

ON THE
FOURTH
CHAPTER
OF ISAIAH.

Elder Samuel Trott

On The Fourth Chapter of Isaiah

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PART 1.

“And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, we will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.”

BROTHER BEEBE: - As I am at this time pretty much confined at home by indisposition, I will, in accordance with the request of our brother J.D. Green, of Georgia, commence some remarks on the 4th chapter of Isaiah.

In being thus forward with my observations, I do not wish to forestall brother Leland, should he be disposed to give his views on this portion of scripture. The fact is, that even if I should be so happy as to agree in views with him, there is no danger of my so exhausting the important subject before us, as not to leave abundant room for brother Leland to bring forward something new. The probability is, that we may differ in our exposition of parts of the chapter, hence our different views may be presented for the consideration of our brethren.

The chapter commences with this well known passage, “And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, we will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.”

The expression, *in that day*, will lead us to look to the preceding chapter for the time referred to; following the 3rd chapter back to its beginning, we shall find that also directly connected in subject and in form of expression, with the 2nd chapter, thus shall we be led back to find the period of this prophecy designated in these words, in chapter 2, “and it shall come to pass that in the last days the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, &c.” Thus we have the period of this prophecy fixed under the gospel dispensation; the expression *last days* being a Jewish phrase to denote the reign of the Messiah as being the grand concluding dispensation. Besides the event in this and the following verses, and those in verse 2, chapter 4 can only refer to this dispensation. But the enquiry arises, is the phrase, *the last days* to be limited to the beginning of the gospel dispensation? Or does it embrace the dispensation at large; leaving the particular periods of this dispensation to be determined by the nature and order of events? The enquiries here suggested are important for the right understanding of the subject before us. For if the phrase used, fixes the period of the prophecy, to the commencement of the gospel dispensation, then the denunciations and the sins against which they are leveled, mentioned in these several chapters, must be referred to the Jews nationally. But if the period extends more generally through the gospel dispensation, then these predicted crimes must be considered as belonging to the anti-christian interest, or perhaps, more particularly in some of the instances, to the corrupted gospel churches; that is, such as have fallen off from the simplicity of the gospel in which they once stood, and hence still called *daughters of Zion*. By reference to particular events of this prophecy, we shall be led unavoidably to the conclusion, that the *last days* here spoken of cannot be limited to the beginning of the gospel. The events, for instance, predicted in verse 4, chapter 2, have not yet had their accomplishment, neither will they until after the destruction of the anti-christian powers. The prediction in verses 11 – , chapter 2, will only receive their general accomplishment when *there shall be one Lord, and his name one over the whole earth*. Again, the prediction, verse 19, chapter 2, and that which is very similar in verse 21, is, by divine inspiration, applied both to the Jews and to others; verse 19 reads, “And they shall

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go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.” The Master foretelling to the women which followed him, the awful destruction coming upon the Jews, says {Luke 23:30,} “Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the rocks, Cover us;” intimating that the above quoted prophecy would then begin to receive its accomplishment in them. Again, at the opening of the sixth seal {Rev.6:12-17,} when heathen or imperial Rome fell with a great destruction, it is said, “And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondsman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains, and said to the rocks and mountains, Fall on us, &c.,” thus showing that the above prophecy had an accomplishment when the powerful interest fell. If thus referred to both these interests, it can scarcely be doubted, that it will have an equally full accomplishment in the destruction of that interest, the Romish Anti-Christ or Beast, which is made up of parts borrowed from both the others; the ceremonies of the Church of Rome having been borrowed both from heathenism, and Judaism. And in the destruction of this power the Lord *will arise no less terribly to shake the earth*, than in the other cases.

Having thus clearly established the facts that the general prophecy connected with this 4th chapter, has a reference, as well to the Romish as to the Jewish Anti-christ; or perhaps more correctly, to Anti-christ at large; I will briefly notice, as I pass, with a view to this general application to Anti-christ, that a portion of the prophecy more immediately connected with this 1st verse, chapter 4; namely, that beginning with verse 16, chapter 3, “Moreover the Lord saith because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet.” As Jerusalem which is above, is the mother of us all, those churches which were constituted in accordance with gospel principles, are fitly termed her daughters, or *the daughters of Zion*. What a full portrait picture is here given of many of the churches of this very day, which a few years ago, stood upon gospel principles! How manifestly drawn by him who, with certain eye, looks through all futurity, *declaring the end from the beginning!* For instance, is there not a great deal of pomposity displayed from their pulpits? And do they not frequently treat with much *haughtiness* those who will not submit to their *conversions* or to their *dictations*? Do they not with many *wanton* looks and actions court the embraces of the world? Many of their plans and forms being avowedly adopted, for the purpose of attracting the attention of the learned and great, and of obtaining what they call respectable congregations. And do they not occasionally cast forth lascivious looks toward *governmental patronage*? Again, do they not make a great *tinkling* with their feet? If they walk forth in the Mission, the Bible, the Sunday School, or even the Tract or Temperance cause, their silver *leg bands* {ornaments, verse 20,} must tinkle. Not only must there be a *tinkling of money*, but also a noise made to attract the gaze of the multitude toward all their *benevolent* steps, with the same immodesty that would be manifested by a female should she deck her feet with tinkling ornaments to attract notice. Without stopping to give a particular illustration, I will just call the attention of my readers to the representation given in the following verses of this chapter, of the *precious jewels* and *ornaments* of human device, with which the churches of this day are decking themselves. More especially would I entreat them to mark well the denunciations of God upon all these ornaments, and upon those that wear them. And may these denunciations be a warning to the children of God to separate themselves from all such wanton churches and professors.

And in that day, at the period when it shall come, in which God shall thus visit these corrupted *daughters of Zion* for their abominations, they will have arrived at such a pitch of madness in their religious zeal, or to such a state of desperation, that *seven women will take hold of one man*, saying,

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“We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.” The impression of many is, that this prophecy is fulfilled in the popular frenzy of the day, of making profession of religion. By way of accommodation, this text certainly serves, aptly, to illustrate much that is passing, at this time, in religion. It has become quite a reproach, to make no profession of religion, especially not to join any of the popular societies. And the most that appears to be wanted, is to be called *christians*. They can mostly weave, what they think, a very good covering of righteousness; they want not the imputed righteousness of Christ for justification. And they can fatten or bloat upon their frames and feelings, and *benevolent* doings; they of course want no other bread. In fact it is to be seriously apprehended that two-thirds of those who join the Baptist Churches at this day, do it for the purpose of taking away their reproach. Their teachers and their consciences reproach them with being sinners; and with not having done what is necessary *to make peace with God*. To remove this reproach, they engage in *making their peace*. What they have to do, according to the present standard, is to bring their minds to a willingness to be saved by Christ, submit to the ordinance, join a church, and adopt a certain prescribed religious form and zeal. Having done this, they set down satisfied, without ever having been brought to such a sense of their wretched, starving state, as to know, that unless Christ gives them of his flesh *for bread* they must forever perish; or of their loathsomeness and nakedness being such that unless washed in a Savior’s blood, and clothed in his pure righteousness, they must remain eternally condemned and banished from the presence of God. Whereas those who are truly taught of God, go to Christ, far more from a sense of the necessity of being fed with that bread which he alone giveth, and of being covered over with his righteousness, than from any desire to be called by his name before men. The circumstances, that the affirmation is of women, might be considered to correspond with the fact of females being so much foremost in professions of religion.

But still if we consider this passage as having any reference beyond its literal accomplishment in the Jews, and the whole connection of the prophecy, I think, obliges us thus to consider it, we must see the phrase *seven women* as having a definite meaning. And what other meaning are we authorized from Scriptural use to affix to the term *women* in a spiritual sense, than that of *denominations* or *sects* of religion, distinct from the true church or bride of Christ? For says Christ in the Songs, “My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother, &c.” It is true that the church of Christ in reference to her being divided into distinct branches, is spoken of in the plural; but in this case, if I mistake not, the term uniformly used, is *daughters*, daughters of Zion, &c. The term *virgins*, as used in Psalms 45:14 & Rev.14:4, I think used rather to express the distinguishing quality of Christ’s sheep. And in the last quoted text, we have the term *women*, evidently used in the sense I have above given to it, as meaning false religions or false churches, and religious societies. The term *seven* being so frequently used in Scripture, to denote the *completeness* or *fulness* of what is represented by it; that I think the term *seven women* in this case can mean nothing other than the various denominations and societies that are distinct from the true church generally, or in the whole. But what *one man* will these denominations take hold of? I answer, the leader of some system, or perhaps nothing more is meant, than that they will agree on some connecting point or bond of human designation. Though, from the views I have entertained on the 20th chapter of Isaiah, in connection with this, I am inclined to believe that the Pope of Rome will be the man, and papacy, popery, &c., the name sought.

But brother Green will anxiously enquire, what is the reproach they will seek to escape by this art? Not only do the Catholics reproach the Protestants for being divided into so many sects and parties, but others point to it as a reproach upon their religion; and they reproach one another for adhering so closely to sectarian views. And the various denominations seem, at this day, to feel that it is a reproach to them,

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to keep up their sectarian barriers; hence the disposition manifested, to keep those barriers, or denominational peculiarities, as much as possible from public view. Hence also the boast of the superiority of the great national societies, seeing that in them, all which they are pleased to term *evangelical* denominations, unite in one common cause.

What I therefore think, intended by this prophecy, is that the various denominations will unite in one general *name*, and under one general head, while each will retain its own peculiar views of religion or doctrine; *eat their own bread*, and retain its own particular forms; *wear their own apparel*. Something like this I think must be intended by this text. And nothing less than this can be implied, as I presume will be admitted, in these texts: "All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him {the beast,} whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," Rev.13:8; and this; "And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark, &c." Rev.13:13. However improbable such an event may appear, certainly those texts imply submission to one general *head*. Besides the idea of a general union has been repeatedly mentioned, and even the beast has been made, that the different denominations are approximating toward such a union. I know not, however, that the plan of uniting under popery, or any one name, has as yet been proposed.

When in connection with these several prophecies, and the circumstances above mentioned, we take into consideration the frenzied state of the religious and political world, and the evidence from past history, of how men will rush headlong to destruction, when given up of God to their own confusion, and to *believe a lie*, the improbability of this general union under one head, and even under popery, in name will vanish. In this way the anti-christian party will prepare themselves for the destruction, which is to come upon all *whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb*, &c., compare Rev.13:8, with Rev.14:9-11.

Under this view of the subject, how precious, and how applicable, how important to be attended to, is the heavenly proclamation, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Rev.18:4.

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Fairfax Court House, Va., Feb.1st, 1837.



PART 2.

Verse 2: "In that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel."

We here have the same *day* referred to, which was noticed in the preceding; namely, the period when a general falling away of the churches shall have prevailed, and when God shall visit them for this

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apostasy. But the reference is to show the state of the true disciples of Christ during, or at that period, described as those “who are escaped of Israel.”

The term *Branch* is so frequently used by the prophets to denote the Messiah, that there can be no hesitancy as to the Lord Jesus Christ’s being here intended. The term *Branch* in most of the texts in which it occurs, has a special reference to Christ in his kingly office, or as the Son of David. This is very clearly the case in Isaiah 11:1, Jer.23:5, Zech.6:12, and it of course may be supposed to have such reference in this passage. In Isaiah 11:1, there is also an allusion to the circumstance of Christ’s birth, as being at the time when the house of David would be very low, or nearly extinct. Joseph could trace his lineage to David, but was in obscurity, and the throne was possessed by the family of the Herods. After the destruction of Jerusalem, if after the butchery of the infants about Bethlehem, the lineage of David was no further to be traced, and was probably extinct, excepting as it existed in this one *righteous Branch*. Hence in that passage the figure employed is that of a stem, or branch, springing up from the roots of a tree, which had been cut down, or become dead.

We have, in the circumstances connected with the birth of Christ one of those special instances in which God accomplishes his wise purposes by instruments, to human view, entirely foreign; and by leaving those instruments to follow their own ambitious inclinations. It was important that the fact of Joseph’s being of the house of David should be publicly established; and this not by the design of men, lest it should be thought to be a mere device to raise the reputation of Jesus of Nazareth. This was fully accomplished. A “decree went forth from Cesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.” Under the operation of this decree, Joseph is brought to Bethlehem to show his lineage and be taxed. Jesus was then, and there, born manifestly as a *branch of the house of David*.

In this passage Christ is called emphatically the *Branch of the Lord*; by which we are evidently taught that this was the peculiar King, the Lord had in view in raising David to the throne of Israel, and in establishing his covenant with him, and his seed after him. See in confirmation of this, II Sam.7:12-17, and Psalms 89:3,4, compared with several following verses.

The term, *Branch of the Lord*, may also be used to show the divine superiority of Christ, as king of Israel, over David and all his natural posterity. He is the *root*, as well as *offspring* of David, and *David’s Lord*. See Rev.22:16, and Matt.22:42.

Christ as king, is called a *righteous Branch*, Jer.23:5. It is said he *shall reign in righteousness*, Isa.32:1. And he is called *king of righteousness*, Heb.7:2. From all which it is evident that Christ’s becoming the *end of the law for righteousness*, and *bringing in an everlasting righteousness*, is connected with his kingly office, or in other words, that he establishes the law, and fulfils its righteous and eternal demands, in the stead of his people, whilst he delivers them from under it, and *makes them kings and priests unto God*.

Again the term, *the Fruit of the earth*, is evidently used to present the Lord Jesus Christ in a different point of view. It has, I think a special reference to the atonement of Christ, or to Christ’s death and resurrection as the substitute of his people. Hence the comparison which Christ makes relative to himself when he says, “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit.” John 12:24. It may also be used to designate Christ as that *peculiar and precious fruit* which the earth was destined to bring forth *from the beginning*. Isa.66:8. Under this view

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of the subject, we shall be led to contemplate the creation of the world, and of men upon it, the entrance of sin, the preservation of man amidst all his corruption, rebellion and depravity, the dividing and dispensing the families of the earth, the various promises, and institutions of God, all as parts of the husbandry of God in the culture of this precious faith. See John 15:1.

