

THE GREATER PURPOSE

BY ALONZO T. JONES

In the calling out of Babylon of old time there was a greater purpose than only that of their being out of Babylon. And so it is now.

This was suggested in the instruction to "let Jerusalem come into your mind"

To be out of Babylon *was great and is great: yet to be in God's purpose for Jerusalem, was then and is now far greater than that — even though that be the essential preliminary to this.

Jerusalem and the temple of God were to be rebuilt, and the pure worship of God as appointed was to be restored in the world for the blessing and salvation of the nations: and this to tell of the true, the heavenly, the spiritual Jerusalem and Temple and worship.

And so it is now: except that now it is the true, the heavenly, the spiritual itself that is to be restored and established forevermore. And the lessons of the story of that other one, are for our admonition and instruction now. Hence this line of study upon which we now are entered is one of the greatest and deepest in all the Bible.

In that experience of old, the great mass of the people, even of those who came out of Babylon and to Jerusalem, never saw this greater purpose in what they were doing: and this because they did not study the Scriptures, and did not hearken even to the living prophets in their own day.

Yet it was all in fulfillment of the Scriptures that they were out of Babylon and at Jerusalem at all. This much they could recognize and be thank-ful for; but the great purpose of all this, and the deeper and spiritual things of the Scriptures, they were willing not to know: and so were willing to drift along and bock, and miss all.

And so it is now. Therefore we must study the Scriptures on this subject.

THE RETURN

The seventy years of captivity in Babylon expired 536 B. C, the first year of the reign of Cyrus the king of Media and Persia. A hundred and seventy-six years before this, Isaiah had written the word of the Lord "to Cyrus" that he should "let go my captives, not for price nor reward." Isaiah 45:1-13.

And now Cyrus had come into the kingdom of the world. There he met Daniel, who brought to him this word of the Lord that had been written to him by name a hundred and fourteen years before he was born. Cyrus received this word as the word of God to him, believed in God, and issued his decree as follows:

"Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of Heaven and earth hath given to me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (He is the God), which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem." Ezra 1:2-4.

Under this decree nearly fifty thousand people went up to the place of the ruined Jerusalem, taking with them five thousand and four hundred of the vessels of gold and silver that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away to Babylon. Zerubbabel was governor, and Joshua the son of Josedech was the high priest.

On the first day of the seventh month an altar was erected, and the regular worship was begun: and about six months after that the foundation of the temple was laid. Ezra, Chapter 3.

THE OPPOSITION

But Satan was against all of this, and was determined that it should not succeed; and immediately he started his campaign of opposition. In the land of the Ten Tribes that had been desolated one hundred and eighty-six years before, there were now the descendents of the heathen peoples who had been put into that emptied land by the

kings of Assyria.

These people, seeing such a great number of people with more to follow come to rebuild Jerusalem, conceived the purpose to join with them and make Jerusalem a mighty fortress; and then when the time should be ripe, to revolt and set up a kingdom of their own, embracing Palestine and all the northern country west of the Euphrates.

And now when these "adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord, then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, let us build with you, for we seek your God as you do, and we do sacrifice unto Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither.

But Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us." Ezra 4: 1-3.

Then these adversaries, seeing that their political scheme was not going to carry, revealed their real spirit and "weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counsellors against them to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia."

These hired counsellors and tribal officials had it in their power greatly to hinder the operations at Jerusalem. For the funds were supplied from the imperial treasury, and the requisitions for money and materials must pass the counsellors and officials at the capital. And among these were the very ones who were under the bribing pay of these adversaries up in the land of Samaria; who could readily hang up and in many ways indefinitely delay any requisition or other paper or document that had to do with affairs at Jerusalem.

How powerful this opposition was at the court and headquarters of the kingdom, is shown in the tenth chapter of Daniel.

THE DEFENSE

Daniel was the chief subject in the kingdom. Daniel 6: 2. He being in this position, and being supremely interested in the work at Jerusalem, could not help being strongly sensible of that grand system of intrigue and particular deviltry that was being carried on in the very court of which he was a part. But against it he could not employ bribery and trickery and counter* intrigue and other deviltry. He could do better: he could appeal to God. And so he says, "In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, ... I Daniel was mourning three full weeks."

When the "three whole weeks were fulfilled" the angel of the Lord came to him and said, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days." That tells that the power and the deceitful working of the bribed counsellors was so great that for the interests of His cause and work in the world, God did not dare to leave Cyrus alone with them: and Cyrus perfectly friendly to all these interests! And when at last the angel must go to answer Daniel's anxious pleading, another mighty one, "Michael, the first of the princes" (margin) must take his place while he was gone. Verses 2, 12, 13, 20.

This gives some idea of how much the brothers at Jerusalem were troubled in their building, and their purpose frustrated, by the adversaries in Samaria, through their hired counsellors and officials at the court of Cyrus. And this was continued all the days of Cyrus — six years, to 529 B. C.; and all the days of his successor — seven years, to 522; and all the days of his successor — eight months, to 521; "even until the reign of Darius king of Persia."

In the days of Cyrus and his son, the adversaries could not really stop the work of building at Jerusalem. But in the time of Smerdis the anti-Persian, they succeeded. They wrote to him the letter that is given in Ezra 4: 11-16, and received the reply given in verses 17-22. And with this authority in their hands, they hurried up to Jerusalem "and made them to cease by force and power." And thus the work was stopped for a little while more than a year, until the second year of Darius the king — 520 B. C.

In that year, both the prophets Haggai and Zechariah began to call the people again to the building of the temple.

THE UNSEEN

In Zechariah's second vision the secret, as well as the mysterious power, of all this wide extended campaign of opposition was revealed — "He showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him." Zechariah 3: 1.

There is the explanation: Satan was the real opposer, the master* schemer, and the subtle trickster through all. This also tells that there was a higher plane and a wider field of operations than only that of the plans and actions of men against men* The real field of operations was the unseen. The real contestants were the unseen powers and agencies. The principals were God and Satan — Satan against God; and the purposes involved, pro and con, were the purposes of these.

As soon as the work was begun again, the adversaries came up with their opposition. But the builders would not cease; for "the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease till the matter came to Darius" Ezra 5:3-5

Then the adversaries themselves brought the matter to Darius: as in Ezra 5: 7-17. As this brought the fine result as related in Ezra 6: 1-13 — the adversaries were compelled to aid "with speed" the work they had so long, so diligently, and at such great expense, done all they could to hinder.

"And they builded and finished it." "And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king." Ezra 6: 14-15. And it was dedicated and the full temple worship and service was re-established in the time of the Passover and feast of the unleavened bread in the month immediately following.

Against all the adversaries that Satan could muster and all the resistance that he could make, the temple of God was finished, and His worship was again fully established in the world in His own chosen place and appointed way at Jerusalem.

But Satan was not yet done. He had failed to prevent God's temple being rebuilt and His own appointed worship being established in His own order; but now he would make utterly vain all of that by sweeping away in a day at one stroke all of God's people in all the vast world-empire of the Persians. And this is the story of the book of Esther.

Thus in point of time the place of the book of Esther is between the sixth and seventh chapters of Ezra.

Remember that all of this time the Persian empire was the world-empire: a hundred and twenty-seven provinces: from India to the Adriatic, and from the Danube to Ethiopia, besides colonies such as Carthage and Cadiz.

As the special favorite of the king, there had now risen to the chief place of power in the empire an Amalekite, Haman the Agagite. The Amelakites were the perpetual and high-handed enemies of Israel and of God (Exodus 17: 16 Margin); and this ages-long enmity was now focused in Haman.

And now with Haman in possession of this world-sweep of power, Satan planned his master-stroke. He would use Haman's power to satisfy Haman's wrath, and at the same time to accomplish Satan's will, by blotting out in a day all the Jews in that whole vast empire. And that would nullify all the purpose and all the work of the rebuilding of the temple and the re-establishing of God's own appointed worship in the world; because then none of His people would be left to worship Him.

But in all of this grand scheme and intended finishing-stroke, his failure was more complete and his defeat more overwhelming than before. Please read here the book of Esther through.

