



The Angelophone (Angelico) Records

An Innovation in its time

With the success of the Photo Drama of Creation it was realized that records were now becoming very popular, so popular in fact that it appears that the Watchtower (IBSA) could not get enough phonograph players from their suppliers for the Brethren to play the records from the Photo Drama.

To overcome the shortage of phonograph players following the release of The Eureka Drama (a scaled down version of the Photo Drama of Creation which combined recordings and slides that could be used in smaller areas and in brethren's homes), the IBSA made an arrangement with the brothers who had formed the "Angelophone Phonogram and Recording company" to supply players and recordings.

The first mention of it was in Zions Watchtower July 15, 1916 (not long before Brother Russell's Death). There were three models available at below wholesale prices: The ACME model, retailed for \$25.00 (USD), wholesale \$12,50, with a special price for the Brethren of \$8.33. The top of the range model was the Cabinet Model, retail \$100 (USD), wholesale \$50.00, and special price for brethren (Watchtower readers) of \$33.33 (R5914).

Recordings of hymns and a special hymn book later became available, but this was not until after Brother Russell's death. In the Watchtower of November 1, 1916 (the same issue that announced Brother Russell's death, R5988), these records were advertised, 50 hymns on 50 records. Also released was the music in a book format called Old Fireside Hymns.

These Recordings were sung by the Renowned Baritone "Henry Burr." On the flip side there were two minute discourses given by Brother Russell explaining each hymn. On the right-hand pages of the book were the words and music, while on the left-hand pages, was the text of the short discourses given by Brother Russell. Henry Burr (1882-1941) was a Canadian singer of popular songs from the 20th

century and an early radio performer. His birth name was Harry McClaskey, Henry Burr was one of his pseudonyms.

One thing to note was mentioned in the Watchtower of December 15, 1917: although the society was not financially involved in the manufacture of these Phonograms, they still worked with the owners (brethren) and the Society was still responsible in financing the production of the 50 Record Set. The WTBS seemed to have discontinued the sale/promotion of these Phonograms and recordings by sometime in 1919. You can still purchase these recordings and Hymn books on the Internet from collectors, although none of the records are legible to play and certainly are indecipherable.

Example of One of the Sermons

AH50, "A Thousand Years! Earth's Coming Glory!"

MESSIAH'S Kingdom repeatedly referred to throughout the Old Testament was the center of all Jewish hopes. But the fact that it will last a thousand years was not mentioned: it was merely Messiah's Day. The Holy Spirit by St. Peter first declared, "A day with the Lord is as a thousand years." St. Paul

IN THIS ISSUE

The Angelophone (Angelico) Records	1
Viruses, Wars, Threats of Extinction	2
John McClintock (1814-1870)	5
Our Lord's Return and Presence	6
Keeping the Faith	9
Mediator and Advocate	11
Note from Reader	11
Conventions	12
RVIC Bible Now Available	12

did not mention the thousand years, but merely proclaimed Messiah's Kingdom, and that He would reign victoriously until He shall have put down all opposition to God's will (1 Corinthians 15:25). It is in the book of Revelation that we have the clear statements that Messiah will reign for a thousand years; that His faithful Bride will reign with Him, a "Royal Priesthood"; that during that thousand years Satan will be bound and the whole world will be granted a judgment or trial, whose results will be life-eternal or death-eternal.



while Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the faithful of the Prophets down to John the Baptist will be the earthly rulers (Matthew 11:11). The call of Spiritual Israelites to joint-heirship with Jesus in His Spiritual Kingdom belongs to this Gospel Age only. The Church's change of nature from human to Divine begins with the begetting of the Holy Spirit and will be completed in the resurrection change. St. Paul explains this and declares, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 15:50). He also tells us that the earthly rulers of the

future cannot be perfected until after the Church's resurrection (Hebrews 11:38-40). So also, Jesus declared, that the least one in the Kingdom would be greater than John the Baptist, the greatest of the Prophets (Matthew 11:11).

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Bible chronology shows that we have been in the great Seventh Day, or Thousand-Year Sabbath, for now forty-four years. This period is called the Millennial Dawn. Nearly all the inventions that make our day so wonderful have come to light during this dawning time. The Bible tells that, while a dark cloud will supervene — "a Time of Trouble such as never was" — nevertheless speedily thereafter the glorious Kingdom of Messiah will, like a sunburst, enlighten and bless all the families of the earth (Galatians 3:29, Matthew 13:43, 24:15-21).

back to full harmony with God and to everlasting life (Revelation 20). While the Jews, according to their light, looked forward to Messiah's Kingdom as an earthly one, in which every man would "sit under his own vine and fig tree," and "the wilderness would blossom as the rose," and God's footstool be made glorious — the Church, on the contrary, was given a different, a spiritual conception, of the Kingdom.



We see the propriety of this: Messiah's Kingdom is to be of two parts, the spiritual, which will be invisible to men, but all-powerful; and the earthly, which will be visible to men. Christ and his faithful followers, His Bride, will constitute the spiritual Kingdom;

Viruses, Wars, and Threats of Extinction

"Men fainting [expiring] for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world [the inhabited earth]" (Luke 21:26, Revised Version Improved and Corrected).

According to Johns Hopkins University Office of Critical Event Preparedness and Response, the virus known as COVID-19 first appeared in Wuhan, a city in China, in December 2019. Although health officials are still tracing (as of the beginning of April) the exact source of this new coronavirus, early hypotheses thought it may be linked to a seafood market in Wuhan, China. However, a study conducted

in late January noted that the first reported case on December 1, 2019, appeared in an individual who had no link to the seafood market. Investigations are ongoing as to how this virus originated and spread.

While coronaviruses are common in different animals, it is rare that an animal coronavirus can infect humans. These types of viruses can cause colds or other mild respiratory (nose, throat, lung) illnesses.

They also can cause serious diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). COVID-19 is thought to be more like SARS. In 2003, an outbreak of SARS started in China and spread to more than two dozen countries before ending in 2004. The World Health Organization (WHO) listed 8,098 people worldwide who became sick with SARS during the 2003 outbreak. Of these, 774 (9.6%) died.

SARS and COVID-19 illustrate how a disease within a country (mostly in Africa or Asia) can easily spread and grow into a pandemic — an epidemic of infectious disease that spreads through human populations across multiple continents or even worldwide.

Pandemics in History

The archaeological site now called “Hamin Mangha” is one of the best-preserved prehistoric (5,000 years ago) sites in northeastern China. Archaeological and anthropological study indicates that an epidemic happened so quickly that there was no time for proper burials, and the site was not inhabited again. The bodies of the dead were stuffed inside a house that was later burned down. No age group was spared, as the skeletons of juveniles, young adults, and middle-age people were found inside the house.

The first recorded pandemic, the Justinian Plague, came in the sixth century. Eight centuries later came the Black Plague pandemic. Both plagues were likely spread by fleas living on infected rats coming into human contact (bubonic plague). Fifty to seventy million people died of the three-century long Black Death. Multiple pogroms and massacres against minority groups, especially Jews, were launched by those ignorant of the true source of the plagues.

Smallpox, cholera, and bubonic plague became worldwide diseases in the 19th century until English physician John Snow mapped houses in London that were affected by a cholera outbreak. His work showed that the disease developed in, and was spread by, contaminated water.