I will now notice the persons here connected with Christ, and described as *them that are escaped of Israel*. Not national Israel; though what is here affirmed is true of those Israelites or Jews who *escaped* in the sense here intended. The fact is, that as the term *Israel*, originally belonging to the whole twelve tribes, and was afterwards retained by the revolting tribes, so the term used in a figurative sense, frequently denotes the whole professed or visible Church of Christ. As in the division, ten tribes revolted from the house of David and turned from the Temple of the Lord, so of the professed Church of Christ, a great proportion has in ages past, revolted from the government of our spiritual David, and turned to their *golden calves*. It is remarkable that the anti-christian interest is represented by ten horns, or kingdoms.

That we are not to understand what is here said of Israel literally, will be manifest from a notice of the fifth verse, as it is evident that cannot be taken in a literal sense.

Of the characteristic here given to the people designed, there is an *escape* which the children of grace experience in their new birth. As they lay exposed to the everlasting wretchedness, and all hope of deliverance by human exertions has failed, the Holy Ghost opens to their view a safe way of escape, and leads them into it. That *way* is Christ Jesus. As Israel on the shore of the Red Sea, sang the delivering hand of the Lord, who had made a way through the sea, for their escape from the Egyptians; so the believer, in view of what he feels is a miraculous escape, in songs of praise, ascribing his *salvation to the Lord*.

But the escape which I understand to be more immediately intended here, is an escape from being carried away by the *flood* of errors which is *cast out of the mouth of the serpent*. This escape the Apostle Peter aptly defines as an *escape from the pollution that is in the world through lust*. II Pet.1:4. This escape is often spoken of in the scriptures as a *narrow escape*, and is ascribed to the electing Grace of God; and so the believer in his experience finds it. The Master's declaration is, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Again, speaking as before in reference to his coming in the destruction of Jerusalem, but also in reference to his future comings, he describes the signs and wonders shown by the *false christs* and *false prophets* to be such that "if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect." Matt.24:13-24. Here we are taught that nothing short of the *electing love of God* could preserve them. Peter also speaks of this *escape* as a very narrow one; his words are, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" I Pet.4:18. Once more, Paul, speaking of the *man of sin*, and of the *strong delusions* by which others would be led to *believe a lie*, expresses his confidence in the escape of the Thessalonian brethren with thankfulness to God on the ground of God's having "from the beginning chosen them to salvation." II Thes.2:13. These facts also afford the precious assurance that the elect of God shall all finally escape.

When we come to experience on this point, we find the believer ever ready with a deep felt sense of the fact, to respond the language of Paul and say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." The natural feelings of the child of grace so strongly incite him to avoid reproach, and to seek worldly ease and applause, his natural propensity to go along with the multitude is so great, the current of his affections

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run so strongly toward his listening to the affectionate persuasions of others, and toward his going with his old friends and associates, those whom he had accompanied with delight to the house of God into those measures which they recommend so highly as calculated to promote the cause of Christ, and as productive of such good feelings, &c., but more than these, the finding himself so much alone, whilst the more talented, more learned, the wealthier, and more showy baptists, have engaged with zeal in the promotion of the new measures; and connected with this, the sense he has of his own weakness, and the distrust he has of his own heart, and the consequent fears that he may not be actuated by right motives; and worse than all, he feels himself to be such a disobedient, ungrateful child, if a child, that he is often ready to doubt whether it can be possible that the Lord should so distinguish him, as to give him so much clearer light in the doctrine and order of the gospel; I say the child of grace having all these struggles within, together with fightings without, and finding himself still urged by a sense of duty to maintain in the face of opposition, a steadfast adherence to the word of God, as the rule of his faith and practice, realizes in the following language of the poet, the breathings of his heart,

“O! To grace, how great a debtor,
Daily, I’m constrained to be!
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee!”

Whilst he knows how to appreciate the feelings of David when he says, “As for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped;” he, like him, also finds his relief in *going into the sanctuary of God*. That is, when he tests by the scriptures the religious notions of those, at whose prosperity he had felt envious; when the preached gospel, like the dew, distils upon his soul; or when he can truly wait upon God for guidance and support, he realizes such a divine beauty and excellency in the simple gospel of Christ, and order of his house, and such a difference between these and the devices of men; Christ to be so sure a foundation to rest his own salvation, and the salvation of the church of God upon; and the *standing* of those who depend on human exertions for salvation, to be so *slippery*, that he finds his mind settled in the conclusion, that whoever else may leave Christ, to follow the contrivances of men, and how popular soever it may be to trust to an arm of flesh, he must trust in Christ as his only hope, and follow him as his only guide, the captain of his salvation. See Psalms 73.

But I must pass to the consideration of what Christ, as the *Branch of the Lord*, and as *the fruit of the earth*, is to those who have experienced this *escape*.

As the *branch of the Lord*, or as the *King of righteousness*, and *King of Zion*, he is to his people *beautiful and glorious*; or as some render the original, *for beauty and for glory*. 1st. Whilst the *deceived ones* are seeking to adorn the gospel of Christ with their school divinity, and with their additional ceremonies and plans, thinking it too plain without such embellishments to attract the attention of the polite; the *escaped from Israel* see such a divine beauty in Christ, as that *branch* which the Lord alone brought forth, and caused to grow, as they are enabled to discover him budding and spreading throughout the scriptures, and as he is manifested in their experience of salvation, that in their estimation, nothing has been or can be, added by man to the revelation made by him, which does not tend to deformity. 2nd. Whilst others are decking themselves with their faith, their repentance, and their *benevolent* doings, &c., to render themselves beautiful as religionists in the eyes of man, and as they vainly think in the sight of God, the child of grace has seen so much pollution attached to all creaturely acts, that he wishes to be clothed only in the righteousness of Christ; to appear clad alone in that before men, as the ground of his hope,

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and before God, as his plea for acceptance. Having the evidence that he is covered over with the robe of Christ's righteousness, he feels a confidence in professing his religion before men, and in pleading at the throne of grace, disturbed with the apprehension that he has substituted something else in the place of Christ's righteousness, he feels ashamed and confounded, both before God and men. Thus Christ is to the believer, *for glory* as well as *for beauty*, as he is received as the *Lord their righteousness*. 3rd. Christ considered as *King of Zion*. Whilst others esteem the bulls of Popes, the decrees of councils, the decisions of assemblies, the recommendations of conventions, or the precedents of certain eminent D.D.'s, as giving great importance to religious ceremonies and plans, and whilst the simple institutions and orders established by Zion's King, are pronounced by such, as *inert* and *inefficient*; a *thus saith the Lord*, is that alone, which to the true disciple of Jesus gives beauty to a religious rite, and renders it precious in his sight; and without that nothing can give value to a ceremony in his estimation. The knowledge that *his Lord* has commanded it, is to the believer, a ground of glorying in what he performs as religious, which no sarcasm, no reproach of men, can diminish in his esteem. With this plea, he with confidence can face councils, and kings in justification of his acts. In a word, the *escaped of Israel* would put on Christ as their only beauty, and glory alone in the conquests of his grace.

As the *fruit of the earth* – Christ is to the *escaped* of Israel, *excellent* and *comely*, or *for excellency* and *for comeliness*.

First: Christ viewed as the *fruit of the earth* in relation to his atonement. Whilst those who follow new systems, divest the atonement of Christ of its divine excellency, representing it as *indefinite*, *uncertain*, and an *unsafe* thing to trust in for salvation; even practically, ascribing more direct effect to tears, repentance, and prayers of an individual toward making his *peace with God*, than to the blood of Christ; and presumptuously boast of a virtue in *missionary money* to save souls which the death of Christ would leave to sink to hell; those, who by grace, have escaped those delusions, not only have seen the entire deficiency of everything else to redeem them from destruction, and to make their peace with God, but have also revealed to them by the Holy Ghost, such an excellency in the atonement of Christ, that with confidence *they trust their whole salvation there*; and knowing its excellency, from its meeting their own ruined, helpless case, they feel the assurance that not a soul for whom Christ died can be lost.

Second: From the little which has been said in these days, of the work of Christ, and the abundance that has been said, of what men can and must do to save themselves and others; we must judge that the multitude of professors see no comeliness in the atonement of Christ. But the *escaped of Israel* see such a comeliness in it, that they not only delight to look upon it themselves, but they wish constantly to be presenting it to the view of others, as the way of salvation. They feel that there is a kind of peculiar *comeliness* or *suitableness* {as the word might be rendered,} in it to their case. They feel its suitableness, as meeting the awful guilt and pollution of their case, from which nothing but the blood of the Son of God could redeem and cleanse them; as honoring the Divine law, and maintaining the purity of the Divine throne, whilst it constitutes a channel through which mercy flows freely to them, as condemned sinners; and bringing them to feel their entire dependence for salvation on that God against whom they had sinned, cutting off all boasting, excepting in the grace of God and all *glorying save in the cross of Christ*.

Third: Christ viewed as that *fruit which the earth from the beginning was destined to bring forth*. The believer has seen such an emptiness in the world, and such an excellency and comeliness in this *fruit*, that he has been made willing to give up the world with all its allurements as his inheritance, and to take

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Christ as his only portion. Whilst others manifest a disposition to make worldly gain of all their religious acts; the child of grace, however much he may, at times, be tried by a worldly mind, when brought to the test will cheerfully forego all worldly advantages, for Christ and for the honor of his cause. The world without Christ, can afford the believer no happiness, no real enjoyment; with the assurance that Christ is his, and he is Christ's, he is happy in any situation; the frowns of the world cannot mar his peace.

It is true, that in the present tried state of the church, the believer has often to mourn in darkness; many and long are the seasons when his *Son of righteousness* withdraws his shining, when he dares hardly say, that he sees any *beauty and glory in Christ*, when he doubts whether he ever has known the *excellency and comeliness* of Christ in truth. But can he in those gloomy periods find anything in the world to make up the deficiency he feels, or to satisfy the mind? No, he is like the lonely dove, which mourns the absence of her mate. But even these gloomy feelings afford him a gleam of hope that he has known something of Christ, and that he shall again be *brought forth to the light*. And at times, his mind experiences a temporary relief from the application of some precious promise to his case, from a manifestation of the love of God to him, or from a review of his past experiences. The prophecy before us, as I understand it, gives the precious assurance, that at the period intended, when the *apostate ones* have got to the worst, then they who are *escaped of Israel*, will realize such *beauty and glory in Christ* as the *branch of the Lord*, such *excellency and comeliness* in him as the *fruit of the earth*, that their minds will be fully sustained under whatever persecutions they may be called to experience, and with the disciples of old, will "take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves, that they have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Hence also will be fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah, that, "At evening time it shall be light." Zech.14:7.

S.TROTT.

Fairfax Court House, Va., Feb.9th, 1837.



PART 3.

Verse 3,4: "And it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning."

We have here a purer state of the gospel church mentioned as succeeding the period referred to in the preceding verses. But to arrive at this purity, the visible churches must be purged of God, from their filth and blood, or from their borrowed schemes, represented under the figure of vain female ornaments, in the latter verses of the 3rd chapter.

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As the state of the church described in verse 3, is the result of what God will do to the daughters of Zion, as mentioned in verse 4, and consequently in the order of events, follows verse 4; I will notice the latter verse first.

Before speaking of the *filth of the daughters of Zion*, I will speak more particularly of what is properly intended by the *daughters of Zion*. In No.1, I represented them rather as corrupted or fallen off gospel churches, but on a further examination of the subject, I am convinced that we must understand gospel churches at large; that is, those constituted upon gospel principles and order, and still professing to be on that ground, whether fallen away in reality or not.

The terms *daughter* and *daughters* are frequently used in scripture, to denote a people, or people dependent on that which is represented as the mother, either in regard to government or by descent. Thus we read of the *daughter* of Babylon, of Edom, of Egypt, &c., denoting the community or people under those respective governments. So also we read of the daughters of Samaria, of Sodom, of Tyrus, meaning the different towns or cities dependent on the government of those metropolises. When the people of the Jews are meant; I think the term *daughter* in the singular is used, as the *daughters of Zion, of Jerusalem, of my people, &c.*, and with propriety, for the Jews remain, as they ever have been, one peculiar people. But the term *daughters* is also used in reference to the gospel church, or that people of whom Christ is the *Salvation* and the *King*. As in Isaiah 62:11, "Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh;" and Zech. 9:9, "Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion; shout O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee," &c. The term *daughters of Zion* is used only in this prophecy; that is, in this passage and in the preceding chapter, verse 16, 17; and in Song 3:11, and as before observed refers to the gospel church as divided into branches. In Song 3:11, considering Solomon as representing Christ, we can I think understand no other than gospel churches represented by the term *daughters of Zion*, and also by the term *daughters* of Jerusalem in the preceding verse.

That the term in the passage under consideration cannot be designed to represent the Jews is to me evident. For 1st, if the passage be applied to them, in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, then the prophecy fails, for there were none left in Jerusalem, and those who were spared of them have not been holy in the special sense of our text. 2nd. If it were applied to them, as a scattered people, and in reference to what is future, I think the scriptures will not support such reference; for, not only does the Master speak of the *days* of God's judgment upon them being *shortened for the elects sake* {Matt.24:22,} and the Apostle said that, "the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost," {I Thes.2:16,} but their being left in unbelief is rather for the sake of the Gentiles, than for purging away their iniquities, see Rom.11:11-13. Besides, though according to the declaration, Lev.26:39, they are left to *pine away in their sins*, yet instead of being threatened with any future judgments for cleansing them, God has promised to *cleanse them from all their filthiness, &c, by sprinkling clean water upon them, &c.* Ezek.36:25-33.

The term *daughters of Jerusalem, or of Zion*, properly belongs to the gospel churches, not only as they are the descendants, in a strict sense, of the church at Jerusalem, but also the gospel church, in its visible form, lay in embryo and in type, in the Jewish church state. Hence Zion is represented as travailing in the birth of Christ and of the gospel church called a nation, Isa.66:7-12.

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I therefore see no other place to look for the filth spoken of in the passage under consideration, than the visible churches of Christ, or those constituted according to the pattern in the mother church at Jerusalem.

