



Type: Book Chapter

The Place of Israel in God's Earth-Scheme of Things

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Source: *Rasha — the Jew: A Message to All Jews*

Published: Salt Lake City; The Deseret News Press, 1932

Pages: 116-136

Abstract: No abstract available.

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"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance" (*Deut. xxxii:7-9*).

Before entering upon an immediate consideration of this seldomly referred to passage, it will be necessary to treat briefly two other subjects: one which calls for the consideration of the nature of man, and his life; the other, the significance of the term "Israel".

As to the first subject there can be no doubt but what man is a compound of "spirit" and what we call "body", or earth-material element. This is made clear in the *Bible* account of man's creation:

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (*Gen. ii:7*).

I pass the manner of the creation of man otherwise than this and the symbols employed to make the account of it, since here I am concerned only with the recognition of the fact that man consists of the body made of the dust-matter of the ground, and the "breath of life" breathed into that body formed of dust; a dual being, spirit and body, or body and in-dwelling spirit; or an intelligence and a tabernacle—always two things. This also became apparent at the death of the Christ:

"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost" (*St. Matt. xxvii:50*).

That is to say, the Spirit within the body withdrew, and the body hung limp upon the cross, dead! The Spirit separated from the body, the latter was placed in the sepulchre, while the Spirit—already immortal—retained consciousness; and according to St. Peter, went to the spirit world and “preached to the spirits in prison”, there held in ward, “which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing” (*I Peter* iii: 18-20).

And again St. Peter:

“For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit” (*I Peter* iv:6).

Surely then, the spirits of men retain consciousness when separated from the body by death, else it would be useless for the Christ to go and “preach to the spirits in prison, which were once disobedient when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah”. Useless to preach the gospel “to them that are dead” that they might be “judged according to men in the flesh”, but “live according to God in the spirit”. This could not be if the spirits of men lost the quality of consciousness at death. Reflection upon these Scriptures clearly establish the duality of man—spirit and body. The body returning to dust at death; the spirit, retaining consciousness, going to the spirit world—place of spirit residence; there to be taught and to live according to God in the spirit. The continuation of the spirit in conscious life after death, or the separation of the spirit from the body, and the life of the spirit, independent of connection with the body, suggest a possible independent existence of the spirit before birth as well as such an existence after death. And it is to such an existence I now wish to call attention.

The Savior on one occasion in controversy with the Jews declared that God was his Father. Whereupon they countered with a boast that Abraham was their father. When Jesus answered:

"If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham, but now ye seek to kill me a man that hath told you the truth which I have heard of God: This did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him: We be not born of fornication! We have one father, even God. Whereupon Jesus answered: If God were your father ye would love me for I proceeded forth and came from the Father; neither came I of myself, but he sent me."

Near the close of the controversy the Christ said to the Jews:

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." Then said the Jews unto him: "Thou art not yet fifty years old and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them: Verily, Verily I say unto you before Abraham was, I am (i. e. existed). Then took they up stones to cast at him, but the Christ made his escape" (*St. John* viii: 29-59).

This surely establishes an existence of the Spirit of the Christ before his birth of Mary, and makes clear the question of Jesus to the apostles who murmured at some of his doctrine in the introduction of the holy sacrament, "the bread that came down from heaven to feed men" spiritually. When he saw how they were affected by this announcement, he said:

"Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?" (*St. John* vi:61-2).

Also it makes clear St. John's Preface to his *Gospel*:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. * * * In him was life and the life was the light of men. * * * and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth" (*St. John* i:1-14).

Clear testimony this of the pre-existence of the Spirit of

the Christ, who was with God in the beginning, and was even then "God", later to dwell among men in the flesh to manifest the glory of the Only Begotten by the Father in the flesh. And now, since the Christ's Spirit had its conscious existence before his birth into the world and was Deity; yet in his human life was so close a parallel with the life of man, may it not be that the common man, too, may have had a like spirit existence? In *Hebrews* it is written that—

"He that sanctifieth [meaning the Christ], and they who are sanctified [meaning men—all men], are all of one: for which cause he [the Christ] is not ashamed to call them brethren" (*Heb. ii:11*).

This is in harmony with the message which the resurrected Christ sent by Mary to the apostles:

"I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father, and to your Father; and to my God, and your God" (*St. John xx:17*).