Some historians cite the so-called Spanish Flu pandemic in the early 20th century as the most significant contribution to ending World War I. According to the American Center for Disease Control, the influenza pandemic infected one-third of the world population of 1.6 billion and killed over 100 million.

By the middle of the 20th century, many diseases which had caused these pandemics were no longer a threat due to significant advances in knowledge: Edward Jenner developed a vaccine against smallpox; rats and mosquitoes were controlled; and public sanitation was improved. No single discovery was as significant in fighting infectious diseases as penicillin.



Henry Kissinger

Unfortunately, this ease of prevention led to complacency in world preparation against such things as coronaviruses, claims Professor Susan Craddock from the Institute for Global Studies at the University of Minnesota and author of *Diseases: Emerging Infections in the Global City*. With 80 percent of one-year olds in the world now vaccinated, most parents have never see their child struggling to breathe through whooping cough or unable to walk when polio struck.. As an example, when the Soviet Union dissolved, Russia’s healthcare systems deteriorated, including the national immunization program. The country soon experienced a serious epidemic of diphtheria that lasted for years.

Post-Coronavirus World Trends

The International Crisis Group (www.crisisgroup.org) works independently to prevent wars and shape policies that “will build a more peaceful world.” The group’s website cautions: “While the COVID-19 pandemic presents a potentially era-defining challenge to public health and the global economy, its **long- and short-term consequences for deadly conflict are less well understood.**”

Henry Kissinger, former U.S. Secretary of State and former National Security Adviser, recently wrote: “The founding legend of modern government is a walled city protected by powerful rulers, sometimes despotic, other times benevolent, yet always strong enough to protect the people from an external enemy. ... As the world emerges from the current crisis, the effort to overcome the effects of COVID-19 plague will require restraint on all sides — in both domestic politics and international diplomacy ... Failure could set the world on fire.”

Since the last ISIS strongholds in Syria fell in early 2019, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a Kurdish-led militia that partnered with the U.S.-led coalition, has largely been left to deal with tens of thousands of ISIS detainees and affiliated family members. Many of the detainees’ home countries refuse to take them back. Humanitarian workers describe these sites as ridden with tuberculosis and perilously overcrowded, with one speaking of “dramatic mortality rates.” This shows how the global outbreak has the potential to wreak world havoc, trigger widespread unrest, and severely test international relations.

According to the Crisis Group, five dangerous trends could arise as the pandemic wanes:

(1) Vulnerable populations in war areas may be unable to get relief (Libya, Venezuela, Iran, Gaza, Guinea, Yemen).

(2) The reduced capacity of international institutions to relieve populations in conflict areas due to the need for domestic spending (Middle East, West Africa, China).

(3) Social Order disruptions emerging from ongoing health-care concerns, xenophobic sentiment against immigrants, and bias against ethnic groups, e.g. the “Chinese” virus or the Islamic Republic “biological aggression.”

(4) Political Exploitation by despotic governments, jihadist groups, and human rights abuses.

(5) Major Power relations as the global systems realign in areas such as supply chains, humanitarian aid, and sharing of technical cooperation.

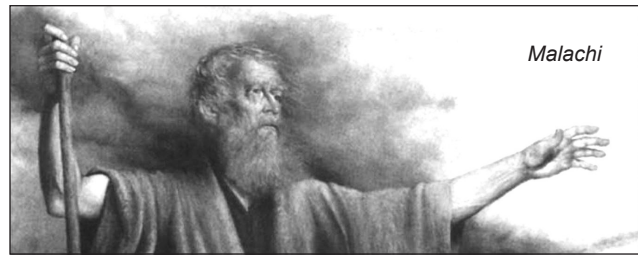
This pandemic has the potential to be long and especially draining on world resources. At this writing we are just beginning to see the impact on unemployment, health care, and other key parts of society. How long and how costly will it be? And when will the next such crisis come?

No More Pain

The Bible pictures Jehovah as a Great Physician who cures from disease: “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases” (Psalms 103:3). The Prophet Isaiah foretold a time when “the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity” (Isaiah 33:24). “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert” (Isaiah 35:5, 6).

Pestilences are the natural consequences of sin and the death sentence passed upon Adam and his progeny. Those who received the benefits of Jesus’ miracles and were healed of their afflictions eventually died. It was not yet time for these miracles to bring eternal blessings. They did, however, offer insight into the miraculous power that will be used on behalf of all people in Jehovah’s kingdom.

Jehovah justly pronounced the curse of death upon mankind. But He intends to remove the curse eventually: “There shall be no more curse” (Revelation 22:3). This is guaranteed through the ransom price provided by Jesus. During this age, the benefits of Jesus’ death accrue only to those invited to share in his sufferings as an offering for sin. When this group, his bride (Revelation 17:7-9) is complete, there will no need to sustain this present evil world (Galatians 1:4) and attendant sickness, pain, and death. God will reverse these conditions in his kingdom, as described in Revelation 21:4: “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” The Apostle Paul says that the reign of Christ and his Church will continue until it has destroyed not only sickness, but death itself. “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Corinthians 15:25, 26). The destruction of death must include the demise of disease as well.



The signs we see on earth today indicate that the promised time of deliverance of the world from sin and death is near. The Prophet Malachi foretells that the Great Physician, “the Sun of righteousness [shall] arise with healing in his wings,” and he connects it in time to the day of the Lord, or the day of Jehovah. He says, “Behold, the day [of Jehovah] cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings” (Malachi 4:1, 2).

Jesus said that this day of the Lord (Jehovah), known also as a “time of trouble such as never was” (Daniel 12:1), marks the end of the age, but not the end of the world (Matthew 24:3, 21). The current experience with the Coronavirus is one more sign that we are now in this foretold time of trouble and of the end of the age. Soon, the healing kingdom of Christ will be established in the earth. All who are in their graves will be raised and given an opportunity for life without disease, without death (John 5:28, 29). All mankind will be granted free access to the one and only true fountain of youth: “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come, And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17). To this unmatched promise the great and gracious God of the universe has set his personal seal. “And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful” (Revelation 21:5).

No matter how much we see the world’s lack of progress in fixing itself, we can know the final outcome. Others tremble, we should not. The phrase “do not be afraid” appears 365 times in the Bible. It is a daily reminder to us to live without fear. As long as Jehovah permits things to continue, let us be ambassadors for Christ in every aspect of our lives (2 Corinthians 5:20):

- Maintain high personal integrity
 - Be alert to the dignity of others
 - Be objective in our judgments
 - Be independent from the world in our thinking (based on Biblical principles)
 - Focus on the character development of others
 - Be sympathetic to the major problems of today
- “Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life” (Revelation 2:10)!

John McClintock (1814-1870)

A Christian Scholar

John McClintock was born on 27th October 1814 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His parents, John McClintock and Martha McMackin, were immigrants from Scotland. He started out working in his father's bookstore, then in 1830 he left his family and moved to New York to take a job as a bookkeeper at the Methodist Book Concern. It was at this time that he converted to Methodism and became interested in becoming a minister.