In entering upon this part of my subject, I am admonished that I shall have to refer to portions of the scriptures and use allusions, which to the polite will appear unseemly. But whilst I would avoid an unnecessary use of expressions or allusions, which might offend the most delicate, I believe every figure, and every illustration, employed by the Holy Ghost to have been chosen with wisdom and propriety, and to be holy in their use; I therefore, dare not neglect on proper occasion, to bring forward the instruction thereby given, for fear of being thought impolite. The fact is, that if we could examine those texts of scripture, to which I shall have occasion to refer, with that sober mindedness of which I may again speak, instead of being offended at the indelicacy of the figures employed, we should only be disgusted at that wretched vileness of our own hearts, and with those awful pollutions which even the churches of Christ have contracted by their inconstancies, and which nothing short of such figures would represent.

I shall notice the term *filth* or *filthiness*, as the Hebrew word is more generally rendered, in two senses in which it is used in the scriptures, as being found in the visible churches.

1st. It denotes excremental uncleanness – see Isa.28:8. This figure strongly illustrates the vile eruptions of our hearts. Says the Psalmist, *I hate vain thoughts*, Psal.119:113. So I think every child of grace will say; and yet, in this day of declensions, instead of covering over these thoughts, as they arise from our hearts, according to the law relating to the figure, {Deut.23:13,} how many of us too often suffer them to flow disgustingly out to public view, in our conversation and actions. Addison, I think it is, has said, “If the minds of men were laid open, we should see but little difference between that of a wise man, and that of a fool. There are infinite reveries, numberless extravagancies, and a succession of vanities, which pass through both. The great difference is, the first knows how to pick and cull his thoughts for conversation, &c.” The same may be said in reference to a prudent christian, and others, with this exception, that vain thoughts and conversation indulged in, generally engender other thoughts and actions of the same, or a more corrupt kind. This course again leads others, with whom we have intercourse, especially if they have confidence in us, into the same habits. Upon this point, confident I am, from the information I have received, that persons who can look back with distinct recollection on the subject, see a very great difference between the baptist churches now in their outward acts, and those of that period, and also in the general walk of members now and then. There was formerly a regularity of deportment, a strict integrity, a sober mindedness, a separation from the world &c., manifested in the whole walk of the baptists, which is seldom seen at this day. Now we are much more assimilated to the world in our outward walk. I am no less confident that no christian can read the New Testament with attention, without feeling conscious that we fall very short of the pattern there drawn of the walk of a disciple of Jesus. I would not have it understood that I am an advocate for that *sanctimonious* face, and air, and voice which some assume on special occasions. I dislike a mask. I have thought that a disgust at these borrowed appearances, has been one means of leading some of us to indulge too much in lightness, and to lay too little restraint upon our vain thoughts from flying out. And the flowing out of evil thoughts, is *that which defileth the man*, see Matt.15:19,20. The fact is, that sober mindedness, whilst it restrains us from lightness and corruption, has a direct tendency to promote cheerfulness in mind and appearance. This is evident to the experienced christian. I have touched but one point of this subject. The corruption has spread its defilement over us as preachers. It has produced on us too much of worldly

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speculations, and ideas of worldly respectability, on our entering and pursuing the ministry. We are not reconciled to be accounted the filth of the world; we therefore *defile* our consciences by conforming too much to the notions and spirit of the world.

A similar contamination has been extended to the churches. It may be seen in our discipline and order, or rather in the manner in which they are maintained; in a disposition to construe scriptural doctrine and commands with as favorable a leaning to the prejudices of the world as we can, &c. My brethren generally may not view these things thus, or be perplexed with them as I am, but I think I speak the experience of some at least, when I complain of not being in any relation I sustain, what I believe the primitive disciples were; and I may add, that I find myself altogether inadequate to bring myself, in feeling and practice, to what I believe a disciple ought to be.

But perhaps this figure may more properly refer to such as Jude speaks of, as *having crept in unawares*, and whom he denominates *filthy dreamers*, and who instead of *preaching the word* preach their own speculations in religion, or the *lucubrations* of those, who in more senses than one, have *studied* out their systems of divinity by *night*.

The other sense which I shall notice, in which the filthiness is used in the scriptures, is its denoting the abominations of idolatry, as illustrated by the uncleanness of an illicit and debasing intercourse of the sexes. It is thus used, Ezek.16:36. The Lord frequently uses the figure of adultery, &c., to illustrate the baseness of his professed people in departing from him and his ways, and choosing their own ways and religion. Adultery is strictly the proper figure. In relation to national Israel, the covenant relation in which they stood to God was similar to the marriage of man and wife. For whilst God chose and redeemed them to be a peculiar people unto himself, he required them *to have no other gods before him*; to honor him as the exclusive object of their fear, their worship, their trust, &c. Hence he says unto them, *I am married unto you*. Jer.3:14. Although many who may admit the truth of these remarks as relating to national Israel, seem to have no sense of their just application to Christ and his church, yet the scriptures authorize me to say, that this relation in its fullest and strictest sense, even as in the case of Adam and Eve, exists spiritually between them, see Eph.5:22-33. Hence there is evidently a corresponding baseness manifested by the visible churches of Christ, when they depart from him as their only Lord, fear, trust, &c., and go after other *lovers*, or embrace systems, and practice forms of religion, which he has never instituted. Consequently the figurative language employed in Jer.2:33-36, 3:1-5, Ezek., chapters 16 & 23, Hosea chapters 1,2,3, and other places, serve to illustrate, as well the extreme vileness of the corrupted daughters of Zion, in tampering with false religions, as of the Jews in practicing idolatry. Does not the Apostle so teach us, when he says, “Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning?” Rom.15:4. Again he says, after naming some of the corruptions of Israel, “Now these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.” I Cor.10:11. I will therefore briefly notice a few of the instances in which the *daughters of Zion* in our day, have like ancient Israel and Judah, defiled themselves, as shown by the Prophets above referred to. For instance, as Ezekiel charges Jerusalem, Ezek.16:25, so the baptist churches, for some years back, have to a great extent, welcomed to their embrace every stranger that passed by; have given countenance to every new religious society and religious scheme; have admitted to their pulpits, every one who came as a baptist preacher, whatever kind of a gospel he may bring; yea, they have manifested a fondness for *new things*, and a great partiality for the vermilion painted gentlemen {Ezek.23:14} *of the schools*, in preference to those plain gospel preachers, whom the knowledge of their own hearts, has made humble and unassuming, and

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whose knowledge of the preciousness of Jesus has made them solicitous, to know nothing, and to hold forth nothing, in their preaching, *save Christ and him crucified*. Again, as Ezekiel depicts the extreme baseness of Jerusalem, chap.16:32-34, so with the baptist churches; the *strangers* above mentioned, have not come to them, without their hire. The churches have lavished upon them their contributions of money. Had these been withheld, the *strangers* had not come to them. So, also like their type, other denominations and societies have not followed them to imitate their doctrine and order; but they have followed others, see Ezek.23:14-30. When they saw the church of Rome sending out their Jesuit Missionaries, they doted upon the missionary plans; when others formed their Home Mission Society for securing the whole West to themselves, they must also have to do with this scheme, and for the same object; when others turned Sunday Schools into a *religious machine* for discipling the children of the country sectarianly to themselves; they also must have in their embrace the *lovely object*; when the *enlightened* of France employed *tracts* to disseminate infidelity, they also fell in love with this scheme, and must have Tract Societies in their bosom. We might follow on the detail in reference to Theological Schools and other things, but enough has been said to show the filthiness of the daughters of Zion.

I will conclude this head with one other remark; the idolatrous Jews that went into Egypt, answered Jeremiah thus, “When we burnt incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men?” Jer.44:19. So the mission baptists say, that since they have commenced practicing these new measures, their churches have increased much more rapidly than before. Yea, from time to time in their reports, they glory on this account over those churches which remain faithful to Christ and to his doctrine and institutions, and wish no increase, but such as have him for their Father. These mission baptists and churches also justify their connection with those babylonish strangers, to refer back to the figure of Ezekiel, on the ground that they are thereby converting the people, and increasing the family of Christ much faster than it would increase were they to remain faithful to him as their only Lord and Husband. But, alas, for those churches, when the Lord shall visit them with the *spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning!* Will he then claim their base born children as his sons? No, they shall be burned up as stubble, and it shall be with such churches as with those Jews in Egypt, above referred to, according to the declaration of Jeremiah, verses 26-28, of the same 44th chapter, or like Jerusalem shall they be destroyed.

S.TROTT.

Fairfax Court House, Va., Feb.24th, 1837.

P.S. On looking over the 1st Number of my remarks on this 4th chapter as published in No.5 of this Volume of the SIGNS, I discover that I expressed myself in one instance, in a way quite contrary to my views of the subject. The instance is where I commence remarking on the 1st verse of chapter 4. I say, “*And in that day*, at that period, when it shall come, in which God shall thus visit these corrupted *daughters of Zion* for their abominations, they will have arrived at such a pitch of madness, &c.” From which expression it would appear that I meant to represent the *seven women* as the same with the *daughters of Zion*. It is true that I afterwards show that I consider them entirely different; which of course appears a contradiction to the sentence just quoted. I will therefore here say, as I shall have occasion hereafter to show, that the *daughters of Zion*, or those constituted according to the pattern of the mother church at Jerusalem, will, excepting in cases where they have gone clear off so as not to have any spiritual life or living members in them, be purged and kept distinct from the Beast or their

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Image. I ought therefore have said in that passage – *And in that day, &c.*, in which God shall thus visit these corrupted *daughters of Zion* for their abominations, the various denominations or religious societies other than gospel churches, will have arrived at such a pitch of madness, &c. I will just remark that there can in reality, be but little difference between the various religious combinations, excepting in the enormities they practice, however constituted, if not constituted according to gospel order – that is, whether constituted on the basis of money, of birth-right or any other human devise, whether by law or otherwise. It is true, the scriptures make a distinction, in name, between the two later classes, representing the one as being wedded to the kings and governments of the earth, the other class as having or seeking to have intercourse with the governments of the world, but not established by law. Hence the one class are called *queens*, the other *concubines*, as in Songs 6:9. For these as might be showed, do in many instances praise the apostolic or gospel church, but only the *daughters bless her*.

S.T.



PART 4

BROTHER BEEBE: - I proceed to the further consideration of verses 3 & 4; verse 4 being more immediately the subject of remark in the preceding letter in which I endeavored to point out what was to be viewed as the *filth of the daughters of Zion*, mentioned in the same verse.

As the *daughters of Zion* of the text, are so manifestly, the visible branches of Zion or churches constituted upon gospel principles, we must from the connection in which the two are here placed, understand the term *Jerusalem* also to have reference to the gospel church. That the term *Jerusalem* is repeatedly used to denote the gospel church, will, I presume, be admitted by most conversant with the scriptures. Paul uses it in this sense, Gal.4:26, where he calls the gospel church in distinction from the Jewish, the *Jerusalem which is above*. Among other texts of the Old Testament in which the term *Jerusalem* is used to denote the gospel church, see Psal.147:2; Isa.33:20; and Jer.33:16. We are not however to understand the terms, *Jerusalem, daughters of Jerusalem, daughters of Zion, &c.*, when used by the Holy Spirit in reference to the gospel church, as used without regard to a distinct idea conveyed by each. In the passage before us, the distinct idea of each term is manifest. The expression, *daughters of Zion*, as I have before showed, designates the gospel church in her distinct visible branches. *Jerusalem*, signifying the *vision or possession of peace*, properly denotes the true body of Christ, as none but living members have had the *vision of peace* or *possess it*. And *Jerusalem as a city builded compactly together, and builded of the Lord*, {Psal.122:3, 147:2,} fitly represents the body of Christ in its collective relation.

But the most difficult point to be understood in this case, is what is intended by the *blood of Jerusalem*. Is it literally the blood of saints which has been shed by persecution? No; that is to be visited upon the inhabitants of the earth; the *earth shall disclose her blood*; and blood shall be given them to drink,

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whilst the Lord's people shall be *hid in their chambers*, compare Rev.16:6 with Isa.26:20,21. But the *blood* under consideration is to be *purged from the midst of Jerusalem*. Is it then the blood of persecution which the saints have shed? Certainly not. They have been in every age, a people *sought out* by persecutors, and have been *as sheep in the midst of wolves*; not only in that *like sheep*, they have been subject to be devoured by their persecutors; but also in that they have never returned devouring for devouring. The blood here spoken of is evidently connected with idolatry, or the *filth* of the text. And looking to typical Jerusalem, we find the *shedding of blood* charged upon her as connected with her idolatry, and which is without doubt, figurative of the subject of our present enquiry. The Lord charges Jerusalem, in connection with her filthy abominations, with taking *her sons and her daughters*, which *she had born unto him*, and sacrificing them unto the images of men which she had made, of the gold and silver which the Lord had given her. He adds, "Is this thy whoredom a small matter, that thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them?" Ezek. 16:12-21. In this passage, I think we have in figurative language, a full development of the blood of our text. We have also similar charges against Jerusalem in Ezek.22:2-4; and 23:37-39. Jeremiah also in charging upon Jerusalem her corruptions, says, "Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the *souls* of the poor innocents &c." Jer.2:34. I would just remark here, that I do not understand the Prophet in using the term *innocents*, as having any reference to the idea of native innocency; but that he uses the term simply in relation to the crime of idolatry which he is charging upon Jerusalem, and thereby accuses her of making those participate in this corruption who are involuntary, and therefore without guilt in the act.