II

Even while the destroyed temple in Jerusalem was being rebuilt by Joshua and Zerubbabel 520 B.C., God's Greater Purpose in the temple and its building was revealed.

For, to Joshua the high priest, the angel of the Lord then spoke the word of God: "Behold I will bring forth My Servant, the Branch." Zechariah 3: 8.

And further, of "The Branch" the prophet was bidden to say to this same Joshua, "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, "Behold the Man whose name is The Branch: and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the Temple of the Lord. Even He shall build the temple of the Lord, and He shall bear the glory: and He shall sit and rule upon His Throne, and He shall be a Priest upon His Throne, and the counsel of Peace shall be between them both."

Zechariah 6: 1243.

This "Man whose name is The Branch," "My Servant -The Branch," is none other than the Lord Jesus.

Jeremiah tells, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch; and He shall reign as King and prosper; . . . and this is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness."

Jeremiah 23: 5-6.

And at the circumcision and naming of John the Baptist in the Psalm of praise of John's father "filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesying," this word was said:

"And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of The Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His way: to give knowledge of Salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, whereby The Branch from on high hath visited us." Luke 1: 78 margin.

THE TRUE TEMPLE

"The Branch," then, of the prophecy, is unquestionably Christ Jesus the Lord. And there is a Temple of which He personally and emphatically is The Builder. For the word is, in emphasis —

"He shall build the Temple of the Lord: even He shall build the Temple of the Lord."

What then is The Temple of the Lord, of which Christ "The Branch" is The Builder? Keeping in mind the word of the Lord, "I will raise unto David a righteous Branch," consider the following:

In Acts 15, in the meeting that was held to discuss the truth of the true Gospel against the false Gospel — Acts 15: 1, 5, 7-9, 11, 24; Galatians 1: 6-8; 2: 1, 5, 14; 3: 1 — Peter said:

"Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made a choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. And God who knoweth the hearts bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they."

"Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them."

After these had spoken, James spoke, and said that this preaching of the Gospel to all alike was in fulfillment of the prophecies, saying, "Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written, "After this I will return and will build again The Tabernacle of David, which is fallen down: and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, saith the Lord who doeth all these things." Acts 15: 747.

This story tells that through the preaching of the truth of the true Gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, "The Tabernacle of David" was being built again which had fallen down.

And since it was "unto David" that God would raise "the righteous Branch" who should "build The Temple of the Lord," it is perfectly plain that "The Temple of the Lord" that was to be built by "The Branch," of the prophets, and "The Tabernacle of David" that was being built by that very "Branch" through the 'preaching of The Gospel, are the one and the same thing.

THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID

This is evident also in the fact that the words "tabernacle," "temple," "sanctuary," "house," "tabernacle of the congregation," "temple of the Lord," "house of the Lord," are all used synonymously throughout the Scriptures; and, beginning with the tabernacle or sanctuary in the wilderness, all centered in the temple in Jerusalem, which temple was being rebuilt by Joshua and Zerubbabel when was given the revelation that The Branch should "build The Temple of the Lord."

And in truth, the original temple in Jerusalem was more the tabernacle of David than it was the temple of Solomon.

David was the first to think of it, when as yet "the ark of God dwelt within curtains."

And when David was informed from God that he could not build the house, from that day to the end of his life he

never ceased to think upon it and to prepare the materials and lay up money for the building of it. And to David, God by the Spirit gave the complete pattern — as we would say, the blueprints — of the whole temple and of each particular vessel and instrument to be used in it, even to the actual weight of each particular one. "I have prepared for the house of the Lord an hundred talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight, for it is in abundance; timber also and stone have I prepared, and thou mayest add thereto." 1 Chronicles 22: 14.

"Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of place of the inner parlors thereof, and of the place of the mercy-seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the Lord.

He gave of gold by weight for things of gold, for all instruments of all kinds of service; silver also for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments for every kind of service; even the weight of the candlesticks of gold, and for the lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof; and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, both for the candle* stick, and also for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick.

"And by weight he gave gold for the tables of Shewbread, for every table; and likewise silver for the tables of silver; also pure gold for the flesh* hooks, and the bowls and the cups; and for the golden basons he gave gold by weight for every bason, and likewise silver by weight for every bason of silver.

"And for the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubim that spread out their wings and covered the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

"All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by His hand upon me: even all the works of this pattern." 1 Chronicles 28: 11-19.

Thus, of the temple and for the temple, the preparation of everything in fullest detail by David was so complete that all that Solomon had to do, or even rightly could do, was to follow the specifications already given in writing to David.

And so in truth, in all except the actual putting of the materials in shape as prescribed, the whole house with all its appointments was altogether "the tabernacle of David" rather than of Solomon.

THE REAL ONE

Yet this was not all: at the most, this was all only a figure of what then and forever is the real "Tabernacle of David." Accordingly, when David first expressed his thought to build a house for the Lord and the Lord in* formed him that he personally could not build the house and why, the Lord then said to him:

"The Lord telleth thee that He will make thee an house." And David replied, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine house, that Thou has brought me hitherto? And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God: for Thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast seen in me the type of the Man whom Thou hast set on high." —Young's translation.

"Therefore now, Lord, let the thing that Thou has spoken concerning Thy servant and concerning his house be established forever and do as Thou hast said. Let it even be established, that Thy name may be magnified forever, saying The Lord of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel: and let the House of David Thy servant be established before Thee. For Thou, O Lord hast revealed to Thy servant saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hast thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto Thee." 2 Samuel 7 and 1 Chronicles 17.

There is the real "Tabernacle of David" — this House that God would build in honor of David, and with David the "type of the Man whom God hath set on high:" even "the Man whose name is The Branch," and who "shall build The Temple of the Lord: even He shall build The Temple of the Lord: and He shall bear the glory, and sit and rule upon His (Father's) Throne, and He shall be a priest upon His (Father's) Throne, and the counsel of Peace shall be between them both." Psalm 110: 1, 4; Zechariah 6: 12-13.

That invisible "House," "Temple," "Tabernacle," "Sanctuary," is the real "Tabernacle of David" which Christ, the Branch raised unto David, should "build again:" and which through the preaching of the truth of the true Gospel He as actually "building again" in the days of the apostles. It had "fallen down" and was in "ruins" because the people to

whom it was preached had utterly forgotten it, and had not comprehended it even before they had forgotten it. And it is "fallen down" again, and is in "ruins" again, because it has been forgotten again. Yet that divine Branch, the true Builder, lives forever more; and He will "build again the Tabernacle of David which is fallen down," and this time unto its finishing. Thank the Lord.

WHAT IT IS

And now, in truth and in fact what is this invisible House of God and Tabernacle of David — this Temple — which Christ The Branch was to build and which through His Word and His Work of the Gospel in the New Testament He was actually building in the days of the apostles? What is it?

In this, nothing but the plain and naked Word of God can answer. Therefore, please read it:

"In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining*to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. ...

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also Moses was faithful in all His House.

"For this Man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who hath builded the House hath more honor than the House. . . .

And Moses verily was faithful in all His House, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ (was faithful) as a Son over His own House, whose House we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing or the hope firm unto the end' Hebrews 2: 17; 3: 1-6.

"To whose coming as unto a living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual House, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 2: 4-5.

'These things Write I unto thee. . . . that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the HOUSE OF God, which is The Church of the Living God.'" 1 Timothy 3: 14-15.

AS THE TEMPLE

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the Household of God; and are built upon the Foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone;

"In Whom all the Building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" Ephesians 2: 19-21.

"he spake of The Temple of His Body." John 2: 21

"And "His (spiritual) Body is The Church." Colossians 1: 24; Ephesians 1: 23; 5: 30, 32; 1 Corinthians 12: 17, 27.

"Ye are God's Building." 1 Corinthians 3: 9.

This "Building groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord"

And He says, "Upon this Rock." "the chief Corner-Stone," "I will build My Church."

Christ, "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession," is The Builder of the House of God Hebrews 3: 1, 3.

"Whose House we are." Hebrews 3:6.