He began his studies at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, however ill health caused him to abandon his studies in his first year. He returned home to Philadelphia and in 1832 recommenced his studies at the University of Pennsylvania. In his zeal he completed four years' worth of studies in just three, graduating with high honors in 1835. Upon completing his studies, he had a brief role as a Methodist Pastor in a small church in Jersey City, New Jersey. He left this position due to severe problems with his throat, which affected him for the rest of his life.

In 1836 he moved to Carlisle, Pennsylvania to take up work as an assistant professor of Mathematics at Dickson College. He remained there till 1848, during which time he became the Professor of Mathematics in 1837 and then Professor of Latin and Greek in 1840. He continued to do some preaching at this time when his throat would manage it and began to protest against slavery and the Mexican War.

In his personal life at this time he married Caroline Augusta Wakeman in 1836 and had two children, Emory and Augusta. He was arrested for instigating a riot over slavery in 1847. This riot enabled the rescue of many runaway slaves, the trial attracted a lot of attention, and led to him being acquitted. He remained at Dickson college for one more year after this before resigning to take the role of editor for the Methodist Quarterly Review. Despite leaving Dickson College he remained on good terms with them and served as a trustee from 1849-1859.

He remained in his role as editor till 1856 during which time he brought a high intellectual quality to the publication, particularly with his introducing essays discussing the works of the French Positivist Philosopher Auguste Comte, whose beliefs focused on recognizing only what could be proven by science. McClintock believed that whilst his science was very sound, that it showed that science was limited in what answers it

could give for human questions, which left a gap that only religion could fill. His essays actually gained the attention and respect of Comte and they ended up forming an unlikely connection. In 1850 his wife Caroline passed away and in 1851 he married Catherine Wilkins Stevenson Emory. Together they had one daughter, Anne, in 1859.

He was offered the Presidency of Wesleyan University in 1851, which he turned down, and Troy University in 1855, which he also declined, preferring to remain in his role as editor. In 1856 he left that role and became the Pastor of St. Paul's Methodist Church in New York. From there, in 1860, he moved to Paris where he was Pastor of the American Chapel, remaining there until 1864. However, in 1867, at the request of Daniel Drew, the founder of Drew Theological Seminary, he became the first President of what would eventually become Drew University, in Madison New Jersey. One of the first things he did upon assuming this role was to organize the purchase of literature from Europe on a large range of topics, but with a particular focus on theology. He also donated some of his own books to the collection.

He devoted much of his free time to studying, translating German theological books into English, and authoring his own Latin and Greek textbooks. His largest and most influential work was undertaken at Drew University, where he became associated with Dr. James Strong. Together they co-authored their *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, now commonly referred to as McClintock and Strong's, along with 200 assistants. He did not live to see the completion of this project as he died three years into it in 1870 when they had only completed the first four of the original 10 volumes. Dr. Strong completed the remaining six volumes and the additional two supplementary documents.

It has been said that John McClintock through his work as a preacher, teacher, editor, and author, did more than any other man to raise the standing of the Methodist church, which at the time was in its infancy and had little respect from the more prominent denominations. He also brought a higher level of intellect to the church itself. His work continues to be influential to this day and has helped to make theology available to the common man. Br. Charles Russell used the information that John McClintock had gleaned in quite a number of his articles.



John McClintock, 1814-1870

Our Lord's Return and Presence

The Time Has Come

Jesus promised he would return for his disciples. We see this unambiguous promise in John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

We may take several salient points from Jesus words here:

- (1) He will return to receive us to himself!
- (2) He will prepare a "place" for us!
- (3) This promise is to be a comfort to us — "Let not your heart be troubled."

Of course, it is natural to wonder, how long before Jesus would return? During Jesus' ministry, this question came up. Jesus discusses it and gives us a great deal of information about his return.

We find it in Matthew 24:3. Jesus' disciples asked this question: "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

Reading this as it comes to us in most of our English versions, we interpret it to mean, what are the signs preceding Jesus' coming that indicate it is close? However, when we scrutinize Jesus' answer in the Greek text we find the meaning somewhat different.

The Greek word translated "coming" is *parousia* (Greek, παρουσία). *Parousia* means "presence," not "coming." There are a few translations that pick up on this significant change.

"And as he was sitting on the MOUNT OF OLIVES, the DISCIPLES came to him privately saying, "Tell us, when these things will be?" and "What will be the SIGN of THY presence, and of the CONSUMMATION of the AGE?" (Diaglott)

"And, as he was sitting upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him, privately, saying — Tell us, when these things shall be, and what the sign of thy presence, and the conclusion of the age" (Emphasized Bible, Rotherham).

There is no controversy about what *parousia* means. In fact the meaning is so plain and powerful that Joseph Rotherham devoted an appendix entry about explaining his own translation of the word. Here is a brief excerpt of what he wrote:

"In this edition the word *parousia* is uniformly rendered "presence" ("coming," as a representative of this word, being set aside). The original term occurs twenty-four times in the N.T.,¹ ... The sense of 'presence' is so plainly shewn by the contrast with "absence" (implied in 2 Corinthians 10:10, and expressed in Philippians 2:12) that the question naturally arises — Why not always so render it? The more so, inasmuch as there is in 2 Peter 1:16 also, a peculiar fitness in our English word 'presence.' This passage, it will be remembered, relates to our Lord's transformation upon the Mount. The wonderful manifestation there made was a display and sample of 'presence' rather than of 'coming.' The Lord was already there; and being there, he was transformed (compare Matthew 17:2) and the 'majesty' of his glorified person was then disclosed" (Appendix Entry to *The Emphasised Bible*, by Joseph Bryant Rotherham, 1902).

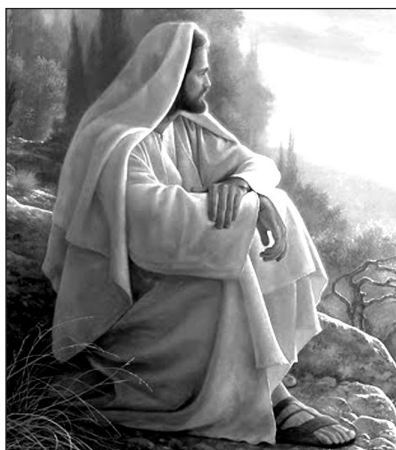
Rotherham goes on to note that the majority of translators have a prophetic view that compels them to use "coming" instead of "presence" because they see this as a singular event as opposed to a period of time. But Rotherham was undeterred because of the compelling evidence of the meaning of *parousia* as "presence."²

Obviously any "presence" begins with an arrival. But a review of the scriptures on this subject does emphasize the idea of a period during which a lot of activity occurs. For example, a number of texts demonstrate that our Lord's return and subsequent presence would be accompanied by a great feasting on spiritual food, requiring some extended time.

"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that **he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and shall come and serve them**" (Luke 12:37,38).

And, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, **I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me**" (Revelation 3:20).

We note first that the previous stage to the Laodicea church was the Philadelphia church, and it preceded the time of Jesus' return. The entire message to the Philadelphia church is contained in verses 7 to 13. In verse 11 we are specifically told "I come quickly." In other words, he had not come yet, but this church is very near the time he would come.



Jesus on the Mount of Olives

For the final stage of the church, the Laodicean stage (verse 14 to 22), we are told, “I stand at the door and knock.” He has arrived. He is **present** at this stage of the church. Furthermore, he is ready to “sup” with those who open the doors of their heart and understanding. This feast reflects the same blessing of spiritual food we saw in the Gospel of Luke. The purpose of this spiritual feast is the restoration of pure truth, much of which had been corrupted after Apostolic times.