But my brethren will be surprised that I should suppose there is to be found in the gospel churches, what answers to the odious crime of sacrificing children by the typical Jerusalem. But I think I shall show, that figuratively, *the blood of the souls of poor innocents* is to be found upon the *skirts* of the gospel churches and that without *secret search*. To prove this, I will produce the Apostle's remarks, I Cor.8:11, "And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died." To understand the Apostle here, we must consider the different senses in which the term *perish* is used, as meaning, *to lose*, *to fall away*, *to become useless*, &c., as well as *to die*, *to be damned*, &c. For instance, a person's arm *perishes* when it withers and becomes useless. In this sense, the weak brother might *perish* or wither, not only as to his comforts, but also as to his usefulness to the body of Christ, and be, as Paul was afraid he might become *a cast away*, that is from the visible church. In this sense some perished, who are mentioned in I Cor.11:30. In this sense, I think many of God's spiritual children have been sacrificed in years past, by the churches of Christ, to the vain notion of competing with the worldly denominations as to worldly respectability. That is, they have been made to *perish* as to their usefulness in the gospel of Christ, and as to their enjoyment of those precious consolations, and that liberty which the truth imparts. How many, for instance, of God's children have been left to *perish*, like the Prodigal, {Luke 15:17,} *with hunger*, in consequence of churches choosing for their pastors such preachers as would, by their oratory and learning, be likely to draw a respectable congregation, and such in preference to the plain, faithful gospel minister? How many promising gifts for the ministry have been buried, been destroyed, as to their usefulness in feeding the sheep and lambs of Christ, by being encouraged by their churches, {and some of them by the persuasion of older members and preachers, in whom they had confidence, involuntarily, like Jeremiah's *innocents*,} to seek to fit themselves for the work, by resorting to literary and theological schools; and which only fitted them for promoting a speculative religion, and feeding the *goats*. Multitudes, it is true, enter the ministry with no other idea than that of qualifying themselves by education for making their profession honorable and profitable. Such characters I have nothing here to do with. Again, there are those, who have been highly esteemed by the saints as able ministers of the New Testament, but have since been flattered by their churches to

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aim at obtaining fashionable congregations; and where are they now? Going with all their influence in support of the *man of sin*, in its various new measures; and if they now touch the gospel string, it is in a lifeless, discordant manner. We are not, I apprehend, capacitated rightly to appreciate, at this day, the depth of the evil which has been produced by the churches having sacrificed the entire usefulness of many of the children of God, as to that *kingdom*, which is *not of this world*, and the gospel peace and consolations, to a great degree, of all, as peace offerings to the world and its prejudices, see Psal.81:6-16; and Isa.48:17-19. Those of us now on the stage, came into the church in its defiled state, and as we began to suck the breasts of our mothers, the churches into which we were brought, we imbibed much of a defiling conformity to the spirit and notions of worldly religionists, so that it became incorporated into our feelings and views. As a consequence of God's Israel having joined himself to *Bael-peor, the god of shame*; that is, *having become ashamed* of the old fashioned doctrine and order as revealed in the gospel; and having eaten of the sacrifices to the *gods of Moab*; that is the *world's means of salvation*, how many of the children of Israel have *died of the plague*; that is to the visible church of Christ, is not for me to say. See for the type, Num.25. I have therefore believed when any departed from the doctrine and order of the gospel, who once professed them, it was because they never loved the gospel in truth; that is, were not subjects of grace. And this, no doubt, is the case with many who fall away; their open opposition to simple gospel truth proves it. But from the view I have been led into upon this subject, I now believe that many of God's children have been heretofore *sacrificed* or have *perished* in the sense I have given. {I say heretofore, for now seems to be approaching a separating time between those who are receiving the *mark of the Beast*, and those whose *names are written in the Lamb's book of life*.} The Galatian brethren's having been *bewitched*, Gal.3:1; the texts I have already quoted, I Cor.8:11; and 11:30, and what Peter says of some, "that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit," {I Pet.4:6,} all go to support the idea that the children of God may awfully depart from him, and his word, and as Peter says, "be judged {or punished} according to men in the flesh," whilst they shall live according to God's electing, redeeming and regenerating love *in the spirit*; and will therefore be found among the *innumerable multitude* which shall stand before the throne and the Lamb, though not of the hundred and forty and four thousand, who were *sealed in their foreheads* as the *servants of God*, and who are not defiled with women, but are virgins; not having been seduced off, to intermingle with those corrupt religious combinations or societies formed upon worldly principles. See Rev.7:3-9; and 14:4. But still my brethren may think that these departures from the purity and simplicity of gospel doctrine and order, can never be so odious in the sight of God, as to be pointed out by the charges of *sacrificing children*, and shedding of blood. But are not God's spiritual children as dear to him as were his typical children? And the one's therefore, being deprived of living in the enjoyment of the blessings of the *gospel land of promise*, {by which I do not mean Heaven,} be viewed by him as being as great, as that of the others being deprived of *animal life* and the enjoyment of temporal blessings in the land of Canaan? God has given in his word ample testimony of his great displeasure at a departure from the word. Witness the case of Saul, I Sam.15:22-36; the case of Uzza, I Chron.13:7-13, compared with 15:11-13; and also the case of the *man of God* sent out of Judah *by the word of the Lord* to prophecy against the altar at Bethel, I Kings 13. If this *man of God* after prophesying faithfully according to the *word of the Lord* must be killed by a lion, for suffering himself to be seduced by a lying prophet, to eat bread among the idolatrous people; can those hope to escape the rod, who, though as we believe, they preach the gospel of Christ, will still make a practice of *eating and drinking* with the open worshippers of the *golden calves* of our day? Yea, have we not need to watch and pray, lest we be beguiled by some lying prophet, or lying spirit, to depart from the word of the Lord?

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It seems proper here to make some enquiry relative to the manner in which these corruptions crept in, and got such a hold on the gospel churches. The Lord has said that the *leaders of this people cause them to err*. Isa.3:12 & 9:16. But still it appears from the context in both cases, that the people were to be judged for suffering themselves to be led astray. There is a natural propensity in christians to be more easily affected by objects of sense, even in things pertaining to religion, and hence to be pleased with what tends to resolve religion into outward acts and show. On the other hand, the experience of the christian teaches him that his religion to be acceptable to God or profitable to his own soul, must be spiritual. The fear of God also operates as a restraint upon his mind to prevent his departing deliberately from the express direction of God's word. A sense also of his own ignorance in spiritual things, and of the deceitfulness of his own heart, prevents his leaning to his own understanding, and disposes him to cleave to the Scriptures as the man of his counsel. Hence, until some person has obtained the confidence of a child of grace, as a guide, and leads him off by degrees, he will not easily be drawn away from the gospel rule. But so far as we are left to give ourselves up to be governed by the dictations and examples of men, we become peculiarly attached to the schemes and views we have received from them. The reason is obvious; namely, that every device of carnalizing religion, tends to make it more congenial to human nature. Again, persecution shows the christian by real feeling, the evil of a carnal religion, makes him abhor such religion, and drives him to the throne of grace, and to the word of God for counsel and support. Consequently, it places him in circumstances to be less influenced by the desire of pleasing men in his religious concerns, and to be more cautious to know that he has a Divine warrant for what he believes and practices. But still the *steps of a christian are ordered by the Lord*. If God leaves him to the influence of carnal leaders, or his own natural inclinations, he will go astray; but if he *hedges up his way* as God has said he would do to his church, {Hosea 2:6,} he will be kept back, &c.

Having made these general remarks relative to this subject, I will come to particulars. As that which more immediately concerns us, is the second defilement of the gospel church, or in other words a defilement since her separation from the *seven-headed Beast*, I shall of course begin where this corruption begins to manifest itself. This was as the Baptists began to emerge from the severity of persecution in England, and were emboldened to put forth a public declaration of their faith. As this had the effect to wipe from them the stigma under which they had suffered, of being *Arians, enemies of all government*, &c. They began to feel themselves as standing on a footing with the other dissenting denominations; their preachers of course began to aspire after the same respectability in the world, as was enjoyed by those of other dissenting congregations. Human learning was necessary for this, and a corresponding support. Here Satan displayed his utmost art in helping them to a plan by which they might sway the churches into their ambitious measures. The plan of constituting the churches into associations was devised – not as *ecclesiastical courts*, such a proposition the churches would at once have rejected; but as *advisory councils* – a less assuming name at first view, but not much less so in truth. Has God said, “If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, &c.,” and has he set before us the evil of not asking counsel of God, as in the case of Joshua and the Gibeonites, Josh.9:14, {see also Psal.106:13-15; 107:11,12, and Prov.1:30,31,} and has the Lord said, “Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding, &c.” Prov.8:14; and is the Lord Jesus Christ *made unto his people wisdom*, and has he given them his word, *that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*; and shall any body of men, with impunity, organize themselves into a *standing council*, for the churches to apply to for advise and direction? Judge ye. It was not, depend upon it, owing to the mildness of the pretensions set up in favor of those *advisory councils*, that they have not ruled the churches with a heavy hand, but to the mercy of God in *hedging up their way*, by inspiring his churches, to watch with a jealous eye, the movements of these self-constituted bodies. But

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still, the leaders by having their efforts combined in these associations, and by inducing the churches to repose a considerable confidence in their *advise*, have been enabled to establish many customs, in the churches, generally, which have no foundation in Apostolic practice. Among other devices, early after the formation of Associations, the churches were swayed to countenance and encourage the plan for obtaining a ministry, learned in the sciences of the world. Hence, Dr. Going, as quoted in the SIGNS, Vol.5, No.5, page 39, was not so much mistaken in saying, "That the Baptists, both in England and America, from the time they became organized into associations, have approved ministerial education." His assertion that they approved of missions at so early a period, wants proof. But does this Baptist D.D., by referring to that period as the height of baptist antiquity, and denying our claim to be Old School Baptists, because we differ in this thing from the Baptists of that day, think to gull his disciples into the belief of such a position? I pity their ignorance of the New Testament if they know not that the Baptists existed as a religious people long before that day. Or is it indeed a fact, that the Baptist schools have received the hypothesis of the Paedobaptists, that the Baptists had but just before that, sprung into existence? If so, we may well expect our learned Baptists to be found among the *seven women, taking hold of one man, &c.*

From the countenance which the churches in many parts were led by degree to give to an educated ministry, the plan ultimately succeeded so well, and so many learned ministers got into the churches, who necessarily in their display of the wisdom of this world in their pulpits, inculcated also much of the spirit of the world, that a series of corruptions both in practice and in doctrine, has grown out of it. Those who could succeed best in appearing to harmonize the doctrine of the cross with the spirit and prejudices of the world, have in all ages of corruption of the church, been considered the most learned divines, and most readily obtained the honorary title of D.D. It is not necessary for me to follow on in detail, the history of the introduction of all the new things of this day. Suffice it to say, that many of those modern measures have manifestly been brought in to provide a support for the swarms of *clergymen*, their many schools are turning out; and that the associations continue to be, in a great measure, the *advisory councils* in which their plans are matured. Hence the cant phrase of the day, about meeting in associations to *devise means* for the spread of the gospel, and the *building up of Zion, &c.* But on the other hand, there have been a few churches and preachers that, amidst the greatest rage for education and missionary operations, have never drunk in these corruptions to the extent to which they have prevailed among the great body of the Baptists. And besides, the extent to which these filthy abominations have been carried, has had the effect to awaken others to a deep sense of the evil of departing from the simplicity of the gospel, and make them willing, at the expense of reproach to retrace their steps, and to seek to cleanse themselves from the whole source of defilement. And thus the Image of the Beast, like as did the original Beast, is by the excess of its human devises, driving the true church and the saints from it, and leading them to bear their public testimony against those innovations, the introduction of which they too much countenanced. But as the *daughters of Zion* have polluted themselves, the defilement must be *washed away*; and as the true visible church by countenancing the introduction of those plans by which many of her children have been sacrificed and thus as Jeremiah says, "The blood of the *souls* of the poor innocents is found in her skirts," it will there remain until *purged away*. Hence the peculiar propriety of the expression used in our text, in speaking of purging away the *blood of Jerusalem*, from the *midst thereof*. It is the *blood of Jerusalem* that is the causing to perish of the living members thereof, as explained before, that stands charged against the churches of Christ, and it is to be *purged from the midst thereof*, for this purging has relation only to the true churches, so far as they have participated in this iniquity.

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Before closing this letter, I would say, to prevent misunderstanding, that in the remark I have made relative to an *educated ministry*, I had reference to what is generally intended by the expression; namely, Persons being educated with a special view thereby to qualify them for preaching the gospel of Christ. Education in itself considered, has no tendency to injure the usefulness of a minister of Christ. Hence Christ has evidently called some such to the work. But in doing this, he has, as in the case of Saul of Tarsus, first humbled them, and made them esteem all their attainments *as loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus*; hence Christ Jesus, and not their learning, will be that which they wish to set forth. On the other hand, the class we object to will, from the importance they attach to learning, be putting that foremost in their preaching.

I must beg the indulgence of the brethren, in having to continue this number on to another letter. It is an important subject, though I much doubt whether I feel it as did those marked for preservation, {Ezek.9:4,} I think I know something of the evil I would describe. Is it not manifest that the gospel church at this time, is separated as in her pollutions, from the presence of her Lord and husband, according to the law relating to another figure, recorded in Lev.15:19. But these days of separation will assuredly pass away, for *her Maker is her husband*. Isa.54:5.

S.TROTT.

Fairfax Court House, Va., March 18th, 1837.

PART 5

Having in the two preceding letters on verses 3 & 4, spoken of *the filth of the daughters of Zion and the blood of Jerusalem*, as found among the Baptist Churches at large, I cannot say, *having fully described them* – I now come to speak of the means by which this *filth* is to be *washed away*, and this *blood purged*. The *spirit of judgment* and the *spirit of burning*, are the means which the Lord will employ for this object. The expressions are rather singular. Peter speaks of “judgment beginning at the house of God.” I Pet.4:17. And Paul speaks of the “fire trying every man’s work;” in reference, as I understand him, to the materials which ‘gospel’ ministers build into the churches. I Cor.3:13. But here we have the *spirit of judgment* and *spirit of burning*. The term *spirit of judgment is used*, Isa.28:6, but it is there used to denote the special gift imparted, as for instance, in the case of the *seventy elders, on whom the spirit which was on Moses was put*. Num.11:16,25,26. And this prophecy is, that the Lord shall be unto those whose province it is to *sit in judgment*, in the gospel church, *for*, or in the place of this spirit of judgment. The churches will, no doubt, in a more eminent degree, at the period when this cleansing takes place, experience the verification of this promise, than in seasons past. And the Lord’s being unto them for a spirit of judgment, will enable them to judge more correctly between truth and error. But still I think the expression in the passage under consideration, has a different reference. It may denote the peculiar energy and effect of the *judgment* and *burning* with which the churches shall be visited, as well as signify that the afflictions shall be mental, not a material burning, as of the Israelites at Taberah.