Again the Christ in his great prayer to God, just previous to his passion, exclaimed in his prayer:

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self; with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (*St. John xvii:5*).

The Christ then even remembered the glory that was his before he was born into the world and desired it renewed. All this fits in with the idea of a war in heaven among the spirits, spoken of by St. John (*Rev. xii:7-11*), where Lucifer, also a spirit, together with the hosts who followed him, had their spirit life, and rebelled against God and were cast out. So that the Christ and the spirits of men and even of Lucifer and his hosts, had this spirit existence—a pre-mortal spiritual life.

We shall take it that these Scriptures and the deductions which they enforce clearly establish the duality of man, spirit and body; the spirit capable of existing in the spirit life independent of the body before birth, and the existence of the spirit independent of the body after death. These spirits were in-

telligent entities in some manner begotten of the Father; for it is written:

"Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live?" (*Heb. xii:9*).

And doubtless also the same thing is meant as to God being "the Father of the spirits of all flesh", when in *Numbers* it is written—representing Moses as speaking unto the Lord:

"Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh set a man over the congregation" (*Num. xxv:16*).

And again:

"O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?" (*Num. xvi:22*).

Here we suspend our thought on this line, for the present, and take up the significance of the word "Israel".

ISRAEL

So far as the significance of the word "Israel" is traceable, its origin occurs at the time that Jacob wrestled with a personage at a place named Peniel. The person with whom the patriarch wrestled is supposed to have been an angel of God. Jacob declared "I will not let thee go except thou bless me". And the angel said: "What is thy name", and was answered, "Jacob". This signified "Supplanter"—"the crafty one", the "over-reacher", and remembering the chief characteristics of Jacob up to this time these names form a true outline of the life he had lived and the character he had developed. But the angel said unto him: "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." And it is said that the angel blessed him there. (In comment upon this verse see *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, Dummelow, *Gen. xxxii:28-32*).

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And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for he explains, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved". This in allusion, according to some commentators, to the belief that "no one could see God and live", hence "Peniel", which interpreted, is "face of God".

This for Jacob changed a name of reproach to a name of honor—Israel; which signifieth, with slightly varying meanings: "Perseverer with God, [and] who is worthy also to prevail"; and with the addition of Peniel—"face of God"—and Jacob's declaration "I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved" indicates very great intimacy and personal relationship to God. Also Israel is interpreted as "Prince with God". (*New Analytical Bible of the A. V.*, 1929, by the "International Council of Religious Education"). Also Israel—as further interpreted—"God fighteth", (*Cambridge Bible Dictionary*); and "Israelite", "God's fighter"; also by Gesenius (*International Bible Dictionary—1912*) "Israel" is interpreted "Soldier of God". These interpretations were transmitted to Jacob's people—to all the twelve tribes collectively, as descendants of Israel; and to the nation as well as to the person of the patriarch Jacob—Israel.

Two generations before this Abraham had been chosen to be the founder of a special family for the inheritance of special blessings from God, and favor. He received the dearest title from God expressing the relationship—"Friend of God":—"Abraham, my Friend", God calls him (*Isa. xli:8; II Chron. xx:8*). "Abraham", said the Lord again, "shall become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him" (*Gen. xviii:18*). "For," said the Lord—as reason for this—"I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (*Gen. xviii:19*). And again the Lord said—and this the crowning blessing—"In blessing I will bless thee; * * * and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (*Gen. xxii:17, 18*). On this St. Paul argues:

"To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. iii:16).

We shall have more to say of Abraham later.

These passages bring us to the point where we may hear back to the text with which this sub-division of our theme began, namely:

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel for the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."

In connection with this Scripture and the ideas to be built upon it, I quote from St. Paul's Mar's Hill discourse.

"God * * * giveth to all life and breath, and all things: and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from everyone of us: For in him we live and move and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said. For we are also his offspring" (Acts xvii:24-28).