Another aspect of Jesus’ return and subsequent presence is the judgment he will perform. And while he will judge the world and nations and people, he will first judge the church. Jesus asked: “I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, **when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?**” (Luke 18:8).

The Greek for “cometh” here does mean “arrival.” And when Jesus returns, he will inspect the church for faithfulness. Peter comments on this principle in 1 Peter 4:17: “For the time is come for **judgment to begin at the house of God**: and if it begin first at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?”

This same theme is depicted by the Prophet Malachi: “Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts. But who can abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap: and he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver; and they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness” (Malachi 3:1-4).

The Lord will return and “suddenly come to his temple.” This temple is another symbol of the church. “Know ye not that **ye are a temple of God**, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16).

Micah here writes in the “day of his coming,” which clearly is a reference to the period of time after his arrival. The Messenger of the Covenant — Jesus — will judge the “sons of Levi,” another reference to the church, and purge them as gold and silver. This is part of the activity of Jesus’ *parousia* and demonstrates further that there will be members of church on the earth during this period of his presence.

The Apostle Peter also writes of this period of time showing that there would be those who scoff at the church over the issue of Jesus’ presence: “knowing This first, that in the Last of the DAYS Scoffers will come with scoffing, walking after their OWN Lusts, and saying, “Where is the PROMISE of his PRESENCE? for from the time the FATHERS fell asleep, all things continue in this way from the

Beginning of the Creation” (2 Peter 3:3,4, Diaglott).

This text is interesting in that the presence of doubters of the presence of Jesus is actually an evidence of the presence. The evidence is there, but, as the Apostle says in the next verse, they are *willingly ignorant* of God’s plans. This text also proves something else of importance. It would be impossible for a scoffer to deny a visible presence. That they are denying it shows that Jesus’ presence will be invisible, evident only because of other indicators.

There is more in this third chapter of 2 Peter that touches on this subject. “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Peter 3:10).

The phrase “will come as a thief” is not well translated as it stands. It should be translated, “will be here as a thief” or “will be present as a thief.” The Greek word *hecko* means be **present** or be **here**. The idea is that Jesus will be here, present, unawares — “as a thief.” This is confirmed in Revelation 3:3: “I will come (Greek *hecko* — be present) like a thief” (NIV).

What is the authority for this translation? Consider the following works:

- Strong’s Concordance — #2240 — to arrive, that is to be present.
- Young’s Concordance — to have come, be here.
- Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon — to have come, be present, be here.
- Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament — to have come, have arrived, be here.
- Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words by Vine — “I come and am here.”

Vine in particular notes that *hecko* means — “come (arrive) and be here.” *Hecko* does not mean the instant of arrival, but includes both arrival **and** presence.

Even looking at Jesus’ own words with respect to his return, we see unmistakable logic that his presence is a period of time. Let us compare the words used in two Gospel accounts and note the result:

Matthew 24:37	Luke 17:26
“But as the days of Noah were,”	= “As it was in the days of Noah,”
“so shall also the <i>parousia</i> of the Son of man be.”	= “so shall it be <i>in the days of the Son of man</i> ”

This verse-by-verse comparison shows conclusively that the *parousia* of Jesus is the same as the “**days**” of Jesus, i.e., a period of time.

Another scripture that demonstrates the activity following Jesus’ return and subsequent presence is found in Revelation 18:1-4: “After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having

great authority; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried with a mighty voice, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and is become a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird. For by the wine of the wrath of her fornication all the nations are fallen; and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth waxed rich by the power of her wantonness. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”³

In this text we have the judgment of Babylon by our present Lord. Along with this is the command for any of the Lord’s people who may still be in Babylon to come out and cease all connection with her. Of course, this is another activity that will take time. This judgment, which consists of an eventual full expose of Babylon’s sins and corruption, is also a sign of Jesus’ presence. It is certainly a sign that we have seen in our own time.

Nahum 1:5-8

Another text which applies to this time of Jesus’ presence provides a connection with Jehovah’s prophetic activity. “The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt; and the earth is upheaved at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken asunder by him. Jehovah is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that take refuge in him. But with an over-running flood he will make a full end of her place and will pursue his enemies into darkness” (Nahum 1:5-8).

This text mentions the presence of Jehovah in connection with judgmental activities at the end of the age. Scripturally, can we associate Jehovah’s presence with Jesus’ presence? The answer is yes! In fact it is unavoidable.

Consider first that in the Second Psalm we see that Jesus is Jehovah’s appointed King and his agent in carrying out his will (see box, next column).

Thus, there is no question that the judgments of Jehovah are carried out by Jesus in Jehovah’s name.

Add to this what Jesus told his disciples about his authority: “And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, **All authority hath been given unto**

“Why do the nations rage, And the peoples meditate a vain thing?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together,
Against Jehovah, and **against his anointed**, saying,
Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us.
He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh:
The Lord will have them in derision.
Then will he speak unto them in his wrath,
And vex them in his sore displeasure:
Yet I have set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion.
I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son;
This day have I begotten thee.
Ask of me, and **I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance,**
And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.
Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;
Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.
Now therefore be wise, O ye kings: Be instructed, ye judges of the earth.
Serve Jehovah with fear And rejoice with trembling.
Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way,
For his wrath will soon be kindled.
Blessed are all they that take refuge in him” (Psalms 2)

me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18).

So we properly associate the presence of Jesus with this presence of Jehovah. In both cases we have activity during the period of their presence.

Returning to the words of Nahum, we see other symbols of the closing events of this world that reinforce the understanding of Jesus’ *parousia* as an extended period. For example, “mountains quake,” “the hills melt;” and “the earth is upheaved at his presence.” Notice the same symbols in the following scriptures:

“But the **day** of the Lord will come as a **thief**; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Peter 3:10).

“Therefore will we not fear, though the earth do change, And though the mountains be shaken into the heart of the seas; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, Though the mountains tremble with the swelling thereof” (Psalms 46:2,3).

“Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt” (Amos 9:13).

Mountains represent kingdoms (see Isaiah 2:2). The earth represents the more stable parts of society and the seas represent the unstable parts of society. The timing of all of the prophecies is the same — during the presence of Jehovah and his Son Jesus. They describe a period of judgment, a period of destruction of this old world during which a lot of things happen. Further we note that his true worshippers are not

removed from the scene immediately, but rather “take refuge in him” while still on the scene. And, as we saw earlier, they are marvelously fed in this divine refuge.

Dawning of the Parousia

“For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the *parousia* of the Son of man” (Matthew 24:27).

Remembering that the entire 24th chapter of Matthew is in answer to the disciples’ question about the sign of his *parousia*, we find this description by Jesus to be enlightening.

Jesus compares his *parousia* to “lightning” coming from the east to the west. This seems a little strange inasmuch as lightning does not generally come out of the east and go to the west. The Greek word for “lightning” is *astrape*. *Astrape* can mean lightning or it can mean shining. In this text, it seems clear that Jesus is speaking of a dawn shining from east to west.⁴

A clear example of *astrape* being used in the sense of shining is in Luke 11:36: “If therefore thy whole body be full of light, having no part dark, it shall be wholly full of light, as when the lamp with its bright shining [*astrape*] doth give thee light.”