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Num.11:3. Nor external judgments like those with which God often visited national Israel. It may also denote the special agency of the Holy Spirit in the thing. That the churches in consequence of their disobedience must experience severe chastisements, is manifest from many passages of Scripture. The text, I Pet.4:17, which I have already more than once quoted, goes to prove the fact. The Apostle in this passage seems to refer to the prophecy in Ezek.9, in which the men with *slaughter weapons* in their hands, were directed to “slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women,” but were forbidden to come near any man upon whom was the mark, and were ordered to begin at God’s sanctuary, verse 6. The men reserved, were those who had been marked for having “sighed and cried for the abominations done in the midst of Jerusalem.” And Peter’s declaration as I understand it, is, that now, under the gospel dispensation, is the time that judgment must begin at God’s sanctuary, or as he calls it, the *house of God*. In this prophecy of Ezekiel, those were to be preserved, who mourned over the abominations practiced in Jerusalem. Another text corresponding with this, and which seems to harmonize the two ideas of judgment, and the spirit of judgment, being visited upon the church of God is found in Zech.10:3. “Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats.” The Lord’s anger is kindled against the shepherds, the *leaders which cause his people to err*. But the punishment will fall upon the goats which they have brought in and mingled with the sheep of their flocks; or according to Paul, I Cor.3:11,16, the *wood, hay, and stubble* which any pastor has built into the church, shall be burned up, but he himself *shall be saved, yet so as by fire*.

Another important enquiry relative to the *spirit of judgment*, and *spirit of burning* is, when and how are they to be made manifest? I am strongly of the opinion that the Lord is at this very time making them manifest. If I am not mistaken in this thing, the spirit of burning is showing itself as the effect of the word of truth. For wherever this word is now preached in faithfulness as the divine standard, both of doctrine and order, it is acting as a refiner’s fire, in separating between the precious and the vile. It is burning out from the churches where the truth is maintained, those whom the Scriptures denominate the wicked; that is, those who are connecting themselves with *that wicked which is revealed*, and are wickedly departing from God, not keeping his ways, contrary to the Psalmist, 18:21. Not only is the word thus burning them out of the churches, but it is, in the estimation of the *wise who understand* burning them up as stubble, root and branch, according to Mal.4:1. That is, it is burning up their standing as disciples of Christ, showing them connected with another interest than the church of Christ, and burning up the works which they are *branching* out, on the right and left, making them as *ashes under the feet* of those *who fear the name of the Lord*. It also burns in the hearts of those subjects of grace, who are placed under a corrupted ministry, or in corrupted churches, compelling many of them to separate themselves from such connections as it burned in Jeremiah, when he held his peace. Jer.20:8,9. God calls his *word a fire*. Jer.23:29. And the effect of burning is repeatedly ascribed to it. See Jer.5:14, Psalms 97:3, Isa.66:16. And in reference to the *spirit of judgment*; truly the rents and divisions in the churches, the distress of mind occasioned by these things, together with the coldness, and other evils connected therewith, constitute a severer judgment upon the churches and saints of God, than any external persecution would be, which the church has ever passed through. Further, this spirit of judgment and of burning, which we are experiencing, is purging the saints and churches from many things, which a while back they looked upon as proper, and even necessary. From the effects already produced, this spirit appears likely to cleanse the churches which remain as *daughters of Zion*, from every polluting scheme they have adopted; and to burn up every vestige of the traditionary ornaments which they have borrowed from the *queens and concubines*, and to bring them to a strict conformity to the word. For the truth is this fire which is kindled, I trust, by the Spirit of the Almighty, must burn so long as any combustibles in the churches. Hence, seeing the *spirit of judgment and of burning* is abroad

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in the churches, it is not to be wondered at, that Old School Baptists cannot settle down upon the practice of those esteemed Regular Baptists thirty years, or even two hundred years back, when as I have before noticed, *constitutional associations*, and the idea of an educated ministry began to be introduced. If I am mistaken as to this being the period intended and something different is to be experienced to cleanse the churches, we must wait the development thereof, before we can understand what is properly intended.

One remark more upon this head. Although, as I have before remarked, I understand the term *daughters of Zion*, to embrace all the churches constituted upon gospel principles, yet I have no idea that all such, nor than a third of them, will be left standing on the *foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*, when the spirit of judgment and spirit of burning, shall have accomplished their work. The few saints which may have remained in the apostate churches, will ultimately be burned out of them, and have to seek a home elsewhere, among their own kindred; as the corrupt professors will be burned out of the purified churches. Thus it was, as before remarked, when the Beast was manifested. There was a general connection among all the churches after much corruption had brought in, and all continued to be recognized as churches of Christ, until those corruptions had got to such an extent, that the saints could no longer submit to them, nor fellowship, as disciples of Christ, those who approved them. They had then, to separate themselves from the mass of professors, and their corruptions, and to retire, a small remnant, to the wilderness. Thus it is like to be, and thus we might expect it to be, in the setting up of the Image of the Beast, with the exception of not having to retire anew to the wilderness.

I now pass to notice the result of this trying session, as described in verse 3. “And it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem. That is, every one who is not driven away by the fire of gospel truth, nor drawn away by the *strong delusions* which God shall send them that believe not the truth, shall be called holy, &c. The explicative added; namely, *every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem*, may be understood to mean the same as having their *names written in the book of life of the Lamb*, &c. If this be the sense, the idea conveyed will be, that the elect will all then be manifested *as holy*. Or the expression may mean, as I think it does, *numbered or accounted among the living*, &c. In this sense the term *written* appears to be used in Psa.69:28, Ezek.13:9, and in several other texts. If this be the true meaning here, then the expression implies that all who profess to have been quickened, will be called holy – no unholy professors left among them. This accords with the declaration of our Lord, “He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” *Unto the end*; that is, through the days of tribulation. Matt.24:13.

Again, the expression *written among the living in Jerusalem*, shows that the persons composing the Jerusalem or true gospel church, are living persons, in a sense in which others are not; consequently they must, in this peculiar sense, have been made alive by a life-giving power. “It is the Spirit that quickeneth.” “And you hath *he* quickened,” that is, God. John 6:63. Eph.2:1. Hence the Campbellite churches, which know nothing about the special operations of the Spirit, are not *Jerusalem churches*; they are unacquainted with the *visions* of peace. The same must be the case with the New School churches of this day, as their leaders say, they have no notion of these *miraculous conversions*. An Apostle hath said, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” II Cor.5:17. And every child of grace knows from his own experience, that the power of nature never made him acquainted with what it is to be in Christ. Those who can believe that nature can produce a *new creature*, may as well come out atheists at once, and ascribe to nature. Brethren if we are of the *living in Jerusalem*, we have nothing to

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glory of, over others; but at the same time, whilst it becometh us to be humble under an abiding sense that grace alone has made us differ from the most self-confident, and from the vilest, we, on the other hand, from a due regard to the glory of God, should not for a moment, in any way, countenance the idea that creaturely exertions ever has changed, or can change a natural heir of hell, or the child of wrath, into an heir of heaven.

In addition to the pleasing idea that when the *daughters of Zion*, are of God *washed from their filthiness*, &c., they will then be composed altogether of saints, or persons made holy. This passage also, I think, gives us to expect that all who are written among the living in Jerusalem, will, in that happy day, be, in a peculiar sense, *holy*. The expression *called holy*, being the same with *declared* or *pronounced holy*, properly implies that they will be then manifested as holy beyond what they had been before that time. But the question arises, how will they then be holy beyond what the saints now are? Not in reference to their eternal salvation. For in this sense all the children of grace, in every age, are alike sanctified or holy; all alike *sanctified by God the Father*, or chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Jude 1 & Eph.1:4. Christ is of God made unto us sanctification. I Cor.1:30. And all alike, “from the beginning chosen unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. II Thes.2:13 & I Pet.1:2. But it is in reference to their lives, and in the sense in which Paul prays God to *sanctify* the Thessalonian brethren *wholly* {I Thes.5:23,} and in which he exhorts the brethren at home to “present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable,” &c. Rom.12:1, that we may expect the saints to be more manifestly holy. This is no other than living under the influence of the internal sanctification of the Spirit, or *working out*, or rather acting out their salvation, which is through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, “with fear and trembling,” Phil.2:12, compared with II Thes.2:12, as this holiness is an acting out of our salvation, and the salvation is a being saved from sin or from all iniquity, it necessarily implies an abstaining from all iniquity, and as the whole world lieth in wickedness, an abstaining from a conformity to the world. On the other hand, as our salvation is not a being delivered, whilst we live in the world, from our natural lives, nor from our relations, connections, infirmities, &c., of this life, this holiness does not imply a withdrawal from the world, nor from the several duties or relations of life.

Again, as this holiness is *holiness to the Lord*, it will lead us “whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God.” That is, our meat and drink will be received with contentment and thanksgiving, and used for our health and bodily activity; and all our acts will be in the fear and love of God, and in the faithful discharge of the duties of the respective relations, stations and callings in which God has placed us, both in the church and in the world.

But further, *holiness to the Lord*, under the Mosaic dispensation, implied a strict and exclusive regard to the commands of God in all their religious performance; a conformity to the nations around them, or a borrowing of their rites being strictly forbidden. It can imply no less under the gospel. The Apostle says, {Heb.2:1,} “We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard lest at any time we should let them slip;” and this he says, from the considerations brought to view in the preceding chapter; namely, that God, instead of speaking to us by the prophets, as under the former dispensation, hath spoken to us by his Son, and the superior dignity which the Scriptures ascribe to the Son, over the angels. Hence the inference which he draws in the two verses following the one above quoted. And if the Jews, on even to the close of the Old Testament’s prophecy by Malachi, were directed to remember the law of Moses, the servant of the Lord, with the statutes and judgments which God commanded to him in Horeb, Mal.4:4; will not holiness to the Lord under this vastly superior dispensation, this *so great*

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salvation, as the Apostle calls it, lead those on whose hearts it is inscribed, to continue to remember the statutes and judgments and the *law of faith*, which he has appointed by the infinitely superior personage – not a servant, but his well beloved Son, whom he has given as a leader and commander of his people? And will not the voice sounding in their ears, *hear ye him*, forbid their looking elsewhere for direction, or going about to devise *ways and means* for themselves, as though they had no leader? Judge ye. The views which I have here given of the holiness intended in the passage before us, is sustained by the description which Zechariah gives of the state of the church when the *man of sin* is destroyed, and for entering upon which, the churches are to be prepared, as pointed out in this passage. The description referred to is this, “In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD, and the pots in the Lord’s house, shall be like the bowls before the altar; yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah, shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein; and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.” Zech.14:20,21. I will notice a few of the expressions. 1st. *Upon the bells of the horses, holiness to the Lord*. As the horses and their bells belong not to religious, but to secular concerns, this shows that in that day the very trappings of our worldly concerns, will be holiness to the Lord; and this whether it relates to war or peace. 2nd. *The pots in the Lord’s house, shall be like the bowls before the altar; yea, every pot in Jerusalem, &c.* The bowls of the temple were of gold, pots were some of brass, but mostly of earth; they were evidently an inferior vessel. If we understand those vessels according to the use of the term, in II Tim.2:20,21, to signify persons; then, at that day, there will be no distinction between *clergy* and *laity* in the church, no set of men who, on account of their scholastic learning, will set themselves up as superior to their brethren, and as having a right to *lord it over God’s heritage*. And every member in the church will consider himself according to his gifts and station, alike bound to live to the glory of God. Yea, the watchmen shall see eye to eye, and there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days, &c. None to say, “Ah! Lord God, I cannot speak, for I am a child.” Isa.52:8, 65:20, Jer.1:6. Or if we take these vessels to typify rites or instructions in the gospel church, as perhaps what is said, verse 21, would require, then this passage denotes that every institution, down to the most common ceremony in the church, will be alike sacredly observed according to the command or pattern given in the word. Yea, that nothing will be admitted in Jerusalem, or the church, but what is holiness to the Lord, as being set apart by divine appointment to its special use. “In that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.” There shall be no more in the church, those who are doomed to destruction, or under the curse. Of course, no unregenerated professors, much less those who have submitted to the *mark of the beast*. How different will that state of the church be from what it is now. Now, the purest churches, it is to be feared, have their *Canaanites*, and have their pots that are not *holiness to the Lord*, religious customs that have no command or example laid down in the word. But the Lord is now evidently *bringing many of them through the fire*, and we have reason to believe, is *refining them as silver is refined*, &c. The process of separating the silver from the dross, it is true, is to us painful, and our unbelief sometimes leaves us to think the fire is too hot, and that it will burn up the silver. But it becomes us to remember that the Lord himself *sits as the refiner*, tempering the heat with infinite skill. Besides to keep down our impatience it becomes us to keep in view the result; for when the Lord shall have accomplished the purifying of his churches, their prayers will then be in faith, for the Lord will hear them, and *He will say they are his people*, and *they will say the Lord is my God*, see Zech.13:8,9.

Have we not reason, my brethren, to rejoice in the fiery trials which are beginning to come upon us, seeing they are appointed to accomplish such a glorious event, and are so necessary on account of our

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defilements and the pollution of the churches. Woe to the churches which are, or shall be, left without these trials, and to be like Ephraim, *a cake not turned*. Hosea 7:8.

S.TROTT.

Fairfax Court House, Va., April 4th, 1837.

PART 6

Verse 5: “And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for upon all the glory shall be a defense.”

I have already remarked that the cleansing which the churches are to pass through, as described in verses 3 & 4, is a preparing of them for entering upon that happy state, which is to succeed the destruction of the *man of sin*. In this, and the following verse, some things relative to that purified state of the church are brought to view. In the intervening time, when the churches, by the *spirit of judgment* and the *spirit of burning*, are prepared for it, and before the *man of sin* is destroyed the *Witnesses* must be *killed*. The affliction consequent upon this event will be short – but three years and a half. Hence says the prophet, “Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian; he shall smite thee with the rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee after the manner of Egypt. For yet a little while and the indignation shall cease, and my anger in their destruction.” Isa. 10:24 & 25. It would seem from this that the Assyrian is to smite the people of Zion, with the *rod*, the sign of civil authority, and to lift up the *staff* against them; the *crozier*, the sign of ecclesiastical authority, with the attempt to bring them into bondage to his ceremonies, as the Egyptian attempted to keep Israel in bondage.