And "The House of God, is The Church of the Living God." 1 Timothy 3:15

It has already been stated, and these quoted words confirm, that the words "House," "Temple," "Sanctuary," "Tabernacle," are all used synonymously in the Scriptures and always centering in the temple in Jerusalem and its meaning. That as to the visible, which always was only the suggestion of the invisible.

Therefore, in the Word and work of The Gospel of Christ the true and invisible Builder, the terms "The House of God," "The Temple of the Lord," "The Sanctuary of God," "The True Tabernacle," "The Tabernacle of David," are all synonymous and center in The Temple of the Lord, The House of God, of which Christ The Branch is the Builder and which He says is The Church which He builds and which centers in the "Jerusalem which is above," and which ultimately centers in "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb who are The Temple of that Heavenly Jerusalem."

Revelation 21: 22.

And so it never can be successfully denied that The Temple of the Lord and the Tabernacle of David which Christ The

Branch builds, is the true, the invisible, the Heavenly "Great Congregation" or Universal Assembly — "The Church of the Living God." Psalm 22: 22; Hebrews 2: 10.

This is not to say that this Church — The Church which Christ builds — is all that there is of The Heavenly Temple or "Sanctuary and True Tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man:"

But it is to say in truth that is beyond all valid question that — While this may not be all of that. That is most certainly all of this.

III

In our study of the rebuilding of the ruined temple in Jerusalem we have seen how persistently Satan was always at the right hand to resist the whole design, to frustrate every purpose, and to hinder every effort. Ezra 4*6; Zechariah 3: 1.

And when, against all of that the temple was finished, how the same Adversary employed all the power in the world to sweep away in one day all of God's people in the world, so that there should be no worshippers and the building of the temple be all in vain. Esther 3.

Also we have seen how that in the very time of the building of the temple, the people were called to "Behold the Man whose name is The Branch: and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build The Temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and He shall sit and rule upon His (God's) throne; and He shall be a priest upon His (God's) throne; and-the counsel of Peace shall be between them both." Zechariah 6: 12-13.

Thus it is plain that all of that record of the rebuilding of the temple, and of Satan's resistance to it, is a prophecy of the building of the true Temple by The Branch who is The Christ. Luke 1: 78 margin.

We have seen that this Temple, this "Tabernacle of David," which The Branch should build Whom God would "raise unto David" (Jeremiah 23: 5, 6), is "the House of God which is The Church of the Living God." Ephesians 2: 19-21; Hebrews 3: 1-6; Acts 15: 7-17.

In the fulness of the time Christ came — The Branch — The Builder of The Temple of the Lord, the Restorer of "the Tabernacle of David."

As ever Satan stood at His right hand to resist Him. And now his resistance was more desperate than ever, because the contest was closer.

Barely had He come when Satan sought to devour Him as soon as He was born: and even before He was actually born Satan stood ready to devour Him as soon as He should be born. Revelation 12: 4, 9; Matthew 2: 13-16.

When Christ stood out openly as The One who was to come, then Satan rallied all his forces to frustrate His purposes; and never slackened till he had accomplished His death* John 1: 26-34; Luke 4: 1-13; Matthew 27:40-50. Here Satan failed also; for God raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand onr His own throne: there to be indeed The Builder of The Temple unto its perfect finishing. Hebrews 2: 14; Revelation 12: 5; Mark 16: 19; Zechariah 6: 12-13.

When at Pentecost The Branch began to "build again The Tabernacle 10 of David,*" Satan renewed all his energy to hinder Him in building: he sought to break down the Building Itself, and to scatter all the materials. Revelation 12: 13; Acts 4: 5-6, 21, 25-26; 5: 21, 40; 6: 9-13; 7: 57-60; 8: 1-3.

But all of this availed nothing; for the more the materials were scattered, the more the .building went on and the more The Temple grew. Acts 8: 4. This made the Adversary more desperate still and he rallied more power and increased his efforts till a perfect flood of Satanic ingenuity was raised to swallow up and sweep away forever all semblance, and every vestige of The Temple. Revelation 12: 15; Matthew 24: 21-22.

But even more than twelve hundred years of all of that failed. And now he comes to the last of his time and must make his final effort. His wrath is greater than ever, and he gathers "all power" of all his realm and exerts it to the full in every way and to the utmost extent. Revelation 12: 17; 2 Thessalonians 2: 9-10; Matthew 24: 24; Mark 13: 22. And note that all that he does all the way is done first of all against The Temple and the building of it, and against The Builder of it: and only incidentally against Christians as such.

But in all of this too he fails of his purpose. In spite of all that he could do through the ages, the building of The Temple went on; and now in spite of all the more that he can and will do, the building of The Temple will go on unto its perfect finishing. Thank the Lord. For with the mighty oath of the revealing angel it is declared, that "In the days

of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the Mystery of God shall be finished as He hath declared to His servants the prophets." Revelation 10: 5-7; Romans 9: 28.

And when it shall have been finished, again Satan employs all the power of all his greater realm than before to deal his master-stroke of all, again to sweep away in a certain set day all the worshippers of God in the world. Revelation 17: 8-14; 13: 3-4, 11-17; 11: 7-12.

And even all of this fails as failed the like effort before and as all his resistance all the way along. The blessed work of The Branch, that Divine Builder of The Temple, goes on not only unto its perfect finishing, but also unto its glorious Presentation — its Presentation to God and to Himself in the Universal Assembly and Church of the firstborn as the gloriously perfected thought of God in "the eternal Purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," "to gather together in One all things in Christ both which are in Heaven and which are in earth — even in Him." Ephesians 3: 9-11; 1: 10.

And so it is written, "I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the Victory over the beast and over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name stand on the sea of glass having the harps of God." "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

"Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen clean and white and bright, for the fine linen is The Righteousness of Saints." Revelation 14: 2; 19: 6-8.

"Christ loved The Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by The Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5:25-27.

In that Great Day and in that great event of the Glorious Presentation, "The Joy that was set before Him" is found, in all its divine and infinite fulness. And in the expression of that fulness of Joy there bursts forth the long-awaited expectation — "In the midst of The Church will I sing praise unto Thee." Psalm 22: 22; Hebrews 2: 12.

"And every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever." Revelation 5: 13.

And "The Lord thy God is mighty; He will save; He will rejoice over thee with Joy; He will rest in His Love; He will joy over thee with singing." Zephaniah 3: 17.

The Temple of God is finished.

The Tabernacle of David is a fact.

The Church of the Living God is herself.

The Universe is singing. Time has ceased to be.

Eternity alone abides, and only in the fulness of the Joy of the LORD.

"And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him. And they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads.

"And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle; neither the light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them Light; and they shall reign for ever and ever." Revelation 22: 3-5.

IV

In the story of the restoration of Jerusalem in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, there is another remarkable prophecy.

That restoration, in the Lord's purpose, included the rebuilding of the walls of the city as well as the temple itself. For the word of the angel Gabriel to Daniel was that the "street shall be build again, and the wall, even in troublous times." Daniel 9: 25.

As before related, the temple was rebuilt and finished, from beginning to finishing, in troublous times: and it was no less so in the rebuilding of the street and the wall. All the way along the opposition was carried on from its original source in Satan, through open enemies and pretended friends, through conspiracy of treacherous "brethren" with the heathen enemies, and by whatever tricks and means and meanness that such association could employ.

THE FALLING AWAY

After the building of the temple, there was in the people a general letting down of zeal and devotion that resulted indeed in a distinct falling away. This was so persistent that it is not too much to say that had it not been for the successive coming up of others from Babylon, the whole enterprise would have languished practically to defeat. From the time of the original coming out of Babylon under Zerubbabel and Joshua the son of Josedak to the finishing of the temple was twenty years. From the time of the finishing of the temple to the time of the second coming out, under Ezra, was fifty-nine years. And from the coming out under Ezra to the coming of Nehemiah to Jerusalem was twelve years.

When Ezra came he found that among the people there was such a falling away/i that they ha*- actually mingled themselves with the idolatrous nations around, and even with those who from the beginning had been the adversaries of all that they themselves were there for. "They had taken of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy seed had mingled themselves with the people of the lands. Yes the hand of the princes and rulers had been chief in this trespass." Even the sons of Joshua the son of Josedak the high priest had done this. Ezra wrought a rigid reform and separation from this trespass. But in the twelve years from then till Nehemiah came, the evil had been repeated.

THE OPPOSITION

No sooner had Nehemiah arrived at Jerusalem than the chiefs of the heathen that occupied the land of Samaria, were all alive to revive the same opposition. "When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel." Nehemiah 2: 10.

The fourth day after his arrival Nehemiah called the priests and nobles and chiefs of the Jews and began the building of the wall. And Satan was no less alive and no less diligent than before in his opposition; and is before had his instruments all prepared for his ready use. For "When Sanballat, the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn and despised us, and said, "What is this thing that ye do? Will ye rebel against the King?"

"Then answered I them, and said unto them, the God of Heaven, he will prosper us: therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem." 2: 19-20.

The workers were so placed that all of the wall, clear around, was included; and the building of it went on everywhere at once. Thus the work proceeded rapidly. "But it came to pass that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they make an end in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish which are burned? Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall." 4: 1-3

The wall was soon half way up. And "it came to pass that when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabians and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth and conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it. Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God and set a watch against them day and night." 4: 7-9. "And our, adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst of them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease. And it came to pass, that when the Jews that dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, From all places whence ye shall turn unto us they will be upon you." 4: 11-12.

From that time on, the danger was so imminent that all the people were armed, and were vigilantly watchful. "They which builded on the wall, and they that bear burdens, with those that laded, everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, everyone had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me." 4: 17.

And of Nehemiah's personal guard, while one half of them "wrought in the work, the other half held both the

shears." "So we labored in the work; and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared. ... So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me — none of us put off our clothes, saving that everyone put them off for washing," for fifty*two days till the wall was finished.

THE WORSE OPPOSITION

And all this time of all the opposition and danger from the heathen, there were a lot of the Jews themselves who were constantly conspiring with these heathen in their enmity and opposition against Nehemiah and the work in which he was engaged. Some even were in secret correspondence with these enemies; others were treacherous counselors of Nehemiah; others were pre-tended prophets bribed by Sanballat and Tobiah to "prophecy" to Nehemiah in their interests.

"In those days the nobles of Judah, sent many letters unto Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came unto them. For there were many in Judah sworn unto him, because he was the son-in-law of Shechaniah the son of Arah; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berachiah. Also they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear." 6: 17-19.

And even Eliashib the high priest was in such close alliance with Tobiah the Ammonite, that he had actually fitted up as a dwelling one of the chambers of the temple, and there had snugly ensconced Tobiah as a resident, and one of the grandsons of this "Eliashib the high priest was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite." 13: 4-5, 28.

Surely the word of the angel to Daniel was abundantly fulfilled — that the "street shall be built again and the wall even in troublous times." Yet in spite of all these sorts of opposition the work was successfully accomplished. "And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God."

THE FALSE TEMPLE

As soon as the building of the wall was finished, Nehemiah took up the task of the betterment of conduct among the priests and nobles and people. In many ways the laws — both the moral and the ceremonial — were greatly disregarded. The Jews equally with the heathen were profaning the Sabbath; and there was also this other equally profane thing of the alliances and inter-marriages with the heathen open enemies.

As had Ezra before, Nehemiah now took up for correction these mixed alliances and marriages with the heathen in general, and with the heathen enemies in particular: Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite.

"In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab. And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language; but according to the language of each people." "And I understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God. And it grieved me sore: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber. Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chamber; and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering and the frankincense."

But that grandson of Eliashib the high priest, who was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite would not separate from his heathen wife and his heathen alliance; and so, says Nehemiah, "Therefore I chased him from me. Remember them, Oh my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites. Thus cleansed I them from all strangers." 13: 7-9, 23-24, 28-30.

Sanballat the Horonite, having now as his very own this apostate Jew of the tribe, and even the very family, of the priesthood, conceived the purpose of erecting a rival temple and establishing a rival worship in Samaria, to that in Jerusalem. And he went personally to the King of Persia and obtained from him the royal permission to build his temple and false worship, claimed to be the true, and passed off as the true.

Thus was originated the temple and worship of Samaria, "Ye worship ye know not what," in contrast "with the truth, "We know what we worship: for Salvation is of the Jews." John 4: 22. At the same time also sweeping away all the rivalry of both those temples, in His statement of the infinitely wider truth: "Woman believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. But the hour cometh and now is

when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." John 4: 21, 23-24.

IN CHRISTIAN TIMES

And when "The Branch" had come, the Builder of the True and Ultimate "Temple of the Lord," this same Satanic opposition of always was diligently continued and the more desperately as this Temple means the more. And, as in the preceding chapter, we have seen that he continues this desperate opposition unto the very end of the world. And it has been again by means of a false gospel and a false temple and a false worship, that this Satanic enmity and opposition has been made most effective.

In chapter II of this series of studies, it has been made plain by the plain Scriptures that "The Temple of the Lord," "The Tabernacle of David," "House of God," of which Christ "The Branch" is the Builder, is The Church of the Living God; and that this "Temple of the Lord" and "Tabernacle of David" is built by Him through the ministration of the True Gospel "with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven."

At Pentecost, and in the event of the gift of the Holy Spirit, the open building of this Temple was begun by "The Branch," the True and divinely given Builder. And the building of that Temple, thus mightily begun went mightily on for a period; and then "The Mystery of Iniquity," through a -false gospel, and a false and rival temple and a false worship, began the work to supplant The Mystery of God in and of the True Gospel, and thus to frustrate the building of The Temple and the walls of the glorious Jerusalem which is above and free and the mother of us all.

From Jerusalem there was scattered abroad "all" of the spirit-filled Christians, except the Apostles: and these "went everywhere preaching the word" of the True Gospel. In the place of these in Jerusalem, of the new ones who came in there were many more formalists and traditionalists: Pharisees, who would subordinate Christianity to Pharasaism. These were ready instruments for the use of Satan in his opposition to the Builder, and to His building, of the new and true Temple: for with a false gospel they subverted souls.

THE FALSE GOSPELISTS

From the Church in Jerusalem there went forth some of those to Antioch and preached to the Christians there, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved" This to people who were already saved: saved by the faith of Christ the Saviour.

Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch preaching The Gospel. They immediately challenged this false gospel that people who are saved must yet "be circumcised and keep the law" — must do something — to be saved!

And there was "no small discussion and disputation with them." And when they could not maintain their false gospel against the True Gospel preached by Paul and Barnabas, they fell back on authority, and asserted that what they preached was held by the apostles and the church that were in Jerusalem whence they had come with the sanction, if not the commission, of those disciples and that church.

When they thus shifted their ground from the merit and strength of what they preached, to the ground of the authority of the church, this put the Apostles and the church at Jerusalem in place of themselves in the question at issue. Therefore it was "determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them (Titus), should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this matter."

THE MEETINGS IN JERUSALEM

When these arrived at Jerusalem "they were received of the church and of the apostles and elders; and they declared all things that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees, which believed, saying that "it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the Law of Moses."

Then there was a second meeting, in which "the apostles and elders with the whole church" met "to consider this matter." After there had been "much disputing," Peter arose and said, "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of The Gospel and believe. And God, who knoweth the hearts, bear them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost even as he did unto us: and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God to put

a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear. But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."

"Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

"And after they had held their peace,. James answered, saying, Men and brethren hearken to me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out 'of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world. Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God."

"Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; . . . and they wrote letters by them after this manner. The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, ye must be circumcised and keep the law; to whom we gave no such commandment."

THE OPPOSITION RENEWED

This stilled the false gopelists for the moment, but not for long. They soon rallied their ill confidence and their bad courage, and entered more determinedly upon their campaign of opposition. They pursued Paul everywhere and by every means that they could employ. They insisted that Paul was not an apostle at all; that he had not seen Christ; that he was only a tent-maker plying his trade for a living; that he got his gospel only from men and was sent by men and was preaching only to please men.