Using this understanding of the word *astrape*, we see that the invisible presence of Jesus will, gradually over a period of time, be perceived along with a recognition of his judgment activities in the affairs of man. The gradual recognition is noted in several places of Ezekiel’s prophecy. In particular Ezekiel 38:19-23 parallels many scriptures prophetic of the *parousia*.

“Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel ... and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the

mountains shall be thrown down ... And I will magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and I will make myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.”

As Jehovah’s Anointed King, Jesus will carry out these judgments of God and will sanctify his name in so doing. All of this will be “at my presence.”

Conclusions

The evidence of scripture demonstrates the following things:

- (1) Jesus’ *parousia* is a period, not an event.
- (2) It is the same period as **Jehovah’s Presence**.
- (3) As Jesus is a spirit, his *parousia* is invisible.
- (4) During Jesus’ *parousia* he judges the church, favors them with an enormous spiritual feast, and judges the nations.
- (5) The perception of the reality of Jesus’ *parousia* will be gradual but will eventually be undeniable and the nations will know of Jehovah’s rule through his anointed King and Son.

(1) Occurrences of *parousia* — Matthew 24:3:27, 31, 39; 1 Corinthians 15:23, 16:17; 2 Corinthians 7:6, 7, 10:10; Philippians 1:26, 2:12; 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 3:3, 4:15, 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:1, 8, 9; James 5:7, 8; 2 Peter 1:16, 3:4,12; and 1 John 2:28.

(2) Perhaps we might defend the KJV translation by noting that in the 1600’s “coming” meant arrival and presence. As an example: “I have enjoyed your coming so much.” In this case the idea of “presence” is preserved.

(3) This angel coming down out of heaven is Jesus. It is the same angel which comes down out of heaven that lays his hand on Satan and binds him for a thousand years in Revelation 20:1-3.

(4) Consider the RVIC translation of verse 27: “For as the breaking sunshine cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the presence of the Son of man.”

Keeping the Faith

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7).

Was there ever a nobler soldier of the Cross than Apostle Paul — the Redeemer alone excepted? Soldiers of fortune and patriots have indeed left their marks in the world and on the pages of history, but not one of them has left so indelible a mark as Paul. The motive power influencing others has generally been selfishness, but the motive power of the Christian is the reverse — love. Others hazarded and laid down their lives in self-interest, or in the interest of their kin or tongue. Paul, copying his Master, laid down his life for Jew and Gentile, bond and free, male and female, to assist in gathering the “elect” to be the Bride of Christ — that ultimately through the glorified King and His glorified Bride, all the families of the earth may receive the blessings

which God waits to give through Abraham’s Seed (Galatians 3:29).

God is seeking only for heroes now. By and by He will deal with the remainder, helpfully. The “elect” must all be courageous, “conformed to the image of His Son” — heroes. Hence the promise to the Church is “to him that overcomes.” And let us remember that scripturally considered this character, which the Lord seeks, may be developed in very humble stations; no matter how low, all may develop the overcoming qualities which the Lord will reward (1 Corinthians 1:26-29).

When writing the words of our text Paul realised that the close of his career was near — his course was finished. He recognised as a Christian that he had

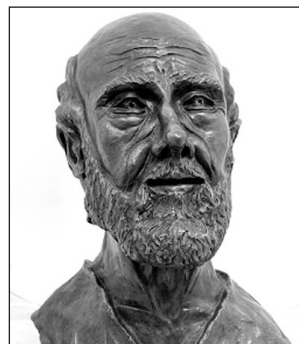
certain lessons to learn in the School of Christ and this was a part of his course of preparation for joint heirship with Christ in the glories of the Messianic Kingdom. The course included not merely theory, but also practice. He not only theoretically learned about Christ, but experimentally. He became a partaker with Him in the sufferings of the present time. And sympathetically he was permitted to enter into a large degree of knowledge of the “mystery” of the Divine Plan hidden from the world.

Not only had his own course of instruction been a thorough one, but he had been given a post-graduate course as an ambassador for his Lord and Redeemer and as an apostle for the brethren, the Church. Moreover, he recognised the fact that all such as become members of the Body of Christ are so directly under the divine supervision and regulations that their times are in God’s hands — all of their affairs of life, temporal and spiritual. As the Master’s death could not occur “until His hour was come,” so likewise it is with his consecrated members.

He had kept the faith and the faith had kept him. Many do not realise how important are knowledge and a correct faith. “My people perish for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6) is Jehovah’s testimony. And their faith can keep pace only with their knowledge, for faith must have a basis. A correct life depends greatly upon a correct faith. Why did our forefathers burn one another at the stakes in a diabolical manner? Because they were governed by error. False doctrines, styled by the Apostle Paul as “doctrines of demons” (1 Timothy 4:1), had been presented to them and they had believed them. The legitimate outcome of the wrong belief, the wrong faith, was wrongdoing. Believing that God purposed the torture of His creatures for centuries in purgatory or for countless millions of years in eternal torment, they copied this misconception of the Almighty in their lives, to our horror.

But Paul had kept the faith — the true faith once delivered unto the saints — faith in the Redeemer’s sacrifice; faith in its application on our behalf; faith in our justification by the Father on that account; faith in the glorious promises of God’s Word; faith in the Lord and faith in the brethren. Surely it meant something to keep the faith — especially when we realise that our great adversary, Satan, is on the alert continually to take it from us or turn or twist it to our loss or injury.

The crown mentioned that the Apostle had seen for many years, with the eye of his faith, was a part of the Lord’s promise. He had absolute confidence in the Lord and in the promise, he had received from Him. That crown had been his cause of rejoicing for many years, not because of pride or ambition, but because of love and benevolence. He would love to receive that crown because it would be the mark of Divine appreciation and love for him,



Bust of the Apostle Paul

a mark of his faithfulness. He esteemed it because it would afford him untold opportunity of blessing his fellowmen in association with his Lord and the brethren on the plane of glory during the Millennium.

The crown which Paul hoped for required him to be faithful until death as shown in Revelation 2:10, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.” He knew the Bible teaching on the subject of the resurrection — that this was his God’s provision for the communication of His blessing, first for the Church, then subsequently for the world. He knew and taught that there would be “a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust” (Acts 24:15). He desired to have a share with his Redeemer in all of his glorious Kingdom work, and he knew that it could not begin until the completion of this Gospel Age, when all the elect Church, as members of the Bride of Christ, would share in “His resurrection,” to glory, honour, immortality, and glorious Kingdom privileges (Philippians 3:10-11).

It was for this reason that he proceeded to declare that the crown was laid up for him at the time of his resurrection. That crown the Lord would give to him and to all others in the attitude of heart to appreciate His revelation at the Second Advent — “that day.” True, not many at the present time love His appearing. The majority, not only of the world, but also of Christians, seeking but not finding in pleasures, riches, and honours of men, have certain ambitions along these lines which they would like to satisfy first, and then possibly they might be willing for the Lord to establish His Kingdom. But, no! By the time their lives have been spent in such pursuits they are usually thoroughly disappointed and bewildered and generally further than ever from seeking the Kingdom.

None but the faithful will receive this crown. Thank God, the remainder will not be tortured, but, on the contrary, will be blessed by their crowned brethren, from whom, as the Christ of God, will go the blessings of restitution through the agency of the Messianic Kingdom. Eventually all the blind eyes of understanding will be opened — eventually all will see the great Messiah, though invisible to the natural sight. Then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God. Paul closes his exhortation by reciting that in his trial before Nero some in whom he had full confidence had forsaken him, and he concludes that the Lord, nevertheless, stood with him and strengthened him, and that he had every confidence in His care to the end of the way.

As Paul states “I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14 ASV), and he continued to do this regardless of his circumstances, which is the example that we should follow.

Advocate and Mediator Contrasted

The Church is "the mystery of God" (Colossians 2:2).

The fact that the church is "the mystery of God" has become clearer as the age draws to a close.

We know that Christ and the church are separate and distinct from the world in every way. They are neither under the Law Covenant, nor are they under the New Law Covenant, but are under the Abrahamic Covenant; being also called, sanctified, developed under a special covenant by themselves.

This the Scripture also styles the Covenant of Sacrifice "Gather my saints together unto me, Those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice" (Psalms 50:5 ASV). This special class of saints, or holy ones, who make this covenant of sacrifice have as their Head the Lord Jesus Himself. When this company shall have completed their covenant by sacrifice, this present Gospel Age will end. Moses, in the Law Covenant given to Israel, represented specially the New Law Covenant, which will be given to the world through the antitype of Moses — The Christ. In other words, the Mediator of the Law Covenant was to be one man, Moses.

The Mediator of the New Law Covenant of the Millennial Age is the New Man, of which Jesus is the Head, and the apostle declares that the members (his body) are made up of those elected both from Jews and Gentiles. From the time of Jesus down through the Gospel Age, the body members of the Mediator of the New Covenant have been in process of selection, and "the better sacrifices" as the basis for the New Covenant have been in process of offering.

During the Gospel Age Jesus has not exercised His office as the Mediator for the world, and the world has no relationship with God, but still lies in the wicked one. The Mediator Himself has been in process of development. As the apostle declares, God raised up Jesus first, and since has been raising up the church, and soon will finish raising them up. It is this Mediator or Prophet of whom St. Peter stated "Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul

that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people (Acts 3:22-23 ASV). The Apostle Paul also tells Timothy "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time (1 Timothy 2:5-6 NASB). No mediating can be done until the body members of the Mediator comprising of "many members" has qualified for the office. The qualification consists of sacrificing according to the Covenant of Sacrifice.

The Christ, Head and Body are, therefore, the Mediator for the world in a prospective sense, in the same sense as Jesus the Babe of Bethlehem could be spoken of as the Saviour, and the King. He is only now becoming the King and has yet saved only a few of His people. There is a wide distinction between the work of a mediator and the work of an advocate. The great Mediator between God and man — The Christ in glory — will fill His mediatorial office for a thousand years and complete it only by the end of that time, when He will deliver over to the Father, fully reconciled, all who can be brought into harmony with the Divine arrangement.

The work of an advocate is different, and, according to the Bible, relates only to the work which Jesus accomplishes on behalf of the church during this Gospel Age. The church will need no advocate in the future. The world has no advocate now. We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. It is Jesus individually, who is the Advocate for us — "the church, His body." He advocates our cause, first, by imputing to us the merit of His sacrifice, thus making us presentable as sons of God. Because of this advocacy, we have received the Holy Spirit, and are new creatures in Christ. As new creatures we still need our Advocate, because we cannot do the things that we would like to do perfectly. We have imperfections of the flesh, which as new creatures we cannot fully control. Hence, we need a Throne of Grace and an Advocate, through Whom we may maintain our present relationship with the Father, and thus not be condemned with the world. E.E.M.

Note from Reader

Dear Brethren, The BBI have been mailing a copy of Peoples Paper for many years to my mother. Sadly, my mother passed away some weeks ago. She looked forward to receiving this publication very much, and I would like to thank you for sending it to her for many years. I am also contacting you so that you may now remove my mother's name and address from your mailing list. Colin (Pearl Molyneux, Merseyside, U.K.)

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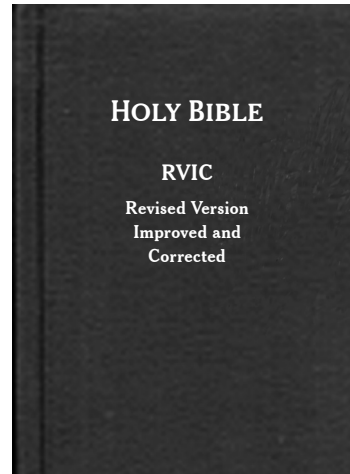
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Church and Ancient Worthies Judged by Faith, Not by Works

They will be assisted step by step out of imperfection of mind and body up to perfection, including perfect works, which will be their standard or test. On the contrary the Gospel Church and the Ancient Worthies have not been judged according to their works, but according to their faith — works having been demanded to the extent of the blemishes of the fallen nature, but instantly reckoned as lifted out of them, or as having them covered with a mantle of grace.

Original Covenant Promised Blessing to all Mankind

Bearing in mind the fact and conclusions above will assist us greatly in understanding our subject, the relationship of the Covenants to each other and to mankind. The original Covenant promised a blessing that should reach all mankind — a redemption from the Divine sentence, and an opportunity for the return to harmony with God, through faith and heart obedience. This promise has in some respects already had its fulfilment, as we have seen. God has already accepted, yea, been willing to lead or to draw, all who exercise faith in Him and a heart desire to live in harmony, with His will. Already, in this sense of the word, the original Covenant operated before the flood, and since the flood, and toward Abraham, and toward all of Israel, who had the spirit of obedience and faith, and during this Gospel Age has operated amongst mankind in all nations and tongues. But a comparatively small portion of the race has received the blessing, because so small a proportion were in a condition to exercise “the faith of Abraham.”

Adding to Original Covenant not a Disadvantage

While at first it might appear that the adding of the Law Covenant was a disadvantage and similarly that the adding of the New Covenant might, in some respects, be a disadvantage or a curtailment or abridgment of the original, all-comprehensive Grace or Sarah Covenant, yet this is really not so. While the Law Covenant did condemn the nation, because they did not have the faith, it did bring a blessing to many of that nation — many more than were developed in other nations, which had no such Law Covenant, with its limitations, threatenings, chastisements, etc. The New Covenant will be still more successful. It will follow the reign of Grace under the Sarah Covenant and be a reign of law. As it is written, “Righteousness shall he lay to the line and justice to the plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of misrepresentations” (Isaiah 28:17).

The Redeemer and His followers will no longer be a

flock of sheep for the slaughter, reviled amongst men, but to the contrary, they shall be the kings and priests, clothed with glory, honor and immortality, before whom “Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God” (Romans 14:11). The King shall rule in righteousness and princes shall execute judgments in the earth.