The descriptive expressions used in the verse under consideration are, as I understand them, applicable to the church in all periods; the promise that of an increased blessing at the period in view.

I will notice the expressions having this general application. First, the *dwelling places of Mount Zion*. This has evidently a reference to the distinct branches of Zion. The expression *dwelling places* answers well to another figurative expression found in Jeremiah 31:1, “At the same time saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel,” &c. As spiritual Israel or the Church of Christ is divided into these families, so each has its home or *dwelling place*. Thus the church is called a house, and is said to be *builded*, &c., in Jer. 30:18 – the dwelling places are called *tents*.

As these figurative expressions are calculated to cast some light upon the relation of gospel churches, one to the other, I will offer a few reflections upon the term *families of Israel*, as well as that of *dwelling places*.

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First. *The families of Israel*. This expression, whilst it shows the church divided into families or distinct branches, shows also a peculiar relation as existing between them. Though national Israel was divided into families, these families were not independent of each other. They were bound together by the ties of brotherhood, were one people, had one father, Abraham, lived under one covenant, under one set of laws, and bound to see that each other observed those laws. See for instance the law concerning idolatry, Deut.13:12 - 18, "If thou shalt hear say in one of thy cities, which the Lord thy God hath given thee to dwell there, saying, Certain men, the children of Belial, are gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known; then shalt thou *inquire*, and *make search*, and *ask diligently*; and behold, if it be truth, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought among you; thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein, &c."

The spiritual relation among the families of Zion, can be no less close than was the natural relation of the families of national Israel. These are members of the same one Body, profess the same salvation, faith, order, &c., own the same Lord, have the same father, {not as Abraham was the father of the nation of Israel,} but Christ the *Everlasting Father* of his people, being the Husband of his bride in all her branches, is the Head of each gospel family, and the immediate Father of all their *true born* children. The ties therefore of fellowship among these ought to be considered no less binding than were the ties of nature among the other. If when one of the families of Israel were reported to have gone into the idolatry of that dispensation, the other families to clear themselves from being accessories to the same crime and to vindicate the honor of God and his religion, were required to enquire diligently, &c., and finding the thing so, to destroy the idolatrous family, or city, with the edge of the sword, that is, so cut them off from their land of promise, and to cut off the natural relation that existed; can it be any less obligatory on the families of spiritual Israel when one of the families, or churches shall be reported to have gone into the idolatry of this dispensation, to enquire concerning it, and if found true, to cut off such family from the claims of relationship to them, by severing publicly the ties of church fellowship, and thus to wipe the stain of such crime from the religion of Christ, which they profess, and to clear themselves from the charge of holding fellowship with those who thus basely desert from the God of salvation.

Second. *The dwelling places of Mount Zion*. These, as already said, are the homes of spiritual Israel. This therefore brings to view the separate interest of each family. Here each family apart meets in its family circle, attends to its own affairs, partakes of the family repasts, if the Master is present, they are truly *feasts of fat things*. Here they retire from the storms that are abroad, and if the Father of the family is with them, feeling composed under his protecting wing, the raging without is like the *storm against the wall*; they hear the sound of the blast, but it only makes them feel the preciousness of their shelter. Here they talk over the incidents of the way, which each has met with, whether of joy, or of grief; where proper affection, or fellowship reigns in a family, with what heartfelt confidence do they unburden their minds one to the other, and listen to the advice of the older members of the family, especially to the words of their Father. Whilst their friends, who may be occasionally with them, participate in the repasts, the joys, sorrows, &c., in the family circle, there are certain circumstances connected with the family circle, and dwelling place, which it would be intrusion, in these friends, to intermeddle with, unless requested. I have here drawn, probably in too high colors, the happiness of these *dwelling places* to suit the experience of most of our churches at this day, but some of our brethren have in recollection pleasant scenes like these, in their church relations in times past, and such scenes will again be realized, when the Lord shall have *washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion*.

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As a brother has recently, by letter, requested me to give my views, through the SIGNS, relative to the propriety of our Old School Brethren uniting with a mixed church, where the original constitution was sound; and it seems with some degree of propriety to come in, in this connection. I will offer some additional thoughts relative to that point.

First. When a person is received as an inmate into a family, it is usually under the impression that he comes in for peace, and with a disposition to submit to the order and regulations of the family. If however, disorderly members have been received, the order of the family is attempted to be subverted, and confusion is in the house, it appears to me not consistent with the gospel of grace, to become an inmate in this confusion. As I have already remarked, there is a common interest among the families of spiritual Israel, or ought to be, if therefore wickedness or disorder prevails in one family, others will feel the wound, and for the honor of the cause seek to correct the abuse, but if the disorder so prevails as not to be corrected by the counsel and admonition of brethren, and if the members of the church professedly adhering to the original constitution will not clear the church from the disorder by exercising gospel discipline, or themselves from it, by separation, they themselves become implicated in the disorder, and hence orderly churches should disown them, until they see their error and correct it.

Perhaps the typical law concerning *leprosy in a house*, may cast some light upon this subject, as being strictly applicable to it. For I think a little reflection will convince any one that the house in the type, built up of stones, &c., can only represent the *spiritual house built up of lively stones*, or those professedly so. This law is found in Lev.14:33-53. Verse 35, "And he that owneth the house shall come to the priest saying, &c." The owner of the house is the Lord Jesus, the chief shepherd; but the elders of the church are pastors and shepherds, and they should not be hirelings, or take the oversight of the flock for filthy lucre, but being *ensamples to the flock*, and as having an interest in their welfare; and being watchman, it is their duty to watch and give warning at the approach of any evil or error. The owner was not to decide himself on the leprosy, but must go to the priest. The Lord Jesus is the high priest of our profession, but his people are made *kings and priests unto God and the Lamb*. We have in the New Testament the decision of our High Priest, through his apostles, upon all things belonging to his church; and it is the duty of the *priests*, the members of the church, to bring every difficulty to the test of the word. The house was first to be emptied of everything, &c. Does this not teach that the church cannot travel while she is in difficulty, owing to corruptions, errors, &c., and therefore ought to suspend the ordinances, and everything else religious, to attend to the removing of the plague. Must not the communion and worship of the church, if attended to whilst the minds of the brethren are fretted with the confusion and disorder among them, partake of the uncleanness of the plague? Verse 37. The signs of the leprosy. *If the plague be in the walls of the house with hollow strakes, greenish or reddish, &c.* All error, whether in doctrine, in order, or in discipline, is of an eating nature; it takes away from the foundation, the truth of the gospel, or from the liberty, the privileges, the consolation, &c., of the people of God, and leaves a hollow, an unevenness in the walls, in the harmony and fellowship of the church, and something wanting to form a consistency. These errors when introduced appear *greenish*, young, something new, which attract, by their novelty, are *new gods that have come newly up*. They also assume a reddish hue, in a little while they burn, in their votaries with anger against the truth and those who advocate it. It must be in the wall to occasion this attention, in those who are built into the church, and effect the plastering, the fellowship. Verse 38. The priest, after looking upon the plague, *shuts up the house seven days* for further observation. So the church, having taken this difficulty under investigation, it is proper she should not proceed too hastily, but give time for cool reflection to those who have imbibed the error, or are under the influence of the corruption. *Seven days*, that is from one regular

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meeting to the next, whether it be weekly or longer. Verses 39,40 & 41. If on the priest's further examination, *the plague be spread*, &c. If these persons, instead of seeing the evil of their error and repenting, become more confirmed, and are trying to disseminate it, &c., as the stones of the wall in which the plague was, were to be *taken out and thrown into an unclean place*, so these members, being *heretics*, and having received the first and second admonition, should be rejected, cast out into the world. The walls of the house were to be scraped inside. What heart searchings do these difficulties in the church, produce in the people of God? How careful to clear themselves in this matter, should they be? And to cast away all the dust they find in themselves, and all the coldness and formality which had taken the place of true fellowship in the church, whilst this error or corruption was tolerated? See II Cor.7:11. Verse 42. They were to take other stones and put in the places of those removed, so the stations in the church of those removed, if officers, are to be filled with other members, and the church again to move on, and receive into fellowship such as the Lord may add unto them. They were also to take fresh mortar and *plaster the house*. Not *untempered mortar*, nor are they to *daub the wall*. And is it not the genuine effort of a church of Christ's having passed through such heart searching difficulties, that the members which have stood fast, get fresh evidences of their own, and of each other's gracious state, feel a fresh and increased fellowship for each other, and now move on with affection and harmony? Verse 43-45. The type goes on to say that if the *plague come again* after the *stones have been removed*, &c., the house is to be *broken down*, &c. In this, and all other simple types, there must be a deficiency to shadow forth the substance clearly. The one figure could not illustrate the course of procedure, where but a few members of a church are affected with a plague of error, &c., and at the same time, show the proper course, where the majority, or body of the church is effected with it, but by this supposition and regulation. But this addition I think sufficiently clear to be understood, shadows forth the case in distinction from the preceding, of an error or corruption prevailing in the church, so that in regular order, the sound part being the minority cannot deal with, and exclude the errorists. In this case the house is to be broken down, or in other words, the true, orderly members are to come out of the disordered body which will in effect be pulling it down as a Church of Christ, however firm it may continue to stand as an unclean anti-christian interest. Or there being none to come out, other orderly churches should disown it. Verses 46 & 47. Which speak of persons contracting uncleanness by going into the house, eating, or sleeping in it during its being shut up, teaches that those who extend tokens of fellowship to a church while in its manifested unclean, disordered state, participate in the sin of the corruption by countenancing it. In reference to the form of cleansing the house, Dr. Watt's brief application of the type, though not properly an explanation must suffice at this time:

“No outward forms can make me clean;
The leprosy lies deep within.
No bleeding bird, nor bleeding beast,
Nor hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Can wash the dismal stain away.
Jesus, my God, thy blood alone,
Hath power sufficient to atone.”

So feels the child of grace under a sense of his various wanderings.

To return to my subject. The term *assemblies* as connected with the dwelling places, is I think used to show what I have tried to keep in view, that by the dwelling places are not to be understood any of

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those *material places* which the fashionable world call churches, but the assembly or the gathering together of the disciples in one place.

I will now defer the remainder of this subject to another letter; and here meet with a few remarks, an objection which I am aware will be made to my quoting so much from the Levitical law, to illustrate gospel order. 1st. An inspired apostle has authorized us to consider this law as *having a shadow of good things to come*. Heb.10:1. Being then shadows or types given by divine revelation, they must have been designed by infinite wisdom to teach the knowledge of the substance. And thus the apostle employs many of them in the epistle just quoted. See for instance, Hebrews, chapter 9. 2nd. We are told that, “all scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable, &c.” II Tim.3:16. 3rd. Paul says thus relative to his preaching, “Saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.” Acts 26:22. With such an example, and such authority, I think I shall be sustained in these references to the Old Testament, providing always that I do not *darken counsel with words without knowledge*.

Yours, as ever.

S.TROTT.

Fairfax Court House, Va., April 26th, 1837.



PART 7

Verse 5. “And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defense.”

I come now to notice the expression, *A cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night*. The figure is a little varied, but the spiritual idea is, no doubt the same as that represented by the *pillar of cloud and pillar of fire* in which the Lord *went before Israel by day to lead them in the way, and by night to give them light, to go by day and night*. Neh.9:19. This I take uniformly understood as typifying the gospel ministry, which is given for a guide and light to the Israel of God, by day and night. As this cloud, when the angel moved between Israel and the Egyptians, was a cloud and darkness to the latter, whilst it was light to the former, {Exod.14:19, 20,} so is the gospel ministry; it is a light to the people of God, but darkness to the legalists or bondmen of our day; and a faithful gospel ministry will in a great measure keep a separation between the two. As the cloud produced a refreshing shadow to Israel in that parched desert during the day, so is the preached gospel to the people of God, when scorched with persecution or legality, &c. Again, there are other instances in which clouds are made to represent the *ministry of the word* as in God’s covenant with Noah. He says, “I do set my bow in the cloud;” again, “And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud.” Gen.9:13,14. So in the ministry of God’s raising up, the bow of the *everlasting covenant* is

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always to be seen. Again, Zechariah says, {10:1,} “Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, &c.” So the gospel clouds or ministry, which the Lord maketh are *bright clouds* – not *towering* – and they give refreshing rain. Hence false teachers are compared by Jude to *clouds without water, carried about by winds*, of course only calculated to deceive and bewilder those who would follow them.

But I will notice the other expression; that is, the *smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night*. It is a well known fact, that when the fire burns sufficiently clear, that which appears as smoke by day, is a shining flame by night. Hence, the smoke here spoken of, which is as the shining of a flaming torch by night must proceed from a burning fire. I had occasion in the preceding number to show that truth or doctrine of the gospel is comparable to fire and is so repeatedly denominated in the scriptures. It is equally true that pure gospel preaching proceeds from the fire of divine truth burning in the heart of the preacher. Thus Jeremiah, when he would refrain from speaking any more in the name of the Lord, says, “His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.” Jer.20:9. Thus Paul says, “A necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel.” I Cor.9:16. So when Isaiah was to have his mind prepared to offer himself willingly to go and publish the message of the Lord, and was depressed under a sense of his entire uncleanness, “then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar.” Isa.6:6. Thus the true gospel minister often feels his entire unfitness to preach the gospel, on account of the awful corruptions of his heart; but when the gospel in its cleansing nature is applied by the Holy Spirit, to his case he goes forth willingly, and with delight preaches that gospel which he so sensibly feels the power thereof in his own heart. Every gospel minister also knows how much of a task it is to attempt to preach when he has to go to the people with a cold, stale, relation of what he knows to be sure, is truth; and how pleasant it is to preach when *his lips are touched with a live coal from off the altar*, when there is given to him a fresh view, by faith, of the doctrine of the cross. When the fire thus burns in the heart of the preacher, the people of God will see and feel the effects of the preaching. If it is a time of darkness with them, they will see the *shining of the flaming fire*, and know that the *gospel cloud* is still near as their *guide*. If it is a time of light to their soul, they will feel the evidence that the true fire is burning in the preacher, and as Israel by marking their course by the cloud, knew that they were traveling in the right way, so these by comparing their experience with this gospel smoke, know that they and the preacher are taught by the same Spirit, and that their teaching is in accordance with the word. If true gospel preaching is like the smoke which rises hot from the fire, then that preaching which is so fashionable as this day, and which is no other than a flowery composition made up in the coolness of the study, of parts, of gospel doctrine, of human reason, of the science of the schools, and of quotations from the scriptures, and from the poets, or consist of recitations of what the preacher has stored his mind with, of dead men’s brains; though it may reflect the colors of the rainbow from being opposite to Christ, the believer’s sun, and with its beauties, please the fancy of the hearers, still not being sent forth by the fire of gospel truth, being not the effect of heat, but of cold, it is nothing but *fog*. So the people of God have ever found it by its producing *chills and fevers* upon them.

Another kind of preaching, very popular, is more like a *cloud of dust* than *smoke*. It consists of exhortations to creaturely duties, and of legal threatenings for failures to perform. And as dust it clouds the eyes and obstructs the breathings, so this kind of preaching beclouds the faith of the believer, when exposed to its influence, leading his views off from Christ, and directing them to his own doings for

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comfort and acceptance, and by obscuring his views of Christ, it hinders his prayers, or obstructs the breathings of his soul.

In reference to smoke, properly so called, it is sometimes unpleasant, and to weak eyes and weak nerves it is painful; but this is only when the fire does not burn clear, or there is some obstruction in the atmosphere or otherwise to its ascending up. So when the gospel preacher is left to himself, and his mind becomes confused, his preaching is often unpleasant to gospel hearers. And when the faith of believers has become weakened by their being overcome by the world or other temptations, or when they have been exposed to the blasts of the *winds of doctrine*, the declaration of clear gospel truth becomes painful to them. But still the preaching of the gospel will be of use in such cases; for as smoke expels noxious vapors, frost, &c., and drives away mosquitoes, so faithful gospel preaching, though at first painful to the believer in a backslidden state, will be likely to produce a reaction, reclaim him from his wanderings, and expel those vapors and frosts which had preyed upon his soul. It will drive from him also those swarms of modern mendicants, which had been sucking – not his blood – but an eleven-penny bit here, and an eleven-penny bit there, whilst he was exposed to their ravages, in the darkness of *new-schoolism*, or in the swamps of *middle-groundism*. It is not the sucking of blood, but the person infused, by the mosquitoes that causes the swelling and pain; so it is not the extracting by these traveling agents of the money from the pockets of those on whom they prey, that does the mischief, but the infusing into their minds the vain idea that they are thus doing something to *help on God's work*, and the leading them to bid God-speed to this iniquitous course. Some reasons why the gospel ministry is pre-figured by smoke, I shall have occasion to notice before I close this.

I will now notice the special promise contained in this passage; namely, that “the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke &c.” The import of this evidently is, that in that day the Lord will provide all his churches with the stated ministry of the word – with “pastors after his own heart, who shall feed his people with knowledge and understanding;” for they shall be of the Lord's creating, such as the Lord shall qualify and call to the work. What then will become of the various machinery for manufacturing ministers, and the multitude which they have produced? They will all fall; no place any longer to be found for them among the churches of Christ.

As this happy day has not yet arrived, and I have no idea of men's hastening it, I will here notice an enquiry which naturally arises from this subject, relative to the present time; namely, whether it is now the duty of each church to have its own pastor, and preaching every Lord's day? That in the apostolic age, elders were ordained in every church, and the churches met regularly for worship on the first day of the week is to me clear. The Romish Church appears to have continued this as a uniform practice. Those denominations which have reformed from that church, have also generally followed the same practice; perhaps not so much in reference to apostolic example, as from their bondage to the notion of a legal Sabbath. The Baptists in England, when they began to aim at being on an equality with the other dissenting denominations, as noticed in a former number, seem also to have copied after them in this thing. As the Baptist emigrants from England to this country, have formerly, more generally settled in the Northern and Middle States, and thither their educated preachers have principally been imported; there we find a general conformity to the English Baptists. There a Baptist College was early established; and there, were early established the notions of a legal Sabbath, and of having a pastor to each church, and he somewhat educated for the work, if it was only to go to a common school, or to some supposed *Gamaliel* for a time, after his first impressions to preach.

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But the early start of the Baptists in the Southern States, appears to have been in a great measure independent of this foreign influence. Take Virginia for a specimen; a few plain preachers came here from the Middle States, and a few others the Lord soon raised under their ministry of the same uneducated stamp. The motive which these had to preach, appears to have been their love to Christ and his cause, their pay mostly persecution, and their guide, as to their field of labors, the openings of Providence; and their calls here and there, where there was an anxiety manifested to hear. Thus following the leadings of Providence, they preached one Lord's day in this place, another in that; and as the Lord raised up churches under their ministry at different places, instead of confining their pastoral care to one church, and leaving the others destitute, they preached each, to several churches exercising a pastoral care over them. Hence the difference in the customs of the Southern Baptists from those in the more Northern States and in England. The question is, which order is most correct? But say some of my Northern brethren, can there be any question upon this point, when in the apostolic age, elders were ordained in every church? Do you not hold that apostolic example is binding upon the churches in every age? I do; but there is no example, remember, for a legal Sabbath to be observed by the churches, nor for the churches to provide themselves with gifts for the ministry, or to make themselves preachers, or to establish schools to make preachers for them; that is in the scriptures; in the practices of the two Beasts there are examples enough of this sort. The case before us is similar to that of adding members. There was an instance in the church at Jerusalem of three thousand being added in one day. The number then added depended altogether on the sovereign act of the Holy Ghost in regenerating them; the number therefore can be no example for churches in after ages to imitate. The order of their being added, was then established by apostolic example, as the order in all after ages; such as being first baptized after *receiving the word with joy* and then being *added to the churches*, &c. So in the case of pastors or elders. The Master gives but one direction upon the point of providing for this office. It is this; "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into the harvest." Matt.9:37. This amounts to a prohibition of the churches attempting to provide them themselves. In accordance with this is the Apostle's testimony; namely, that the Lord Jesus when he ascended up on high, gave gifts unto men; and this, not according to the notions of men, but according to the purpose of the Father, for he received these gifts. According to this purpose, *he gave some Apostles, &c., and some pastors and teachers*. Eph.4:8-11. Consequently it is not the work of men or money to provide these. But then the ordaining to the work, those which the Lord gives for it, even to a plurality of elders in every church, is Apostolic example. The pattern for ordaining elders is given, as I think, in the case of Barnabas and Saul, Acts 13:2,3. As several worthy brethren differ from me on this point, I will beg the indulgence here to say – not to provoke disputation, but to explain my own views – that it was in defense of a cardinal point in our Old School principles, that on a former occasion, well recollected by some, I thought it important to write on this subject. I still attach more importance to the subject than some others do – not to the form, as a form simply considered – but on account of that point in our principles above referred to; namely, the perfection of the Scriptures as a Rule, both of Faith and Practice. Throw away Acts 13:2,3, as a pattern for ordaining to the ministry, and we find it appointed to ordain elders, without any direction or example by which to inform us in what this ordaining consists. And throw away Acts, chapter 6, as a pattern for appointing and setting apart to the office of deacons, and we shall have certain officers named in the apostolic churches, as in Phil.1:1 & I Tim.3:8, and no intimation given how they were introduced into the churches, what is their office, or how they are to be appointed to it. If the scriptures are thus deficient in those points, their perfection, as a Rule, is destroyed; we are at sea without compass or stars. Such a view of the revelation which God has made of the religion of his own appointing I cannot admit. To return to my subject; admit Acts 13:2,3, to be a pattern in the case, and we shall find the order for setting apart to the ministry, harmonizing with the testimony that the gifts are

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imparted by Christ according to the purpose of the Father, for they must first be designated to the office by the Holy Ghost; that is, in their special call to the work, before being ordained. Thus as is salvation, so is the gospel minister, the work of the *Three that bear record in heaven*.

Here is the grand error, upon this point, of the English and our Northern Baptists, they appear to have taken the example of ordaining those gifts which the Lord gave and manifested to the primitive churches as a pattern for providing themselves with a supply of preachers. And they not only have absorbed all the *gifts for exhortation* in furnishing their supply of preachers, but in many instances where those have offered who did not possess the requisite gifts, they have concluded that by sending them to some famed *Gamaliel*, or school, or college, an image of the gift might be carved out of the candidate's mind, or be stamped upon it by communicated ideas. Thus have they presumed to usurp that prerogative which the Lord has reserved in his own hands. And this awful presumption, with its accompanying *filthiness and idolatry*, has, lamentable to say, not been staid at the North, but all its evil consequences has overspread the South and West.

If it should be asked, Why are not the churches now as fully supplied with gifts as were those in the early ages of the gospel? I answer, because the Lord hath so purposed, hence the churches were left to corrupt their ways, and were *allured and brought into the wilderness* {Hosea 2:14,} which is of course a state of considerable privations. See also Psa.81:13-16. Hence when the Lord shall have performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and upon Jerusalem, he not only *will give her, her vineyards from thence*, {from the wilderness,} Hosea 2:15, but he *will* again “create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, &c.,” will furnish every church with a full supply of gifts of his own providing, and which he himself will call into active exercise. And this promise fully sustains the position I have taken; for it clearly presupposes that such was not the state of the churches previous to the period intended.

One more enquiry I must anticipate; namely, whether during the continuance of the wilderness state of the church, those gifts which the Lord does impart to the churches for the ministry, should be confined, each, to one particular church, or whether those endowed with them, should labor to feed the sheep and lambs of Christ, wherever they find them *bleating* for food, within the reasonable range of the locations respectively assigned to each by Providence? To me it appears clear, that the scriptural direction and example is in favor of a *pastor or teachers* extending the sphere of his labors beyond the limits of his one church. We read, it is true, of the elders of the church at *Ephesus*, and of elders being *ordained in every church*. These scriptures show that they are to take the *oversight* of the churches where their lot is cast, but cannot, I conceive, be justly construed to imply that their labors were to be confined each to one church. Hence, Paul's address to the Ephesian elders; he says, “Take heed to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.” What are we to understand by *all the flock* in this case? The Apostle himself explains it in the next clause. “To feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Will any Old School Baptist say, that the *church of God which he has purchased with his own blood*, and which of course Christ *loved and gave himself for*, was no other than that particular branch or church planted at Ephesus? I think not. The direction then must be general, to feed the church of God over which the Holy Ghost had made them *overseers*, that is to labor where he specially calls them, according to Acts 13:2, or in other words, wherever the Holy Ghost gives them to see it is their duty to go, there do the work of an *overseer* in taking *heed of all the flock, to feed*, not the goats, but the *church of God*, &c. Peter's direction to the elders which were *among* those to whom he wrote, is equally general – not to feed their *respective flocks* – that appears to be a more modern idea –

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but to *feed the flock of God*, not everywhere; that those elders could not do – but *which is among you*, &c. That is, the *flock of God is to be fed*, and wherever the elders find it, *among them* or themselves among it, let their attention be turned to this work.

I now leave this, which may be considered a long digression, and come to the last clause of the verse under consideration; namely, “for upon all the glory shall be a defense.” This evidently has reference to the preceding part of the verse. The glory may be the glory of that purified state of the church, when the glory of the Lord shall have arisen upon her, and the Gentiles {the nations} shall come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising. Isa.60:1-3. The defense, the Lord having set watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem that will never hold their peace – that will see eye to eye, {Isa.62:6,} and the light of the gospel being so clear, the enemy will no more be able to make inroads with his *other gospels*, or to set up in the churches his ministers *transformed into the apostles of Christ*. Or the glory may be, the peculiar glory and light of the gospel in that day; and the defense, the *dispensation of the gospel* being still committed to men of *like passions* with others; this *treasure* will still be in *earthen vessels*. And herein is the reason I was to give, why the gospel ministry is compared to *smoke*. The smoke is not the pure fire, but the heat and light of the fire ascending through the evaporation it causes from the fuel. So the preached gospel is not the pure revelation of God which he makes of himself in Christ; but it is that revelation and truth irradiating the human mind, and through that denser medium shining forth for the instruction and comfort of the people of God with a tempered brightness, so that the *word of life* as thus *declared and manifested unto us*, we mortals, can *look upon, and handle*, can examine it deliberately and composedly. See I John 1:1-3. Hence by this *defense* upon the glorious brightness of the divine truth of the *gospel of the Son of God*, it is tempered to suit mortal vision.

S.TROTT.

Fairfax Court House, Va., April 27th, 1837.

PART 8

Verse 6: “And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from the storm, and from rain.”

From what is said here, and in other passages of Scripture, it is evident that what is called the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, has its antitype under the gospel dispensation, and that this anti-type, as to its external protecting coverings, and to its glory, will be more fully displayed at a further day. In Ezekiel 37:27, having reference to the same period with the above, God says, “My tabernacle also shall be with them.” In Rev.21:3, it is said, “Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them.” This anti-typical tabernacle the Apostle describes as one which “the Lord pitched, and not man,” {Heb.8:3,} and again as being a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands; that is to say, not of this building, and of which Christ is the High Priest. Heb.9:11.