Since the spirits of men—of all men, as we have seen, existed in the spirit world before taking bodies in the earth, it is conceivable that there were all different qualities of spirits, divided into races of varying intelligence as here on earth; for, let it be remembered, in connection with this passage just quoted, that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation." So is it conceivable, I say, that there was an "Israel" in the spirit world as well as here in the earth, and that God has assigned and fixed, or divided, unto the nations their inheritance in the earth life, and set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel; or according as he would distribute into the world the leavening power of the spiritual Israel, existing

in the pre-earth life; so that these enlightened ones—who doubtless, in the spirit life, composed God's Israel there—might be as leaven to the successive races and nations of the children of men in the earth life. That some such divine plan as this was contemplated in the pre-determinate scheme of things for man's life on earth is made very apparent from our *Book of Abraham* given to the world by the Prophet of the New Dispensation. The Lord had given unto the patriarch, Abraham, a view of the vastness of his creations, and his perpetuation of them. He had been made to see the hosts of spirits designed for life upon the earth, and now the word of the Lord to him:

“Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences [spirits] that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones; and God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: **These I will make my rulers;** for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham thou art one of them, thou wast chosen before thou wast born” (*Pearl of Great Price, Book of Abraham, iii:22, 23*).

This foreknowledge of the existence of Abraham—his standing in the spirit world—one of those whom God would choose to be his rulers, and who was numbered among “**the great**”, “**the noble**”, “**the good**”—makes us to understand the significance of God appointing Abraham to be really the founder of Israel. First, his own family, and as a family, to be a witness for God. Secondly, really the founder or father of the twelve tribes of Israel through Jacob; also there came of Esau a race of people, wild men, fierce by nature, yet descendants of Abraham and tribes of importance. Third, the nation or kingdom of Israel, as it was finally developed through Saul and David, the poet-king, who by his psalms instructed the world in the things of God and especially in the wonder and power of true repentance, which led him to rise through faith to retain his hold on God notwithstanding his grievous sins. Abraham was numbered among “**the great**”, “**the noble**”, and “**the good**”, which qualities circumscribe all the virtues—and “these,” said God, “I will

make my rulers; and Abraham thou art one of them. Thou wast chosen before thou wast born." The closing phrase reminds us of the word of the Lord to Jeremiah. The Lord said to him:

"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee;
 * * * and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.
 * * * See, I have this day set thee over the nations
 and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down
 and to destroy, and to throw down [also] to build and
 to plant" (*Jer. i:5-10*).

And so doubtless throughout—Moses—Isaiah—Ezekiel—Daniel, the prophet of the captivity, who lived so near his God that not only was he a prophet to the captivity, but also the inspired man who learned his knowledge by faith—for which he gave God the glory—and there was unfolded to his clear-cut vision the inspired dream forgotten by the Babylonian king, in which was figured forth the successions of the great empires of the world until broken to pieces by the little stone cut out of the mountains without hands, which rolled on the feet of this great image representing the great successive nations that would rule the world and break them to pieces, but the little stone would become a great mountain—the kingdom of God—which would fill the whole world, and was destined to stand forever (*Dan. ii*).

Undoubtedly this links in with the prophecy of St. John, when he heard great voices speaking out of heaven, saying: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever" (*Rev. xi:15*).

Following the chosen ones of the *Old Testament*—and they doubtless included all the prophets of Israel—we come to the work of those who were chosen in the Meridian Dispensation, as set forth in the *New Testament*. The Christ—Prince and Lord of all; the apostles and prophets chosen by him to complete the founding of the church and start it upon its career; disseminating among the people the chosen ones of the spirit world to leaven the world with righteousness and the

knowledge of God; projecting this knowledge of God before the vision of man, in and through the Christ.

Thus Israel, the Israel of God from heaven, was distributed among the races and nations of men. Israel, as foretold by Moses, becoming the witnesses for God in the world.

Moses set before his people at the close of his work the favors that God had shown to them, the powers he had displayed in their presence at the great manifestations on Mount Sinai, when the people heard the voice of God and begged that they might be spared from hearing more, and asked that Moses be permitted to be the intermediary and be permitted to teach them the things of God; and thence onward to the border of the promised land which Moses was not permitted to enter, Israel received the word of the Lord through that prophet.

Moses also foretold the calamities which would befall the people of Israel if they departed from the Lord, disregarded his law, and scorned his revelations. These things are set forth in *Deuteronomy*, one of the *Books of Moses*, and generally considered the last. Here he said to them:

THE BLESSING AND GLORY TO BE ISRAEL'S ON CONDITION OF OBEDIENCE

"And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments, which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.

"Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy

storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

“The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways. And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee. And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord swore unto thy fathers to give thee. The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them: And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

ENUMERATIONS OF CALAMITIES TO FOLLOW DISOBEDIENCE OF GOD AND HIS LAW

“But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

“Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me. The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have con-

sumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it. The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew: and they shall pursue thee until thou perish. And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed. The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them; and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. And thy carcase shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them, away. The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed. The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart: And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee. Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof. Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them.

“Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long: and there shall be no might in thine hand. The fruit of thy land, and all thy labors, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed away: So that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head. The Lord shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone.

And thou shalt become an astonishment a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee. Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in; for the locust shall consume it. Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress them, but shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them. Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast his fruit. Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity: All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume.

"The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail. Moreover, all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee: **And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed forever.** Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favor to the young: And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee. And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given

thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee: So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave: So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, and toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates. If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, **The Lord Thy God**; then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.

“Moreover, he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the Lord thy God. And it shall come to pass that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to naught; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of

mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee: and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! And at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you" (*Deut. xxviii*).

The exposition of all this is continued in chapters xxix and xxx.

These two things, the outlines of predicted blessing on the one hand and cursing upon the other, according as Israel would accept and obey the law of God or depart from it, may be classified as the most stupendous prophecy ever uttered and the point of interest in them is that they proved true according to obedience or disobedience on the part of Israel. While the predictions of the first prophecy perhaps were only partially realized, for Israel's obedience was, even at the best, imperfect, and consequently the realization of blessings promised not fully attained, yet under her three kings, Saul, David, and Solomon, she attained great expansion and power and glory, though it was short-lived, extending over only 120 years.

On the side of the predictions of calamities that should follow disobedience is the story of a cup drained to the dregs, in their history. This began with the division of the kingdom into two kingdoms, Judah and Israel (975 B. C.). The next great calamity was the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel in the days of Shalmanezar, king of Babylon, and Hosea, king of Israel (721 B. C.), the Israelites being taken captive to Babylon, whence early in their captivity they made their escape it is alleged; the main part of them supposedly going northward into unknown lands. Since when they have been known as the "Lost Tribes". About a century later Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took Jerusalem and carried the tribe of Judah and

such of the tribe of Benjamin as adhered to him to Babylon, where the Jews served in a cruel captivity for seventy years.

After this long captivity the Jews were restored to their lands by Cyrus, king of Persia. They rebuilt the city and the temple. After the death of Cyrus they lived under varying masters, Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, until finally Palestine was made a Roman province with civil officers appointed until the coming of Christ. Seventy years later through their resistance to Roman authority and repeated rebellions they provoked a war which resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem in one of the cruelest and most destructive sieges ever laid to a city, involving more widespread and terrible sufferings of a people that history records.

According to Josephus 1,100,000 men fell in the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, and 97,000 were captured in the whole war. Of the latter number, the greater part was distributed among the provinces, to be butchered in the amphitheaters or cast to wild beasts; others were doomed to work as public slaves in Egypt; only those under the age of seventeen were sold into private bondage.*

“An equally dreadful destruction fell upon the remains of the nation, which had once more assembled in Judea, under the reign of Hadrian (A. D. 133), which Dion Cassius concisely relates. By these two savage wars the Jewish population must have been effectually extirpated from the Holy Land itself, a result which did not follow from the Babylonian captivity. Afterwards a dreary period of fifteen hundred years' oppression crushed in Europe all who bore the name of Israel, and Christian nations have visited on their head a crime (the crucifixion of Messiah) perpetrated by a few thousand inhabitants of Jerusalem, who were not the real forefathers of the European Jews. Nor in the east, has their lot been much more cheering. With a few partial exceptions, they have ever since [i. e., the destruction of Jerusalem] been a despised, an oppressed and naturally a degraded peo-

*For Josephus' account of the destruction of Jerusalem, the siege of it, the famine, the horrors of it, the brutal struggles for food, for treasure, etc., see his *Wars of the Jews*—translated by William Whiston A. M., chapters iii to x.

ple; though from them have spread light and truth to the distant nations of the earth" (*Biblical Literature*, Kitto, vol. i, p. 391-2).