Works and Punishments Under New Covenant

Faith, giving place to sight, the test will be works, according to the ability; and everything less than the ability will receive stripes and corrections in righteousness. That reign of Law and good works will thus be rightly tempered to the condition of each individual, and the result, we believe, will be marvellous — the bringing of thousands of millions to perfection, in harmony with God. So far from the New (Law) Covenant being an abridgment of the Abrahamic (Sarah) Covenant it will be an extension of it, which will make its blessings much farther reaching. The original Covenant now gathers those who can and will exercise faith and obedience. Its usefulness would thus be at an end, were it not for the added New (Law) Covenant, which, ignoring the lack of faith and obedience, will take hold of the world and, by chastisement and instructions, force obedience and knowledge and then gradually develop the heart-obedience of Abraham in so many of them as possible and destroy the others. Thus Abraham, “the father of the faithful,” will become under the New (Law) Covenant the “father of many nations” — a multitude, as the sand of the sea — as well as the father of the faithful under the original Sarah Covenant of faith and grace.

God's Arrangement Through Covenant Best

Thus, we see that the influence of the original Covenant, after electing a Faith Seed, both natural and spiritual, will, through these by the New (Law) Covenant, bless a far greater number than by any other method conceivable. Thus, again the Lord shows us how much greater are His arrangements than any which the human mind could have planned. Surely no flesh can glory in His sight. The more we see of His plans, His purposes, His methods, the more should we glorify Him and realise our own nothingness, insignificance! (Z. 1909, 45.)

LAW-RIGHTEOUSNESS AND FAITH-RIGHTEOUSNESS

Divine Law the Standard for All

Although the Church is not developed under a Law Covenant — neither the old Law Covenant nor the New (Law) Covenant — nevertheless it is being

measured by the Divine Law standard; as the Apostle says, The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who are walking not after the flesh but after the spirit (Romans 8:4).

The Jew under the Law Covenant was unable to be justified because unable to keep the letter of that law, and because Moses, the mediator of that law Covenant, had no merit or grace to contribute to the people which would excuse them from the letter of the law and make the spirit of that law available for their justification.

The New Law Covenant Will Require Obedience to the Divine Standard

The New (Law) Covenant, like the old one, will require obedience to the letter of the law of God, and not merely to its spirit. The rule of that Covenant will be “He that doeth these things shall live by them.” What advantage, then, will accrue under the New (Law) Covenant above and beyond that which the Jew enjoyed under the old law Covenant.

Difference Between Those Under Old and New Law Covenant

We answer, the difference will be that the New (Law) Covenant will have the better Mediator, who will have the right during the existence of the Millennial Kingdom to instruct, chasten, reward, assist and uplift all who will be obedient to Him, so that by the close of the Millennial Age all who desire eternal life, all who appreciate righteousness, or who could be made to appreciate it, will have been brought up to that perfect condition mentally, morally and physically which Adam enjoyed but lost by sin, and which Christ redeemed by the sacrifice of Himself.

Mediation Will Last a Thousand Years

The mediation will last for the thousand years, and at its conclusion the world will be turned over to the jurisdiction of the Heavenly father — Christ will “deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father” (1 Corinthians 15:24). They will be delivered up perfect, mentally, physically, morally, and be all that Adam was, plus the experiences received through the reign of evil and through the subsequent reign of righteousness. Thus, the old law Covenant and the New (Law) Covenant have special points of similarity, and we see the difference between the two to be, as St. Paul points out, that the New (Law) Covenant has the better Mediator, who is able to cancel the sins that are past and to take away the stony heart, and by restitution processes restore the heart of flesh. Additionally, He will instruct mankind to that condition where they can, if they will, keep the Divine law perfectly, both in letter and in spirit.

Object of Gospel Age Lost Sight Of

This was lost sight of in the dark ages. The real object of this Gospel Age — the selection of the members of the antitypical Mediator of the New (Law) Covenant — the mystery — became obscured. No future age for the blessing of Israel and the world was acknowledged.

Instead the New Covenant was considered as but another name for the Abrahamic Covenant, to which, instead, it is to be an addition.

Sarah Covenant Different, Required no Mediator

The Covenant under which we become Abraham’s Seed — i.e., the Abrahamic Covenant (the Sarah Covenant), had no law provision and no mediator. It was a one-sided Covenant and needed no mediator. It was made with one who believed God, who was justified by his faith, and whose faith was tested by obedient works to the extent of his ability. To this tested, proved man, Abraham, God gave the great promise, “In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” This was the Covenant to which was added the oath of confirmation. That promise and that oath become our strong consolation, our anchorage of hope, because we have become united to Christ as His members — members of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, which is to bless natural Israel and the world by the long-promised New (Law) Covenant, of which we are being made able ministers or servants.

Christ Accepted by Obedience to Law, Church Accepted by Faith and Obedience to Extent of Ability

To Christ the original Covenant came with the Law “added,” and He inherited by obedience to the Law. He is now accepting us separate and apart from the Law on condition of faith and obedience to the extent of our ability. To us the righteousness of the Law is counted as fulfilled when we walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit of the law, because we thus give evidence that if we had perfect ability we would keep the Divine Law perfectly. And we who are accepted as members of the Body of Christ have entered into a covenant of sacrifice as respects the earthly nature, and to be copies of our Redeemer to the extent of our ability — in heart, in will, and, so far as possible, in deed.

After Testing Church, God Will Accept Her Fully

After testing us thus, if found faithful, God will accept us fully and grant us spirit bodies like unto our Redeemer’s. It is thus, as New Creatures in Christ, that we may be the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, and members of the Body of the great Mediator, the great Prophet, Priest, King and Judge, who during the Millennial Age, under the New (Law) Covenant sealed with His blood, shall establish righteousness in the earth, and lift up the willing and obedient of humanity out of sin, degradation and death to harmony with God and everlasting life.

Church Not Justified Under Any Covenant

Is it asked, under what Covenant is the Royal Priesthood, the Church of the First-Born, justified? We answer, under no covenant. Our justification, like that of Abraham, is by faith. As it is written, “Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone that it (righteousness) was imputed to him, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on

Him who raised up Jesus, our Lord, from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:5, 23-25).

Paul Shows Abraham Justified Before Circumcision Ordinance

St. Paul in this connection points out that Abraham was not justified because of his circumcision, for he was justified by faith and reckoned righteous before he was given the seal of circumcision. Likewise, he was not justified by the Covenant made with him, but the Covenant was made with him because of his faith, and his justification through faith. And thus, it is also with all of us who are counted Abraham’s Seed. After being justified by faith, we are granted the privilege of becoming dead with Christ, and thus becoming members of His Body, the spiritual Seed of Abraham, whose circumcision is that of the heart (Galatians 3:29). (Z. 1909, 228.)

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT NOT THE NEW COVENANT

God’s Promise to Abraham a Covenant

The Scriptures over and over again refer to God’s words with Abraham, not only as a promise, but as a Covenant. As, for instance, before it was made, God said to Abraham, come out of thine own land into a land that I will show thee, and I will make a Covenant with thee. It was in harmony with that promise that Abraham removed to the land of Canaan, where God declares that He did make a Covenant with him, to the effect that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. The prophet tells us that that Covenant was confirmed three times to Abraham with an oath — again to Isaac and again to Jacob. (See Genesis 17:19, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14.) This which the Apostle styles The Promise (particular and special above all promises) is also called a Covenant thirteen times in the Book of Genesis alone, besides numerous other references which anyone can find with a concordance.

The Oath-Bound Covenant

It seems strange indeed that a desire to establish a theory could warp the judgment of any Christian Bible student to such an extent that he would endeavour to ignore the greatest of all imaginable Covenants on record — the Covenant on which all of our hopes as Christians depend. Hearken to the Apostle Paul’s estimation of this Covenant as stated in Hebrews 6. Urging the Israelites to patience and faith that they might inherit the promises, St. Paul says, “For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself ... for men verily swear by the greater and an oath for confirmation is the end of all strife. In this matter God, desiring more abundantly to show unto the heirs of the promise the immutability (the unchangeableness) of His counsel (or purpose), confirmed the promise by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have

fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.” The Apostle thus shows that the Abrahamic Covenant (without a mediator, because it was unconditional), was firmly bound in a manner that would be satisfactory even amongst men, namely, by an oath.

God’s Oath

How much more convincing is God’s oath, making sure, unchangeable that basic Covenant made with Abraham, assuring the heirs of the promise (“us”) that ultimately all mankind will receive a blessing, and that it would come through us (Galatians 3:29). The Apostle tells us that that oath was intended of God for us rather than for Abraham, to give us strong consolation, that we might lay hold firmly of the hope set before us in that promise — that Abrahamic Covenant. He adds (verse 19) that we have this hope as an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast within the veil, whither Jesus has entered as our- forerunner, to whom we are approaching — as members to our Head. He is the Head of that Seed of promise. We, the members of His Body, will shortly follow Him beyond the veil and share His glorious work of blessing the nations, beginning with Israel, under a New Covenant. We, as the adopted members of the Body of Christ, are directly the beneficiaries of the original Covenant, whose other features of blessing the world will all be worked out through us — under the New Covenant arrangement with Israel.

Paul and the Abrahamic Covenant

Surely there is no consistency or reason in ignoring this Great Oath-bound Covenant made in Abraham’s day, consummated the Divine oath. If it were not a Covenant, or if, as a Covenant, it was not ratified or made operative until the days of Jesus, why should the Apostle say that the law Covenant was added to the Abrahamic Covenant 430 years after the Abrahamic Covenant was made? Evidently St. Paul considered the Abrahamic Covenant well established, for he adds that the Law Covenant afterwards instituted could not disannul the Abrahamic Covenant (Galatians 3:17). It must have been a thoroughly completed Covenant, firmly bound with the Divine oath, else that statement that it could not be disannulled would be an untruth.

Hearken again to St. Paul’s discussion of the matter with the Galatians, He says, “This I say, that the Covenant, that was confirmed (“previously ratified” — Strong’s lexicon) before of God in Christ, the Law (Covenant), which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” As showing the inferiority of the Law Covenant in comparison to the Old (original) Abrahamic Covenant, St. Paul tells us (Galatians 4:22-31) that Abraham’s two wives, Sarah and Hagar, were allegorical; that the son of Sarah represented The Christ, the Church, Head and Body, while the son of Hagar represented the nation of fleshly Israel. He says, “Which things are an allegory: for these are the two Covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Hagar, which corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and

is in bondage with her children.” On the contrary, he declares that Sarah corresponds to Jerusalem, which is above and free, the mother of us all. He adds, “We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise.” (verse 28). It required nearly seventeen centuries for the development of Hagar’s son, Fleshly Israel, under the Law Covenant. The Son of Sarah (the original or Abrahamic Covenant), has already been more than eighteen centuries in process of development. Through Him all nations shall be blessed. He secured earthly life rights by His obedience; He sacrificed or laid these down at Calvary; He during this age has made them available to His “Body,” and soon will be ready to give them as a legacy to Natural Israel and the world (Romans 11:31).

Israel Realised Value of Abrahamic Covenant

Israel realised the value of this Covenant made with Abraham; it constituted the basis of all their hopes, faith and trust. They supposed that the Law Covenant needed to be added to it, and therefore, they accepted it as an amendment; but they continually trusted, hoped, in the original Covenant, as St. Paul says, “Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God, hope yet to come” (Acts 26:7). It was after Israel had become discouraged with their inability to keep the Law that God encouraged them, by assuring them that He would make a New Covenant with them, which would operate more favourably — more to their advantage. And so He will. By the end of this Gospel Age, after having selected the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, the New Covenant with Israel will go into effect. As it is written, “This is My Covenant with them when I shall take away their sins. The Deliverer (Mediator, Prophet, Priest, King) shall come out of Sion (the Gospel Church) and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (natural Israel)” (Romans 11:26,27).

Gospel Church Not the Seed of Two Mothers

Undoubtedly then we may assure all who have the hearing ear, that the Gospel Church is not the seed of two mothers or Covenants, but of one, and that that one is the Sarah Covenant, the old, original, oath-bound Covenant. Sarah had but one child, Isaac, who typified The Christ, Head and Body — the heir of all. “We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise” — heirs of the great privilege of blessing all the families of the earth, as members of the great antitypical Mediator of Israel’s New Law Covenant, which will displace and supersede the Old Law Covenant.

“After Those Days I Will Make a New Covenant”

In Jeremiah 31:53 we read, “after those days,” as setting a date for the New Covenant. Why is this? And what days must precede the making of the New Covenant?

Chastisement of Israel. Seven Times of Punishment

God foretold that if Israel would be faithful, He would bless them in every sense of the word, but that if they would walk contrary to Him, He would walk contrary to them and chastise them “seven times for their sins.” (Leviticus 26:28). This expression in this connection is, with variations, repeated three times. In one instance the word “MORE” is used. “I will chastise you seven times more for your sins.” The Hebrew word rendered more, according to Strong’s translation, would properly be rendered “continuously.”

Seven Times Not Literal

This threat of punishment we interpret to mean, not that the Lord would give Israel seven times as much punishment as they should have, but that He would punish them seven times (seven years) more (continuously) for their sins. These seven times or seven years were not literal years surely, for they received more punishment than that on numerous occasions. The seven times we interpret as symbolical years, in harmony with other Scriptures — a day for a year, on the basis of three hundred and sixty days to a year. Thus, the seven times would mean 7×360 , which equals 2520 literal years. And the word more or continuously would signify that this period of 2520 years would not be the sum of all their various years of chastisement at various “times,” but this experience of 2520 years of national chastisement would be one continuous period.

Next, we should ask, has there been such a continuous period of disfavour in Israel’s national history? The answer is, Yes. In the days of Zedekiah, the last king to sit upon the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord, the Word of the Lord concerning the matter was, “O, thou profane and wicked prince, whose time has come that iniquity should have an end: Take off the diadem! Remove the crown! I will overturn, overturn, overturn it (the crown, the kingdom) until he comes whose right it is, and I will give it unto him” (Ezekiel 21:25-27). This period of 2520 years, or seven symbolic times, expires according to our reckoning in 1914 (1914-18). In other words, the period of Gentile times, or Gentile supremacy in the world, is the exact parallel to the period of Israel’s loss of the kingdom and waiting for it at the hands of Messiah.

Israel Unready at First Advent

Messiah at His First Advent found them unready as a nation to be His Bride, to share with Him as the Spiritual seed of Abraham, and it has required, as God foreknew and foretold, all this intervening period to select Spiritual Israel, the royal priesthood, the “holy nation,” the “peculiar people,” the Body of Christ, the Body of the Mediator between God and mankind.