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This anti-type is what we have now to show. By the tabernacle proper, that is the *curtains of fine linen* and the *boards of the tabernacle*, {Exod.40:18,} together with what it contained, I understand the gospel church, with its Head and under its peculiar dispensation prefigured; by the several coverings, that protection which is provided for it. The several parts of the type we will briefly notice. First, the ark of testimony, with its enclosed tables of the Law, and covered over with the *mercy seat of pure gold* represented the Law as magnified and made honorable by the obedience of Christ, and as covered over, or divided from his people by that perfect and divine atonement which he made, *pure*, and *independent* of all the works, exercises, feelings, &c., of creatures. As the Ark with the mercy seat and cherubims upon it, the golden pot of manna, the golden censor, with Aaron's rod that budded, were all placed in the most holy place where alone the high priest had access, so Christ as the head of his church, is seated on the throne of his glory, where he remains as their *life*, as their *righteousness* to perfume their prayers, as the *fountain* of gifts, sovereignly to dispense them to his church; and where he will ever remain to be seen as their *bread of life*. As the high priest entered into the holiest once every year, not without blood, &c., so Christ as the High Priest of spiritual Israel, *entered in once into Heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and to appear in the presence of God for us.* Heb.9:7,12 & 24. As the Ark was brought forth and carried in the center of the hosts of Israel in their journeyings, so Christ walketh in the *midst of the seven golden candlesticks*, and is with his churches in all their difficulties and tribulation.

Second. In the holy place where the golden candlestick, the incense altar and the table of shew-bread; so in the gospel church and in its gifts for the ministry, we have the golden candle stick and its lamps burning, to give light to all that are in the house, and answering to the pure olive oil, which the bowls of the candlestick contained to feed the light, we have the Holy Spirit who dwells with and is in the saints, and who feeds the gifts for the ministry, making them useful. In the ministry of the word, and in the supper is held forth as the Lord our righteousness, by which the people of God are encouraged to go to the throne of grace, as if encompassed with a cloud of smoking incense; and is thus also held to view as the *bread of life*. The priests, the sons of Aaron only might enter the holy place; to them it appertained to *order* and *trim* the lamps, to burn incense on the golden altar, and to set in order the shew-bread on the table and to eat thereof; so none but believers, the sons of Christ our Spiritual Aaron, and who are *made kings and priests unto God and the Lamb*, have a right in the church or to interfere in its institutions, and it is their province, being in the church, to order and trim the lamps, to judge of the gifts, and to see that they give true light; and no stranger might come nigh to meddle with these things; yea, not even the Levites, lest they and the priests both die. See Num.18:3,5 & 7. How will mission societies, mission boards, theological schools &c., compare with this ordering of the furniture, and Law of the tabernacle?

Third. The Altar for burnt offerings, was in the outer-court, before and near the door of the tabernacle, and the brazen laver between that and the door of the tabernacle. The altar being thus without the tabernacle, taught first that Christ and him crucified is to be preached to the world at large as the only way of salvation; second, that the atonement or offering of Christ should be applied and received by faith before a person should be admitted into the church. As the altar was near the door of the tabernacle, so there needs not much space between a person's laying the hand of his faith on Christ as his great sacrifice, and coming to the door of the church. As the altar and its vessels were under the charge of the priests alone, {Num.18:3 & 5,} so the preaching of Christ crucified to the world, belongs only to believers, and to be under the direction of the *royal priesthood*, the church, and no stranger should be

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allowed to interfere in these things, even though he would give his hundred dollars, twice told, for directorship.

Fourth. As the laver was placed between the altar and the door of the tabernacle for the priests to wash their hands and feet at before they entered into the tabernacle, or came near to the altar, Ex.40:30-32; so believers, notwithstanding their having felt an application of the blood of Christ for pardon, should have clean hands and feet, an upright walk and conduct, before they are allowed to enter and enjoy the privileges of the church, or to minister at the altar. The Master saith, “He that is washed, {that is in the fountain of a Savior’s blood,} needeth not, save to wash his feet;” implying that if the walk of a believer is clean, he is altogether clean.

I now pass to the tabernacle proper. Here a difficulty presents itself as to which is innermost, the boards, or the curtains of fine linen. The general idea is that the boards are innermost, thus it has been described, and thus Calmet, and others have given drawings of it; and so any of us, no doubt would have made and set it up, if left to our own discretion. But Moses had the *pattern showed to him in the mount*. From all the examination I have been able to make of the descriptions given in the word concerning the tabernacle, I find nothing warranting this general idea; but by comparing Exodus 36:13 & 14, with 40:18 & 19, I am constrained to believe that the tabernacle of fine linen was set up innermost, and the boards being put together by their tenons and bars, formed a protection to it; the tent of goat’s hair, with the other coverings, being over the whole.

Hence the tabernacle of fine linen is first to be noticed. “Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen and blue and purple and scarlet; with cherubims of cunning work shalt thou make them.” Ex.26:1. By this tabernacle I understand the everlasting covenant, as being the *heavenly places* in which the people of God are *blessed with all spiritual blessings*, {Eph.1:3,} to be represented. Parkhurst, in his Lexicon on the word *shesh*, here rendered *fine linen*, makes it so named to denote the cheerful, vivid whiteness which linen is susceptible of. The root signifies to be *sprightly, cheerful, to rejoice*, &c. It therefore fitly represents that peace and joy which a soul feels when by faith it views itself sheltered under the provisions of the everlasting covenant, or enabled to take hold of its better promises. It was *twined linen*, made strong; so the covenant in all its provisions is made *sure*, and all its blessings ultimately connected together, not to be separated, its *promises* are not *yea and nay*. These curtains were also made with blue, azure, or sky blue. So the blessings of this covenant, are not earthly, but heavenly and spiritual. They were also made *with scarlet and purple*. So the everlasting covenant, whilst it recognizes the inflexible demands and purity of the *fiery law*, shows also the purple fountain of a Savior’s blood as having satisfied the law’s demands, removed its wrath, and changed it, from being an object of dread, to an object of delight and confidence to the believers.

These curtains were also wrought with cherubims of cunning work. There a difficulty occurs as to what the cherubs were, and consequently as to what they represent. The literal idea of the term, may be *as a child, or young man, to increase in knowledge, or to become great*, &c. If we look for a description of them, we find none in the history of the tabernacle or temple, excepting that they had wings and faces. In Ez.1:5-12, compared with 10:6-9, we have a particular description of the cherubim which he saw, and which corresponds with the *four beasts* or more properly four *living creatures*, of Rev.4:6-8, and which are generally thought to be like the cherubims on the mercy seat. By turning to Rev.5:8-10, it is evident these unite with the Elders in worshipping the Lamb, and in saying, “Thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood, out of every kindred, tongue and people, &c.” Hence the cherubims could be designed to

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represent, neither the Trinity in union with the man Christ, or angels, for these were not redeemed out of the *kindreds, people and nations*. They must represent some chosen from among men. And from their standing upon the mercy seat which represents the atonement of Christ, one on the one end and the other, on the other, with their faces inward looking toward the mercy seat, I think the prophets which prophesied before the coming of Christ, and the Apostles are intended, or rather the prophetic gifts; hence Christ is spoken of as the *foundation of the apostles and prophets*. Eph.2:20. The appearance and several faces of these cherubims, were designed to represent the qualifications of those for their office; but I will now take time to particularize. As the apostolic stands at the head of the several gifts for the ministry, so through them I understand the ordinary gifts according to their measure represented. But corresponding to the cherubims on these curtains, we find cherubims and palm trees carved on the wall of Solomon's temple. I Kings 6:29. And corresponding to these we find Ezekiel describing the cherubims and palm trees carved on the wall of the temple of which he had a vision. Ez.4:1,18 & 19. As these cherubims were so intimately connected with palm trees, so that each of the faces of a cherub described looked toward a palm tree, and as palm trees seems intended, as from Ps.92:12, and Songs 7:7 & 8, to represent gospel churches, they seemed intended to represent ordinary gospel ministers. These cherubs had only two faces, *the face of a man*, denoting that they possessed understanding, and the *face of a lion* to denote their boldness in declaring the truth and testimony of God, and each face looking toward a palm tree to denote their entire relation to, and dependence on the churches. Therefore they are not our modern missionaries. Whether these cherubs had the bodily appearance of a man, to denote the ministers of the gospel being men of like passions with others; *straight feet* and *divided hoof*, to denote the steadfastness and correct walk which ought to belong to a minister, and wings to denote their soaring above the earth and earthly considerations in the ministry of the word, as those described, Ez.1:6-12, had, is not said. But from their bearing the same name it is presumable they had the same general appearance. Now from the cherubims being wrought on these curtains we are taught that the gifts for the ministry are an important provision in the everlasting covenant.

Next to, and connected with the tabernacle were the boards of shittim wood, overlaid with gold, and fastened together by tenons and bars, so as to form one building. These boards, being of incorruptible wood, and overlaid with gold, and thus closely connected together, represented the whole mediation of Christ in its various parts, and as embracing the union of his divine and human natures. As the tabernacle was thus encompassed with these boards, so by the mediation of Christ the church is secured and the everlasting covenant is sealed and its blessings made sure to the heirs of promise. The sides only were enclosed with the boards, the top only being left open, teaching that the mediation of Christ was not designed to secure to the people of God an earthly inheritance, nor to confine their views and expectations here but to lead them to look forward toward a heavenly and eternal inheritance; and also to raise their hopes and expectations heavenward for their salvation and defense. The east side was not enclosed with boards, but pillars of the same wood, and overlaid in the same manner with gold were placed on that side; and on these were suspended for the door of the tabernacle, a *hanging of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needle work*; this to afford a passage in and out for the priests.

The hanging, like the curtains of the tabernacle represented the spiritual blessings with which the people of God are here blessed, as before showed. But no cherubims on it; ministerial gifts are not to be manifested, but in the church; neither are they to be the door of entrance into the church. This hanging was wrought with needle work and suspended on the pillars, to show that the blessings thereby represented must not be merely learned but *wrought* in the experience of a person, and he brought to

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hang entirely on the mediation of Christ, without any other standing as to his acceptance with God; in order to his being entitled to the privileges of the house of God.

I now pass to notice the coverings of the tabernacle. The first was the tents of goat's hair, that is curtains made of goat's hair spun. This formed a tent well calculated to turn the weather. As goat's hair is distinct from *sheep's clothing*, there may be some difficulty as to what is to be understood by it. It may denote that outward protection to the church and religion of Christ derived from the world, signified by *the earth's helping the woman*. Rev.12:16. Or rather I think, it denotes the worldly deportment of believers; that is, their intercourse with the world, and in the business thereof. This being upright and harmless as it ought to be, is well calculated to secure to them toleration of their religion and protection to their persons. This may properly be denoted by goat's hair; first, to distinguish it from their religious acts and exercise, more properly termed sheep's clothing, and because this intercourse is the actings of the natural life, and relating to its concerns; though it ought always to be under the influence of their religion. Second, because when believers look at their own outward deportment they see nothing good in it, and often think it bespeaks their being goats. Hence the surprise of those on the *right hand*; Matt.25:37-38.

Over this tent was a covering of ram's skins died red. This was calculated to denote the *fiery law* of God and the influence it often has in restraining the enemies of the cross from doing violence to the people of God.

Outside of all was a covering of badger's skin. There is a great diversity among Lexicographers and translators as to the true meaning of the word *theshashim* rendered by our translators *badgers*. That badgers were not intended is pretty evident from the fact that they are northern animals and not likely to be found in Arabia. Calmet thinks a color resembling sky colors was intended. The Editor of Calmet suggests that seals were the animals intended. Pagninus gives as the meaning of the word, the yew-tree, hence supposes the bark of that tree used, but quotes the Targum as thinking an animal of many colors designed. Parkhurst gives *azure blue* as the meaning, but thinks it a lighter sky color, than the color generally called blue, and suiting the more ordinary appearance of the sky. This also was the rendering of all the ancient translators. Hence the two leading ideas on the subject have been; on the one hand, that something coarse was intended, on the other, that the colors of the heavens are designed. To us the most natural idea would be that this outside covering designed to protect the others from the weather was something coarse. And in reference to the church, as it has existed, it is evident that its having been led to assume the coarseness incident to a wilderness and obscure state has been a great protection to it. But to me it is no less certain, that, that heavenly and divine interposition {denoted by the sky colors of this covering, which after the destruction of the Beast and the churches coming up out of the wilderness, will be so clearly seen as having been exerted in her preservation during the reign of the Beast, and now so gloriously exerted in her deliverance, the *God of Jeshurun being seen riding upon the heavens in her help and in his excellency on the skies* {Deut.33:26,} will strike a dread upon all who remain unregenerated, and deter them from making any attempts to annoy the people of God; as the miraculous deliverance of Israel from Egypt, struck a dread upon the nations around. Hence I believe it was designed of God that these two ideas should be attached to that word, suiting the two states of the church, its oppressed, and its more glorious state.

The promise in the passage under consideration contains two leading ideas. 1st. As suiting also the promise already quoted from Ezekiel 37:27. "My tabernacle shall be with them," it implies that as the

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tabernacle was, in all its parts made according to the pattern showed in the mount, and of God's appointing, no human planning about it, so that the church, when it shall have been washed from all its defilements, and brought out of the wilderness, shall be in all things conformed to the word of God, that God shall then be worshipped and served, not according to the plans of men, but according to his own revealed order, and by his own appointed institutions. 2nd. That then the protecting coverings of the church will have their full effect to preserve the people and religion of God from every annoyance, so that, according to Isa. 11:9, "They shall not hurt, nor destroy in all God's holy mountain."

We are not to understand by this that the Church of Christ has not now, all these protecting coverings for her defense. But as I have before noted in the course of my remarks upon this chapter, God has left his church and people to experience these buffetings for their good, and to reclaim them from their base wanderings from him; and that they might experience these severe rebukes from those *lovers* which they have gone after in their conformity to human religions. God, as he hardened the heart of Pharaoh, has suffered the hearts of the enemies of truth to become enthralled by their false systems of religion, has *given them up to believe a lie*, and thus to become emboldened to assault the truth and people of God, in the face of those awful threatenings in his word against them. But then these false systems by which men are led to think that they are doing God service in reviling and persecuting the saints, will all have been swept away in the destruction of the *man of sin*, and the saints will be shielded by a correct walk, protected by the declarations of the divine law, and upheld by the manifest interposition of an arm almighty, so that none will dare to molest them. May this glorious period soon arrive, and may we in the mean time, have grace to take patiently all the ignominy and persecutions that may be heaped upon us by those who are rearing the Image of the Beast.

S.TROTT.

Fairfax Court House, Va., July 7th, 1837.