In this general campaign they went into Galatia, and there they skillfully plied their opposition that they deceived and confused — "bewitched" — and even turned back from Christ to their false gospel, the Galatian Christians. This was the cause of Paul's writing the letter to the Galadans: which, more than any other Scripture, reveals the secret and principle of this whole matter.

"Paul, an Apostle, not of men neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead . . . unto the churches of Galatia. ... I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto-another gospel: which is not another, but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ.

"But though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other gospel unto you let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

"Do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I vet pleased men, I should not He the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that The Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

He himself had been a traditionalist, even a surpassing one: "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted The Church of God and wasted it: and profited in the Jews' religion above many of my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

"But when it pleased God ... to reveal His son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. . . .

"Then fourteen years after I went up again unto Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also (this was the time of Acts 15). And I went up by revelation and communicated unto them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles. . . . But neither Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised; and that because of false brethren unawares brought in, which came in privacy to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus,

that they might bring us into bondage. To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour: that the truth of The Gospel might continue with you." Galatians 1 and 2.

THE TRUE GOSPEL

Thus the real question and the whole question, was "the Truth of The Gospel;" and whether the truth of the Gospel should continue or whether it should cease?

Whether it should be the true Gospel, or a false gospel, that should be preached?

Whether it should be the perfect and eternally established Salvation of souls, or the deceitful subversion of souls?

Whether man's Hope should be an anchor, sure and steadfast; or whether it should be only "a spider's web?"

And this the very thought of the Scriptures as to the "walls" of this True Jerusalem "which is the mother of us all:"

For thus it is written:

"Do Thy good pleasure unto Zion: build Thou the walls of Jerusalem." Psalm 51: 18.

"Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation and Thy gates Praise." Isaiah 60: 18.

That is to say, that God in Christ has made His Salvation so complete and so strong and so sure and so enduring that it is the divinely perfect protection and defense of every soul that has it; and that He intends that this Salvation — the Gospel of this Salvation — shall be preached, and so preached, that it may be so received and so preached, that it may be so received and known, that every soul shall perpetually dwell in the quietness and assurance and perfect Peace of God which passeth all understanding and keeps the heart and mind through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4: 7.

"In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah, We have a Strong City: Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.

"Thou wilt keep Him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed (anchored) on Thee, because he trusted in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is the Rock of Ages." Isaiah 26:1-4.

This is The Gospel that God in Christ put into the world of sin.

This is The Gospel that He revived in the world with the bountiful refreshing from Heaven at Pentecost.

This is The Gospel that Stephen preached to the hard-hearted and rebellious Sanhedrin, and for which they stoned him to death.

This is The Gospel that Paul received from Christ in Glory and which he preached everywhere.

This is The Gospel of God — the eternal Gospel.

This is The Gospel of "eternal Salvation" — Salvation that is eternal for every soul who receives it.

This is The Gospel.

THE CRISIS

But Satan never wants any souls to have for his protection and defense the mighty wall and bulwark of this Salvation. And so again and more determinedly He set about to make the building of this wall to be as far as possible frustrated: and that "in troublous times."

Against the plain and definitely declared and written conclusion of "the apostles and elders and the whole church" in Jerusalem at the meeting in Acts 15, the false gospelists in their renewed endeavor succeeded in swerving to their cause even the apostle James the Lord's brother.

Greatly encouraged and strengthened by the influence and use of this name, they proceeded to further and greater conquest. And most fittingly this effort — and the crisis of the whole controversy with it — occurred at Antioch where their contention had been begun.

Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch as before, preaching The Gospel To Antioch Peter came, also preaching The Gospel In the midst of their united building of the walls of Salvation, there came to Antioch again a bunch of the false gospelists. These "came from James" and by the influence of that name they so effectually plied their wiles and wiliness, that Peter was actually swung their way. By this great accession the other Jewish Christians there were drawn over, and even "Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation."

"But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of The Gospel. I said unto Peter before them all: If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest the Gentiles to

live as do the Jews?

"We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ, — even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law. For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

"But if, while we seek to "be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build up again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.

"I do not frustrate the grace of God. For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

THE MYSTERY

Only the recognition of the hypnotic presence of Satan in that false gospel and with the promoters, can explain its workings there.

Both Peter and James had stood up for, and clearly spoken for, the truth of The Gospel, in the meeting in Jerusalem when the question was directly considered. And the published letter carried the statement of their position. Yet that adverse influence was so strong that it could cause James to swerve and for a time to forget his own publicly spoken words in that meeting, and to disregard the conclusion that had been unanimously set down in that published letter. Before that meeting in Jerusalem, Peter, in the case of Cornelius, had met this very issue and had decided it perfectly straight; and afterward had met the charge of the false gospelists, and against their charge had so held the truth of The Gospel that they were silent. Acts 10 and 11. In that meeting on this same question in Jerusalem, Peter cited this former fact, and confirmed it by his speech there. And the letter of the conclusion reached in that meeting, was his equally with all the others.

And yet against all of this personal experience and knowledge in the truth of The Gospel, Peter, by that evil influence of the false gospelists, was caused to "withdraw and separate himself from true Christians. And Peter, who with the perfect calm of Christian boldness had repeatedly faced the murderous Sanhedrin, now withdrew and separated himself from true Christians, "fearing them which were of the circumcision!"

Barnabas, who for eighteen years had steadily preached the truth of The Gospel, and for years had preached it harmoniously with Paul, now; was "carried away" with the dissimulation — the two-facedness, the hypocrisy — of the false gospelist crowd.

What but Satanic power and the Satanic delusion of traditionalism and formalism passed off for the way of salvation, can explain all of that. And even then, it is a mystery how all of that could be done even by Satanic power.

Yes, it is a mystery, that is the truth: a mystery beyond fathoming. For that was the beginning of the working of the very "mystery of iniquity" which finally revealed and presented in the world "the man of sin" opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, and as God sitting in the temple, the rival, false, and pretended temple of God showing himself that he is God. 2 Thessalonians 2: 4-7.

That speech of Paul's saved the day for the truth of The Gospel, with the apostles and in The Temple of the Lord and Tabernacle of David — The Church of the Living God — of which The Branch is the Builder.

THE NEW FALSE TEMPLE

But the false gospelists continued in their false way, making "troublesome times" for all who would have and hold only the truth of the Gospel of the Eternal Salvation of God by the faith of Christ alone.

Also on the part of the Christians from the Gentiles there was a losing of "their first love" because of their not giving to the Holy Spirit the supremacy in all things of the individual and of The Church. In their lack and the absence of the Holy Spirit from His own true place, the guidance and control of the churches, and in the churches, was usurped by men and became wholly human with the indulgence of wholly human ambitions under the inspiration of the continual and ever-active Adversary of The Builder and the building of "The Temple of the Lord."

Men, such as Diotrephes, loving "to have the preeminence," spoke "perverse things to draw away disciples after

them," and asserted authority to "cast out of the church" all who would not submit to their dictation. Revelation 2: 4; Acts 20: 17, 29-30; 3 John 9-10. Here also there was set up an imitation or "antitype" or professed "continuance" of the Mosaic order.

In the Scriptures the terms "elder" and "bishop" designate the same persons: the word "elder" signifying primarily "an older person," and "bishop" signifying an "over-seer," a "lookout." And these are distinctly instructed that while they are over-seers they are not to think that they are overlords or over-rulers. Acts 20: 28; 1 Peter 5: 1-3 margin. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Matthew 23: 6-11.

But in the indulgence of human ambitions and propensities there was asserted and assumed a distinction of dignities amongst these themselves, and of these all above the people. The one who of the elders could have the chief seat, held that he alone was properly bishop: while the others were properly the elders or presbyters: and that as bishop his was a dignity superior to theirs, and accordingly he must be held and addressed as "the bishop" while the others as inferior must be held and addressed only as "elder" or "presbyter." And in turn the elders or presbyters must be held as superior to the deacons.

This made three "orders" of these "dignitaries" — bishops, presbyters, and deacons. And these three together assumed a superiority and asserted an authority that never could belong to them, over the people. The three "orders" as one asserted for themselves the distinction of "the clergy" while the general membership of the churches were only "the laity."

Then these three "orders" of the "clergy" set up the doctrine and the claim that they in the "Christian Church" were the legitimate successors of the high priest, the priests, and the Levites, of the Mosaic order. With this also there was indulged a splendor of dress and display and /unction analogous to that of the sanctuary services under the Levitical law, while the air of superiority and the exercise of authority that were indulged were always those of the Roman magistracy instead of that of any Christian ministry.

And since "it is of necessity that a priest have somewhat to offer," the imposture was extended by turning the Lord's Supper into a "sacrifice" which the "priest" offered; and the imposture was completed in the "daily sacrifice of the Mass" by that "priesthood" with its accompanying "altar," "tabernacle," and "sanctuary."

With all of this the step was easy to the arrogance that asserted and demanded that "we should look upon the bishop even as we would upon the Lord Himself;" that, "the church is founded" upon the bishops, and every act of the church is controlled by these same rulers;" and that "Whence you ought to know that the bishop is the church and the church is the bishop, and if any one is not with the bishop he is not in the church."

Thus by these "bishops" and their "clergy" there was built up an hierarchical system that they called "the church" but that was utterly false to every idea of the Church of the Scriptures, of Christ, and of God. In that church these overlords, in their overbearing despotism, issued commands and made demands that were not only unchristian but anti-Christian. Then all dissent was "heresy" and all disobedience was "schism," and the Christians who dissented and disobeyed were cast out of that "church."

However, it is worthy of note that the over-lording ones were compelled to acknowledge that these Christians were not cast out because of any disrespect or disobedience to Christ or to His word, and it has stood for all time, that, "Neither have heresies arisen, nor have schisms originated, from any other source than this — that God's priest is not obeyed . . . whom . . . if the whole fraternity should obey ... no one would rend the church by a division of the unity of Christ."

The "unity" of this man-made and heathen system called "the church" was then made to be of more importance than either truth or righteousness, or even than Christian character. No room was allowed for any question as to what any one taught, or what his Christian character, "so long as he teaches out of the pale of unity." In this way the very truth of Christ was made to be "heresy;" and the truest Christians were made to be "heretics" and "schismatics" to be persecuted and destroyed out of the world.

And to this utterly false and wholly human and Satanic construction there was arrogated the divine idea and title of The Church according to the whole, and therefore The Catholic Church, and The Body of Christ. And when, in the progress of this federated and confederated system, the development had spread over the Roman world and had culminated in one bishop at the great center of the recognized as well as the asserted "head" of this "body," then that man was held to be the Head of the catholic Church, die Head of the Body of Christ, and therefore "vicar of

Christ" or "vicegerent of the Son of God," the Fountain of faith and of the truth and consequently infallible.

But, in such a place as that, and embedded in such enormous claims as those, what could be that man other than truly "that man of sin who as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God?"

Through the ministrations of the truth of The Gospel, preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, The Man whose name is The Branch is building The Temple of the Lord and "a strong city" whose walls are Salvation and whose gates are Praise — The glorious Church of the Living God.

At the same time, and in the vicious opposition of rivalry and enmity to that Temple, through an utterly false gospel of forms and formalism and traditionalism, Satan has built a false temple — a false church — wherein sits only "the man of sin" to be worshipped: all so false that twice the Lord Jesus pronounces it "the synagogue of Satan," and twice declares of it, "Which thing I hate" Revelation 2: 9; 3: 9 and Revelation 2: 6, 15.

V

To the people of Israel in the wilderness the Lord said, "Let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them."

Yet it was not by the sanctuary itself as such that He would dwell among them; but by the service and ministry of the priesthood in the sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and offerings for sin on behalf of the people.

This service and ministration was that of The Gospel in their day: the Gospel through which by confession and forgiveness of sins the people were brought to God in atonement: the believer and God being made "at one:" the believer dwelling in God and God in him.

Thus God would dwell among them by dwelling in them. But they, mistaking only the forms of the things, held that it was by the sanctuary itself that God would dwell among them; and that just by the sanctuary itself being in the midst of their camp, and the temple in the midst of their land in Jerusalem, the Lord was dwelling in the midst of them.

This was the use that was made of the sanctuary and of the temple in Jerusalem that followed it. And by this formalism that kept God far off from any real place in themselves, their iniquities ruined themselves and the nation and the temple in which the Lord dwelt as best He could among them.

The Lord had first to destroy the sanctuary, and next to scatter them abroad out of their own land and utterly to destroy the temple, to get their minds and hearts away from that formalism and formalistic idolatry. Jeremiah 7: 3-14.

And even all of this was only partially effectual; for still in the time of Christ they held that perfection was by the Levitical priesthood and law; and both Jesus and Stephen were killed because these cast what they considered to be reflection on the temple and customs, Hebrews 7: 11; 10: 1; Matthew 26: 61; Mark 14: 58; Acts 7: 48-50; 6: 13-14.

THE TRUE WORSHIP

But all of this and all other formalism and all formalistic worship, the Lord Jesus swept away with the truth that the time had come when neither in the mountain and temple of Samaria nor in that at Jerusalem should be the place for men to worship God; but that "the true worshippers are those who worship God in Spirit and In Truth.

In the spirit of formalism, the temple and the worship make the worshipper.

In the Spirit of God and of His Truth, the worshipper makes both the temple and the worship.

"Your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God." 1 Corinthians 6: 19.

"Ye are the Temple of God and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." 1 Corinthians 3: 16.

"Ye are the Temple of the Living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them" 2 Corinthians 6: 16.

"To Whom coming as unto a Living Stone, . . . chosen of God indeed and precious, ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house" 1 Peter 2: 4-5.

"In Whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord. In Whom ye also are builded for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Ephesians 2: 21-22.

This "holy Temple," this "habitation of God," that is composed of Spirit-filled Christians "builded together" by the Lord Christ Himself, — this is "The Church of the Living God."

This Temple — "The Universal Assembly and Church of the high-born" — is not composed of a promiscuous gang,

gathered by men, but of particularly "called out" and prepared ones by the Spirit and word of God: each one a living stone reflecting the image of the Builder, and the whole building reflecting the perfect image of God and radiating all the fulness of the manifold glory of God.

Now who only and alone could be the Builder of this Temple, this Church? Certainly none but He Whom the Scripture names and calls all the Universe to behold. "Behold the Man whose name is The Branch! He shall build The Temple of the Lord: even He shall build The Temple of the Lord, and He shall bear the glory."

And to this divine appointment and proclamation He Himself responds, "I will build My Church, — and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

THE SANCTUARY

See how completely and how exclusively this is certified in the Scriptures:

1. When the sanctuary and the tabernacle in the wilderness was to be built, which was only "a figure," and only "for the time then present" — while the word was, "Let them make Me a sanctuary," they were not left to make as the sanctuary whatever Moses or they might think would be the sanctuary.

No: both Moses and they were particularly charged. "According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." Exodus 25: 9.

"And look that thou make them after their pattern which was showed thee in the mount." Verse 40.

"And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion there-of which was showed thee in the mount." 26: 30.

"As it was showed thee in the mount, so shall they make it." 27: 8.

Thus all was showed to Moses in "pattern," and strictly according to that "in all things" it must be made.

"Yet this was not all: neither was Moses nor were they allowed to proceed according to the pattern as he might hold it in his mind from what he had seen and as he might tell them. He was required to write out in utmost detail, by the Spirit of God, each and every particular item of the sanctuary and all of its appointments. Read Exodus 25: 9 to 30: 38.

And even this was not all: All those, both men and women, by whose hands the sanctuary or any part of it or its appointments was to be made, must be specially called and endowed with wisdom from God for that particular thing.

"See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding and in all manner of workmanship.

"And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded them." Exodus 31: 2-3, 6.

Also of Bezaleel, "He hath put in his heart to teach, both he and Aholiab." 35: 30, 34.

"Then wrought*Bezaleel and Aholiab., and every wise hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom, and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded." 36: 1.

By the Spirit of- God to see the pattern, then by the Spirit to have written out in complete detail a description of the pattern, and then by the Spirit's endowing every worker with "wisdom and understanding to know how to work" in what was to be done strictly according to the instructions in the written description of the pattern that was showed — only thus was built the sanctuary that was only "a figure" and only "for the time then present."

THE TEMPLE

2. When the temple was to be built in Jerusalem, to take the place of the sanctuary and the tabernacle, it was so again.

By the Lord Himself, Solomon was chosen to be the builder of the temple. Yet Solomon was not allowed to build according to what might be* his view of what should be the temple. Nor was he left to gather from the description of the sanctuary what he might think that the temple would be like, and build according to his deduction from that. No: this was a large advance upon that, and must be known itself and for itself. And so God gave to David "by the

Spirit" "the pattern" of the temple and of every thing connected with it. And then, "said David, The Lord made me understand in writing by His hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern."

And this writing, as that concerning the sanctuary, was in fullest detailed description of every part. Read in 1 Chronicles 28: 11-19 the statement about it, and think of what must have been the description itself as given in the writing given to David. And this writing, as now the blue-prints of a building must be followed precisely in every detail.

And when the pattern had been shown, and when the full description in writing had been given by the Spirit of the Lord, then men endowed by God with wisdom for the purpose were to be the workmen in the construction of it all: Solomon, with wisdom beyond all other men (1 Kings 4: 29-34); the men "whom David did provide" (2 Chronicles 2: 7); and that son of the widow of the daughters of Dan who was the "master-craftsman" of the king of Tyre. 2 Chronicles 2: 12-13.

Thus was built the temple that was only "a figure of the true" and only "for the time then present."

HOW THE TRUE ITSELF

Now, when thus it was twice in the building of the figure of the true, how alone must it be in the building of The True itself? Who only could possibly build The True — who but "the Man whose name is The Branch" who is named to do it?

Remember that the men were "called by name" who were to build the sanctuary. None other could do it.

Solomon was chosen by name to be the builder of the temple. No other could do it.

And when this is true of only the figures of the True, how much more is it true of The True itself? When only "the Man whose name is The Branch" is named to be The Builder of The True, then only He can do it. No other could possibly do it.

"He shall build The Temple of Ac Lord: even He shall build The Temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory."

To nobody but to Him has the building of The True ever been com-mitted. None but Him has ever been named in that connection.

And where is the pattern showed of The True, as to be built by Him, as was showed of each of the two figures of The True?

Where is any written description of The True, in full and precise detail, as to be built by Him, as was given of each of the two figures of The True?

Nowhere. Not in all the Scriptures is there any hint of any such thing.

Is it asked, How then could He build The True without any pattern or written description? The perfect answer is, He can do it perfectly without either of these —

Because from eternity He is one with God and one of God.

Because His mind is the very and express reflection of the mind of God

Because it was in Him that there was purposed "the eternal purpose" of God, of which The Temple of God, of which He is the Builder, is the manifestation.

And He from eternity being all of this —

Being one with God and of God,

Being the One in whom The True was eternally purposed,

His mind being the mind of God,

When He builds The True He is only giving expression to the thought of God with which from eternity He has been familiar, and in the purpose which in eternity was purposed in Him. In this as in all else He is "The Word" — the expression of the thought — of God. He no more needed a pattern of the True Temple than He needed a pattern of Creation.

And this again tells how utterly is excluded everybody but Christ Himself from being the Builder of "The Temple of the Lord" which is The True.

And when that Temple, that House of God, is the Church of the Living God, this also tells how utterly is excluded everybody but God in Christ by the Holy Spirit from being the Builder of The Church.

THE BUILDING BEGUN

Christians are the "built" ones, not builders: except as "workers together with God" through the ministry of the Gospel to bring to Him the "stones" with which He builds the House. 1 Peter 2: 4; I Corinthians 12: 18.

Christians as thus "build together" are "God's Building." 1 Corinthians 3: 9; Ephesians 2: 22.

Thus it was that at and in Pentecost "the Man whose name is The Branch" began to "build again the Tabernacle of David which was fallen down, and to raise up the ruins thereof."

Note it: the eleven of the apostles whom the Lord left to begin under the New Order the preaching of The Gospel, were men who, each one, had been personally selected and called by the Lord Himself to follow Him.

They had all been in close relation to Him and taught by Him for more than three years.

They had been ordained by Him unto and in and for this ministry of The Gospel as "workers together with God" in His building of "The Temple of the Lord."

And yet, with all of this, they were not yet allowed to preach a word nor to do a thing in that ministry to which they had been chosen and called and taught and ordained and commissioned; but were to "tarry" in Jerusalem "until endued with power from on high," "to wait for the promise of the Father in the baptism with the Holy Ghost" by whom they should "receive power" — the power from on high for which they were to "wait."

Then, then, "ye shall be witnesses unto Me." Until then they could not be true witnesses unto Him, nor true ministers of Him, nor workers together with Him.

And so it is yet and forever. Being chosen and called and taught and ordained and commissioned by the Lord Himself — all of this does not qualify for the ministry of The Gospel as a "worker together with God." All of this is good.

Indeed all of this is necessary. But any of it or even all of it, does not qualify. The enduement "with power from on high" in "the promise of the Father" of the "baptism with the Holy Ghost" — this qualifies. And this alone qualifies.

This is how in the New Order the building of The Temple of the Lord, The Church of the Living God, was begun by "the Man whose name is The Branch," the true and divinely appointed Builder. And this only is how it ever can go on.

THE FALLING AWAY

And thus alone it did go on, and gloriously, at the beginning. But there came "a falling away." The Holy Spirit was not received and held and courted above all The "first love" was lost. Men and man's thoughts and purposes and ways were promoted. Men, even men of sin, arose "speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them."

These ministered to themselves, not to Christ. Their disciples must minister to them, not to Christ. These all were workers together with men, not with God. These supplanted Christ as the Builder, and made themselves the "builders" of "the church:" and thus the "building," "the church," was their own, not God's. The conception, the design, and the purpose, were all their own, not the Lord's at all.

No person having "the mind of Christ" could ever even think in such a line or of such a course as that. .These could see the invisible and could "see Him who is invisible:" and having His mind that is the emptying of all self that God may appear, they could easily and continuously have God's purpose always in mind and be truly "workers together with God."

But these others, having not the Spirit and so not the spiritual mind, but only the carnal or natural mind that "is enmity against God and is not subject to the Law of God neither indeed can be" — the mind that is of Satan — could not in spiritual things think any otherwise than in the conceptions and purposes of Satan; and so were but ready instruments of Satan in his perpetual opposition to the building and to the Builder of The Temple of the Lord.

THE FALSE TEMPLE

And these having no pattern nor description of the True Temple, nor of any other building that they should build, • were necessarily left to the conjurations and vain imaginings of their own carnal minds that were "enmity against God." And the best that they could do was to steal from the Mosaic order what they would have for their perverse conception of "temple," "priest* 24 hood," "sacrifice," "altar," "tabernacle" and "sanctuary."

And this resorting to Moses was in itself the forsaking of Christ: for in the Mount of Transfiguration, with Moses

personally present "in glory," the "Voice out of the bright cloud" "from the excellent glory" had proclaimed of Christ to all in the world forever, "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye Him."

And again, on this very subject there stood the plain word of God that it is just because He is the Builder of the House, "His own House," that "this Man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses." Hebrews 3: 3.

Thus, even if they could have had really Moses and the Mosaic order, this would have been the certain rejection of Christ, and of God's command to "hear Him." It would have been the rejection of the excellent glory itself, for only its reflected glory.

But they could not in truth, but only in pretense, have either Moses or the Mosaic order: that was "abolished" and "done away." 2 Corinthians 3: 7*15. And when they forsook Christ for Moses, and didn't get Moses, then in the nature of things they had nothing — nothing but the perverse notions of unspiritual men led by the mind that is enmity against God.

And since the Mosaic organization of "the church in the wilderness" was of and for a people of distinct and definite tribes all dwelling close together in a very limited area, it was literally impossible for even these perverse minds to make this organization applicable to individuals or "two or three" or other small congregations far apart and of different countries and languages and distributed all over the world. Therefore for their "church organization" their natural minds naturally were pleased with and readily adopted the political form and order of organization of the earthly and worldly and heathen governments of Greece and Rome: Greece first and Rome shortly afterward as their natural and worldly ambitions grew.

And this was at once, and in itself, to espouse the Satanic. For Rome was "where Satan dwelleth" and where "Satan's throne is." Revelation 2: 13. And the Roman government was Satan's mightiest weapon in his perpetual war against God and against all that is of God. And that false temple, their "church" thus conceived and constructed, the Lord Jesus twice designates as only what it inevitably is, "The synagogue of Satan." And the Scripture further distinguishes it as "the temple" wherein, "in the place of God," sits "the man of sin, the son of perdition opposing all that is of God or called God, showing himself that he is God or called God, and passing himself off as God." Revelation 2: 9; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3*4. Read also Revelation 12 and 13.

And when the Satanically devised Romish imperialized "church" and that Satanically inspired and controlled Roman imperial State were united in the- iniquitous combine that composed the harlot-inspired and harlot-ridden "Beast," again the Scripture states the exact fact and tells the perfect truth when it says that to the Beast "the dragon, that old serpent which is the devil and Satan," gave "the power of himself and the throne of himself." Revelation 13: 2; Greek 17: 3.

And for more than sixteen hundred years that Roman imperialized "church" demonstrated to all the world its essentially Satanic character and rule. And in this there was also demonstrated in perfection to all the universe what, and only what, can be done by human "builders" of The Temple of the Lord, The Church of the Living God.

THE FALSE BUILDERS

At the very beginning, Peter gave to that sort of thing a thrust and a slam that ought to be sufficient forever to everybody but Satan. When the "church" officials of the Jews assumed authority to dictate and to manage in the building of The True Temple of the Lord, Peter, "filled with the Holy Ghost," told them that it was "by <the name of Jesus Christ" that the things were done that they were opposing, and added:

"This is the Stone that was set at naught of you builders, which is become the Headstone of the corner." Acts 4: 11. "You builders!" "you builders!" You, assuming to be builders when you know so little of what you are about that the very first thing that you do is to reject and "set at naught" — count as nothing — the one Stone that is the all essential of the whole Building!

But in spite of all that in the Scriptures the Lord could say of and against that sort of thing, and in spite of all the demonstration of the Satanic character and working of that sort of thing from die days of the apostles until now, men, uninspired men, carnally minded men, have continued to assume to be "builders" of God's infinite House, The Temple of the Lord, The Church of the Living God!

And every such attempt has been only a blind, bungling, blundering; procedure: and the result only a contrivance that time has proved, in every instance, to be so arrogant, so overbearing, so despotic — so unchristian, so Satanic

— as to make utterly tired every Christian spirit that it could reach.

Even professed Protestants who saw the Satanic character and enormities of that original false "church" and were glad to denounce it as the Satanic thing that it is — even these have gone about to build "the church!" And in every instance, in principle and in form and in practice, they have followed the course of that original false "church." And when these in their place and turn made themselves unbearable to better-wishing people, and cast out all dissenters, then even these cast out ones in their turn have repeated the same old dismal story and have assumed to build "the church."

And this has been repeated over and over till the world is afflicted and Christianity disgraced with as many of them as there are days in the year, or more, each one of them claiming to be "the church" — "the only true church." And now these all, compelled by the truth and the facts of things to recognize the falsity of that claim, set up the other equally false claim that it is all of them together "as one" that is "the church." And so they now go about by compromises and mutual recognitions and federations and confederations and inter-relations and councils to have all molded into one United World Church. And then this "one body," including the old original false Satanic one, in combination and cooperation with a United World Nations, to establish this world-combine of Satanic falsities as "the Kingdom of God," and to compel all people to accept it as "the Kingdom of God" and the ultimate and final "true church," and to worship according to the will and dictation of that second Satanic thing of the kind — or rather the same thing the second time — to rule the world. Revelation 17: 7-8.

But not one of them alone is The Church, and not all of them together "as one" can be The Church. Each one of them alone is a false "church," and all of them together, "as one," only intensifies the falsity.

There is not one of them that has not been used, and that does not stand ready to be used, in its degree, to usurp the place and authority of God, after the example of the original false "church," and in that place to act altogether unlike God.

There is not one of them that has not been used, and that does not stand ready to be used, to oppose the truth of God and to condemn and cast out and persecute true Christians.

There is not one of them in the world, that any person and every person does not need to be saved from to be Christian.

And is not the absolute Babylonish confusion of all the would-be builders and buildings of "the church," from first to last, with the first definitely designated by the word of God as "Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" — is not all of that sufficient demonstration that no one other than The One named, "the Man whose name is The Branch," could ever build it? When will men ever learn this, and let Him do it?

THE CHRISTIANS

This does not say that there are not now any Christians in any of them.

There are some Christians in ail of them. But this is not by any virtue or merit in these "churches," but in spite of the falsity of them and in them.

Note it: the Samaritans were a mixed and mingled heathen people. The Samaritan temple was the result of an apostate Jew joining with that mingled heathenism in its Satanic opposition to the true temple in Jerusalem, and so was all and always absolutely false. Yet in setting before the Jews and all people for all time the model "neighbor" of the Law of God, the Lord Jesus cited "a certain Samaritan."

Now this Samaritan was not what he was, by any virtue or merit of or in that temple or its worship; but altogether in spite of it. And so it is with all these other false temples. The Christians in them, as that Samaritan, are what they are as Christian not by any virtue or merit or good of or in any "church" itself, but altogether in spite of it.

See it again: the heaviest denunciations that Jesus uttered, the heaviest that He had, were spoken to and of the high ones, the leaders and officials, of "the church" — the "church organization" of the time. Even their "missionary work" was a curse to all who were brought under their power: "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves." Read the whole of Matthew 23, with Isaiah 3: 12; 9: 16.

But as these carried the Scriptures with them everywhere, those who received the Scriptures and not that "church," and followed the Scriptures instead of that "church," were true worshippers and free, and escaped the destruction

and annihilation that came to that whole "church" and temple and city.

And so it is now with these "church organizations" and "temples" and "great city Babylon." The farther from them a person is, the better he is off, and the better chance he has to be a true worshiper, and a true Christian and Free in the glorious Liberty wherewith Christ makes Free; and the more surely he escapes the destruction and annihilation of the whole series and combination of their whole "church" and "temple" and "great city."

And the truth of all of this is told in the brief but mighty word of the "Voice from Heaven, saying; Come out of her My people: that ye be not partaken of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." Revelation 18: 1-5.

THE TIME OF THE FINISHING

The Satanic opposition to the True Builder and to His building of The Temple of the Lord has prevailed long enough. The Satanic succession and array of false "temples" has deluded and deceived and cursed the world long enough. It is time — high time — that "the Man whose name is The Branch" should have His own place as really and actually The Builder of The Temple of the Lord.

It is time that this Temple shall be seen and studied and known as what it is in truth and in the truth.

For now is the time when the building of this Temple of the Lord, The Church of the Living God, is to be finished: and it will be done.

It will be done by "the Man whose name is The Branch" His own Personal Self as the Builder and Finisher, by the Holy Spirit, and presented to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but holy and without blemish.

Now is the time of the finishing of all things. And in this time of the grand finishing, the grandest finishing of all is the finishing of The Temple of the Lord, The Glorious Church of the Living God, by "the Man whose name is The Branch" and the grand and glorious Presentation of it to Himself and before the delighted universe of God.

And in the building and in the finishing and in the grand Presentation of this Temple of the Lord, the Glorious Church, by the Builder and Finisher, the Man whose name is The Branch — in all and through all and over all, "He shall bear the Glory."

XXX

This booklet, The Greater Purpose is sequel to the previous one, From Babylon to New Jerusalem, in the series dealing with Ecumenism and Biblical Ecclesiology, discussion of which is the current topic of these days. Now, having the rubbish out of the way, we are prepared to see and to study The Temple itself: and this will be done in the next booklet after this:

THIS IS THE CHURCH