Jerusalem was laid waste, the temple destroyed and the very foundations of it plowed up so that not one stone was left upon another in the mad search for supposed Jewish treasure buried beneath the sacred structure. From thence Judah, as a political and civil power, was utterly destroyed, insignia of government had "departed from his shoulder", since when Judah has been a broken and scattered people without country and even without home and everywhere they have sought refuge they have been a people hated, despised; and have endured persecutions and cruelties such as never had been inflicted upon any other people. Shiloh in the Christ, had come truly, and the "sceptre had departed from Judah!" The "lawgiver" had passed from between his feet (*Gen. xlix:10*). And so Israel has continued in that fallen state; for the ten tribes, a lost and scattered people; for Judah, through more than two thousand years, a broken and despised people; separated from among the nations to bear the hatred of all. During that time Jerusalem has been indeed "trodden down by the Gentiles". Meantime, however, it is fitting that the world and especially the Christian part of it, remember the virtues of this undoubtedly chosen people of God. Chosen to be his witness in the world; and so circumstanced that whether obedient or disobedient; whether, accordingly, in favor or in disfavor with God, they would equally be God's witness. But nevertheless it should be remembered, as one recent writer has put it, that—

"There are Jews of the highest position and ability. They are outstanding among their fellow citizens, having escaped from opprobrium through their personal qualities and their contribution to social and civic welfare. They are expressive of the latent genius of their people."

And then for the leaders of this people, beginning with Abraham, the same writer adds:

“Forget not Abram who established faith as the corner stone of justification; Moses whose laws are the foundation of our jurisprudence; David whose songs are the best of our hymnology; Isaiah who saw through heaven; and Jesus of Nazareth, the soul of Christianity, himself a Jew, every inch of him. The modern Jews, who have fed the hungers of the heart, soul, and mind of men, space would forbid cataloguing. Spinoza, gentle, wise and persecuted, whom Renan called ‘the greatest Jew of modern times’, and Durant terms ‘the greatest of modern philosophers’. Heine, who sang his lyrics from a heart anguished over the miseries of his people. Marx, radical and thundering for justice to the masses. The glorious harmonists of Germany, whose Jewish souls have given us our best in oratorio and symphony. Disraeli wisely ruling England. The Rothschilds financing Europe through bankruptcy. A few among a host” (*Scribner’s* for October, 1930).

It is a joy at this point to turn to more pleasing prospects for both Judah and all Israel than the melancholy history of this people for lo, these many centuries.

Even when enumerating the blessings for obedience on the one hand and the long list of calamities for disobedience, on the other, the Lord said through Moses:

“And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice, according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, [i. e., to the Lord—acceptance] and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the utmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the Lord thy

God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments, which I command thee this day. And the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers" (*Deut. xxx:1-9*).

Both branches of Israel, Judah and the "Lost Tribes", may accept the word of the Lord given by Jeremiah:

"Hear the word of the Lord O ye nations and declare it in the isles afar off and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat and for wine and for oil, and for the young of the flock, and of the herd and their souls shall be as a watered garden, and they shall not sorrow any more at all" (*Jer. xxxi:10-13*; see also context vs. 7, 8, 9).

"Therefore", it is said in another chapter, "Behold, the days come saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, but the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands whither he had driven them: And I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers" (*Jer. xvi:14-15*).

A like promise is made through the great prophet of Israel, Isaiah (see *Isa. xi:10-12-16*):

"Turn O backsliding children," says the Lord again in Jeremiah, "for I am married unto you and I will take you one of a city and two of a family and I will bring

you to Zion: and I will give you pastors according to my own heart which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to pass when ye be multiplied and increased in the land in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more the ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind. * * * At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord to Jerusalem: * * * In those days the House of Judah shall walk with the House of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north, to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers" (*Jer. iii:14-18*).

And now the signs of hope appear in the skies for the gathering of Judah to his land and the return of the "Lost Tribes" to the knowledge of man, and return also to their promised land. As a beginning of this work the Jews, as we have seen, are looking with more favor upon Jesus of Nazareth—are "beginning to believe in him"; likewise Judah is gathering to Jerusalem and under the protecting aegis of the British government is looking to the establishment of their national life in Palestine. Also the work of the Lord has commenced among all nations, tongues and people, "to bring about the restoration of his people upon the face of the earth"; which in broad terms means that the Israel of God from the spirit world which has been transplanted thence to the earth into earth life, and those of them who will be living in the earth at this gathering time—this Israel whom God has decreed he would make his rulers—"the great", "the noble", "the good"—will be brought together and from their pride of place in God's earth-scheme of things, shall minister the blessings of the Millennial reign. The time when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ."