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THE SUBSTANCE
OF A MINISTRY ON THE
OFFICE OF THE APOSTLE
IN THE GENTILE CHURCH

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PREFACE

The writer, in preparing a new edition of this Ministry, delivered by him in December, 1834, has only made a few verbal corrections. In all material respects it remains unaltered. Considering the time when it was delivered, when the idea of an Apostleship was strange to us, when we had no experience of the practical working of the office; it is evident that the subject of the Apostolic Ministry required to be treated in the most elementary way possible.

After the death of Mr. Irving, in December, 1834, the author was directed to proceed to Edinburgh, and to instruct the Church there on the Apostolic office: "Teach not thyself; teach thine office in the midst of them;" and he delivered a course of lectures on the Ministry of the Apostle in the Gentile Church. Some short notes of his teachings were made by one of the ministers present, and he was requested to look them over and correct them for printing, as the subject was of great interest to all the Churches at that particular time, when the number of those who should serve in the office of Apostle was being made up previous to their Separation, which took place in July, 1835.

The Ministry, now reprinted, contains the substance of these teachings.

At the time these lectures were delivered, the nature and duties of the Apostolic office were little known, neither was there any clear notion of the distinct duties belonging to the Fourfold Ministry of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Pastors.

The members of the Churches in the present generation have grown up in the practical experience of the working of these Ministries, and in the fruition of the blessing of Apostolic rule and doctrine; and they have known the nature and distinctive character of the several Ministries of the universal and of the particular Church which owe their endowment and development to the actings and teaching of the Apostles. But the fact of the presence of these Ministries as forming a necessary and most important part of the living organization of the Body of Christ, in the faith of which they have been brought up, but which, except among ourselves, is so little understood or recognized, makes it desirable that the grounds of our recognizing the Apostleship, and the Ministries springing as it were out of and dependent on it, as the integral and principal functions of that organization, should not be lost sight of.

As has been said, the reprint of this Ministry has been undertaken at the request of some of the Angels, who, as the writer is led to believe, give expression to

a desire felt by all in charge of Churches. It has been undertaken in consequence of a strongly - felt conviction that the perusal of this Ministry will be of benefit to the Churches in bringing before them the „raison d'être“ of an Apostleship in these days, and in awakening in them a more lively sense of the unspeakable blessing which the Churches, and the individual members of the Churches, have derived from the revived Ministry of Apostles, as the means of healing the divisions of the Church, of restoring her ordinances, of settling her doctrines, and of bringing out the full organization of the Fourfold Ministry, for the perfecting the saints and for edifying the Body of Christ.

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THE author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says: "God, who, in times past, spake by prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son:" - and, „How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those that heard; God also bearing witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will.“ The Holy Ghost is the witness of the Lordship of the SON OF MAN, of the glory and the honour given to Him; and, though we see not yet man having the dominion, yet we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour. And, forasmuch as He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, He is not ashamed to call us (the Church) His brethren. In the same Epistle, we are told that we are not come to the mount that might be touched, and to the voice of words, but to Mount Sion, and to the city of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to God the Judge of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant; and it is added, "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh from heaven."

When the Jews had heard God speak on earth in giving the Ten Commandments, and when they witnessed the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountains smoking, they removed, and stood afar off, and said unto Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Exod. xx.) In Deut. v., Moses recounts to them the same circumstance, and adds these words (v. 27), "And ye said, Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it. And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee, they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever! Go, say to them, Get you into your tents again. But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee all the commandments," &c., "which thou shalt teach unto them." And in Deut. xviii. 9, &c., Moses, recalling to their recollection the giving of the Ten Commandments, says, "When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee...thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God

will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God: neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. *I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee,* and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.“

When Peter had healed the lame man, at the Beautiful gate of the Temple, and the people came together greatly wondering, he immediately exclaimed, „Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?“ And he then preached Jesus and the resurrection: “Ye killed the Prince of life, *whom God raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.* And His name through faith in His name hath made this man strong; yea, the faith that is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness. Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, in order that the times of refreshing may

come; and He may send Jesus Christ, which before was preached to you: whom the heavens must receive till the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the prophets. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me;* him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul that will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. Unto you first, God, *having raised up His Son Jesus, hath sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.*“ And so again, in Acts v. 30: “The God of our Fathers *raised up Jesus,* whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.“ By comparing these passages with the preaching of Peter to Cornelius and his company (Acts x. 38-43), and of Paul at Antioch (Acts xiii. 30-41), we see plainly that the promise which God made to Israel (Deut. xviii. 15-19), He hath fulfilled the same unto us: first to the Jews after the flesh, and then unto us Gentiles, *in that He hath raised up Jesus again.* Therefore the ministry of the Prophet like unto Moses,

did not commence till after the resurrection from the dead.

Jesus, raised from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and *again sent* to bless the people, in turning away every one from his iniquities, is the Prophet like unto Moses. See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh; for if they escaped not, that refused him that spake on earth - which refers to the conduct of the Jews at the giving of the Ten Commandments (Exod. xx. 18, 19) - much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven. (Heb. xii. 25.) This condemnation came upon the Jews when they refused Paul. (Acts xiii. 46, and xxviii. 26-28.) As the rejection of the first apostleship, with the concurrent witness of the Holy Ghost, was the condemnation of the hypocritical Jews, so the rejection of the apostleship now, with the witness of the Holy Ghost, will be the condemnation of the apostate Gentile Church.

The Prophet raised up is Jesus raised from the dead, and speaking from heaven. The character of the Prophet is that he is raised up, from among the brethren, with a similar office to Moses; and the fruit of his rejection is, that whosoever will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. The witness was first to the Jews, and when they had

rejected so great salvation, the same salvation was preached to the Gentiles.

This second Mosaic ministry was not fulfilled in the birth of Jesus nor in His ministry on earth, nor in His death, but in His resurrection, whereby He was shown to be the Apostle and high Priest of our profession. By resurrection from the dead He was declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the Spirit of holiness; and was manifested as LORD, the fountain of all power and authority, and CHRIST, the anointer, with all grace and spiritual blessing, and HEAD over all to the Church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. (Eph. i. 19, to end.)

When the Jews had refused to receive the witness, and to enter into His rest, then the Apostle to the Gentiles, the Apostle of the uncircumcision, turned to the Gentiles, not to convert the Gentiles, but to take out of them a people for His Name (Acts xv. 14), and to gather together the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, not to the entire casting-off of the Jews, for God is able to graft them in again, but to the fulfilling of the word (Num. xiv. 20), "I have pardoned according to Thy word, but as truly as I live all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." When Sion, the Church, the elec-

tion out of Jew and Gentile, is perfected, the Deliverer shall come out of Sion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob. The fleshly Israel thus gathered will not, as a nation, be made partakers of the spiritual adoption of sons, but will, as the election, become the first of the nations. And when the spiritual election is gathered, and Jesus has Himself, as the Messiah, led back the Jews to their land, the coming-in of the fulness of the Jews, the election in the flesh (after the fulness of the Gentiles, the spiritual election has come in) will be to the world as life from the dead. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew, nor given the Gentiles the pre-eminence over the Jews; but hath purposed in us whom He hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, to make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He had afore-prepared unto glory.

In the dispensation of the fulness of times, when God shall have gathered in the fulness of the Gentiles, and shall also have come out of Sion as the Deliverer, turning away ungodliness from Jacob, showing forth the spiritual Israel, the true election, the assembly and church of the first-born who are written in heaven, and Israel after the flesh, the people who are beloved for the fathers' sake, the election in the flesh; then the purpose of God to gather together all things in one in Christ, both which are in heaven and which

are in earth, shall be accomplished, not by the Prophet like unto Moses, Jesus speaking from heaven, but by Jesus, the Head of His Body, and His Body complete in Him, who is the fulness of the Godhead; not by the crucified Jesus of Nazareth, but by the King of the Jews, the Judge both of the quick and the dead, coming in glory, the glory of His Father, and His own glory, and of the holy angels.

If the veil be still over the Jews, when Moses is read, as to the promises to them, what shall we say to the darkness of the Gentile Israel, who seek to make the whole world partakers of the election; or, rather, who know no election; who see not in the reading of the Old Testament (Abraham's covenant, Gal. iii) the promise of the inheritance, and therefore despise the seal of the Spirit of promise, the earnest of it; who know not the hope of the Church, Christ in us the hope of glory; and who in their blindness are seeking to save the nations of the earth without the Jews; to declare Jesus the ransom for all without knowing Him as Head over all to His Church; who, while professing to know Him, in their works deny Him; and are labouring to alter God's purpose, and to bless the world, without the promised Seed, which is Jesus and His Body, the Lord and His anointed (Gal. iii.).

The Gentile Church, to whom is proclaimed the gospel of the uncircumcision (Gal. iii. 8), the gospel of salvation preached unto us with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, the glad tidings of the fulfilment of the covenant made to Abraham, while in uncircumcision, that in his seed - that is, in Christ - all the nations of the earth should be blessed, has these characteristics: it is Catholic, free to all the world, not to embrace all men - for the Church is an election - but an election out of all nations, and therefore Catholic; and Apostolic, not of the world, but chosen out of the world, and sent into the world as a witness of the Father and the Son; as a witness of the love of God to those who love Him and believe in His Name; as a witness of the holiness, the power, the grace, the truth, the wisdom, the glory of the Father revealed in the Son; in Him whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, to manifest the invisible God, and to declare the life eternal; teaching men to know Him, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. In the prayer of the Lord, not for the world, but for His Church (John xvii.) not for the first disciples only, but also for those who should believe on Him through their word, it is said they are not of the world, but are sent into the world. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. As Thou has sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world." They are given to Jesus by the Father -

„Thine they were, and Thou gavest them me“ - and they know and believe that He came out from the Father, and was sent by the Father. They are one in the Father and in the Son. This is the character of the Church; not of the world, nor of any but the election; and the office of the Church is to glorify Jesus, as He glorified the Father, that the Father also may be glorified in the Son; to manifest in a mortal body the life of Jesus, the Word made flesh, and to teach the world to know that Jesus is sent from the Father, and that the Father hath loved the Church as He loved Jesus before the foundation of the world. "For the Father Himself loved you because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." (John xvi. 27.) The distinction of the Gentile Church, the Church of Christ, in which Jew and Gentile are one, is that she is the container of all the fulness of Jesus, in whom dwells the fulness of the Godhead, and the manifest to Jew and Gentile of Jesus risen and glorified, abiding in her and in her members by the Holy Ghost.

This purpose of God has not been seen; Jesus has not been glorified in the Church, as the Father was glorified in Him; and unless this glory be seen, how shall the Jews be stirred up to jealousy? If it were done in the first ages of the Church, in the time of the first Apostles, why are the Jews not delivered? And yet the foundation of God standeth sure; the

Lord knoweth them that are His: and let everyone who nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

The Lord has been the dwelling-place of His people in all generations, and in His kingdom shall the whole family be gathered together: they shall come from north, south, east and west, and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. But the saints before the Lord's first coming did not receive the promises; they only obtained a good report by faith: they are the spirits of just men made perfect, not without, but with us. (Heb. xi. 40.) The promise to Abraham, in which they hoped, was sure in the Seed, namely, Christ; and the receiving the promise of the Spirit, and the attaining to the in-dwelling of the Spirit, through faith, is the distinction of the Church of Christ. This, the Spirit of Adoption - the Spirit of the Son, crying in our hearts Abba, Father - the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead - the Spirit which dwelleth in us - which shall quicken our mortal bodies, and now does enable us to offer our bodies a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God - is our inheritance.

The essential character of the Christian Church, therefore, is, that it is the dwelling-place of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost, the container of the fulness of Him that filleth all in all, the manifestor and glori-

fier of the risen Jesus, who, by His resurrection from the dead, and ascension into glory, is constituted the Apostle of God, the High Priest of our profession, who is passed into the heavens, and is there our high Priest after the order of Melchisedec, after the power of an endless life.

Jesus, raised from the dead, and glorified, and speaking from heaven, is the Apostle of God to the Church, as Peter preached (Acts iii. 26), "Unto you first," &c. The Jews refused this great salvation, which apostasy God had declared by the prophets of old; and now to the whole world is the Gospel of this salvation preached; and the preaching is Jesus raised from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and speaking from thence; and sent, in the ministry, the men, by the Holy Ghost, confessing to the Lordship of Jesus; and, in the members, by the utterance of the Spirit confessing to Jesus come in the flesh, and raised to be Lord and Christ.

This is the meaning of the Apostolic Church; a Church sent into the world by Jesus, as Jesus was sent into the world by the Father; and this her apostolic character implies not merely that she shall have Apostles, but, moreover, that all the members, according to their respective places and offices, shall, in measure, be manifestors, in the power of His resur-

rection, of Jesus raised from the dead, and sent, in His ministries and members, to declare the Godhead of the Son and His Lordship, and to glorify Him as He glorified the Father. While we fail of this, we are forsaking our standing.

The manifestation of the Spirit in the Church depends not on Apostles, nor on any state or condition in which the Church may be found, but on the faith of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The first pouring out of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, the former rain, came on the little company who had believed in the Man Jesus, who had been dead, and was alive again, and in the remission of sins through His name, and had seen Him after His resurrection; and, when they were all with one accord in one place, they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and Peter preached Jesus and the resurrection, and called on the devout men of all nations, who came together on the report going forth, to repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, for the remission of their sins; and they also should receive the Holy Ghost. And when the Gentile, Cornelius - a devout man, who feared God with all his house - had sent for Peter by revelation, and was, with his company, present before God, to hear from Peter all things that were commanded him of God, Peter preached the Man Jesus, whom the Jews slew, and whom God raised up, and the remis-

sion of sins through His name, to all who believe in Him; and, while he spake, the Holy Ghost fell upon all who heard the word. Here, again, was another instance wherein God, who knoweth the hearts, bore them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, as He did to the Jews, and putting no difference between Jew and Gentile, but purifying their hearts by faith.

Such was the basis of the Church of Christ. The absence of the witness of God, which knoweth the hearts, and the want of the seal of the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, and the deliverance of the creature from the bondage of corruption unto the liberty of the glory of the children of God, for which all creation groaneth, and for which we also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, viz., the redemption of our body. The absence of this witness does testify to the utter want of faith in a risen Jesus, a living Man, raised to the Throne of God, and given to be Head over all to the Church, which is His Body.

The gathering of the nations is to be to Jesus. He is the light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel; but, first, the sons are to be prepared for the glory to which the Captain of their salvation brings them. First, the body is to be prepared; and,

when the body is prepared, then saith He, „Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.“ Jesus having, by His Fourfold Ministry, perfected the saints, and built up His Body in love, and brought them to His own measure of purity and holiness, cometh with ten thousand of His saints to execute judgment upon all, to baptize with fire the world, which is reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

Therefore, it is a great mistake to think that the want of the gifts of the Holy Ghost arises from there being no Apostles. THE MAN JESUS IS THE APOSTLE, the Prophet like unto Moses, with whom God spake face to face, shewing him plainly, and not in visions or in dreams. (Num. xii. 6-9.) It arises from there being no faith that He who was dead is alive again, and is risen indeed, and is gone to the Father; from want of faith in that which is written, that no man hath ascended up into heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in Heaven. It arises from unbelief in THE WORD made flesh, the eternal life manifested. (1 John i. 1, &c.)

It was by faith in the Man Jesus, raised from the dead, and not by laying on of hands, that the Holy Ghost came at Pentecost, and in the house of Cornelius. Of what avail would all signs of apostleship be (if there were any other signs of that office than a

Church filled with the Spirit, and ordered, in all things, after a godly sort) to a Church not full of faith in the resurrection, and in all the fulness of blessing which comes to us through the resurrection of Christ. As the Lamb of God, He taketh away the sins of the world; but to the Church He is known as He who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God, and hath given us eternal life.

Apostles cannot give the Holy Ghost. Signs of apostleship cannot enable anyone to give or receive the Holy Ghost. Talking of the Holy Ghost cannot do it; but, to as many as receive Him, to them gives He power to become the Sons of God, even to as many as believe on His name, who are born of God. And of what avail would it be, if it could be so, to have a Church filled with the power of God, if the power were not controlled and used by the Word made flesh? But, if the Church have that faith, then it can receive Apostles; and Jesus can, by them, minister the Spirit, and can, in those who believe and abide in Him, put forth His own apostolic authority, to enable them to rule and control, and exercise the gifts of the Spirit, which are given to every man, to profit withal, to the edification of the Body, the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, till we all come, in the unity

of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man.

Jesus and His Church, manifested and glorified together, not Jesus without His Church, whom the heavens conceal, nor the Church without Jesus, who is given to be Head of the Church; but Jesus *and His Church*, seen together in glory, will be the fulfilment of all the prophecies as to the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the seed of David, the son of David, and David's Lord, the man-child, who shall rule the nations, and the heir of the Throne of God for ever; the Son of whom, when He is brought into the world, it shall be said, "Let all the angels of God worship Him," &c. (Heb. i. 6.) Jesus, begotten of the Virgin Mary, by the Holy Ghost coming upon her, the power of the most High overshadowing her, is a sign (Isa. vii. 14) of the promise of the Virgin's Son, whose name shall be called Emmanuel, by interpretation, God with us. (Isa. ix. 6, 7.) This is the "Israel, my Son, even my first-born," referred to in Exod. iv. 22, 23, whom the true Moses shall bring out of Egypt. There is another, the true Israel, and another true Moses, and another Egyptian bondage, a bondage of corruption, from which the heirs of God shall yet be delivered into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, that is to be revealed, of which the first Moses, and the Israel after the flesh, and Egypt, were only a figure.

This Israel was begotten, and the promise to the fathers was fulfilled to us, their children, on the raising up Jesus again, as it is written, "Thou art my son, *this day* have I begotten thee." (Acts xiii. 33.) *This day* being the resurrection of Jesus. For the power of the Most High overshadowed the Church - the Virgin - and the Holy Ghost came upon her, and the Son was begotten, when Jesus (God from everlasting) received the Holy Ghost for us, and became the quickening Spirit to the Church; John (Rev. xii.) sees the woman, the mother of the man child - a wonder in heaven, a marvel to all Christendom - clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and having a crown of twelve stars on her head, travailing in birth, ready to bring forth.

And so at the time when the man child shall be born who is caught up to God and His Throne, at the time of the woman's travail and of the child's birth (Rev. xii.), the same time spoken of in Rom. viii. 18-23, and in the Gospels, as the great tribulation, the sign of the coming of the Son of Man, and of the end of the world, the Church is seen walking in the Mosaic ordinances as spiritually interpreted and ministered by twelve Apostles, the moon and the stars which rule the night, showing forth not the letter of the law, but the righteousness of it fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; the

clothing of the sun, the path of the righteous, which is more and more bright unto the perfect day. Such must be the appearance of the Church when the Lord comes in glory, and when those who are alive are caught up to meet Him in the air.

Paul, the Gentile Apostle, or rather the fore-shower of that ministry, as one born an abortion, or “before the time,” says (2 Cor. iii. 2), “Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written with the Spirit of the living God: and *such trust* have we through Christ to God-ward.” And then, speaking of the glory of the ministration of the Prophet like unto Moses, the ministration of the Spirit, he adds, “Seeing then we have *such hope*, we use great plainness of speech.” His hope survives to us; like Moses, he saw the promised land (Eph. iii. 2-10), but he entered not in. He lived to see the failing of his hope of leading the Gentile Church into this glory, and beheld the beginning of the “falling-away first,” of which he warned the Thessalonians: the beginning of this falling away was the binding the apostleship. And, when the apostleship was bound, then these words were fulfilled, „He who now letteth, will let until he be taken out of the way,” for that was the hindrance to the revelation of the man of sin in the Church. After Paul had become bound in spirit, he

continued for a season in the flesh, though desiring to be with Christ, which is far better. He was no more seen as an Apostle mighty in word and deed, but truly as an abortion, and spake of himself as an ambassador in bonds, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; for the word of God was not bound; and having fought a good fight, having finished his course, having kept the faith, he departed to be with Christ, and waits to receive the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give him at that day, and not to him only, but also to all that love His appearing.

We have been dispersed like Israel of old, and the curse has come upon us according to what happened to the Jews. We know not Christ in us the hope of glory, nor the Spirit, the earnest of the glory to be revealed; and, now that we are again brought to desire to return, and to have again restored to us the earnest of the inheritance, the seal of the Holy Spirit of promise, our course is pointed out to us (Deut. xxx.), as applied by Paul (Rom. x.), where he says, “The righteousness of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, *to bring Christ down*) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, *to bring Christ up from the dead*). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we

preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus the Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that *God hath raised Him from the dead*, thou shalt be saved.“ And the faith in the preaching Jesus raised from the dead to be both Lord and Christ will be our righteousness, and we will again receive the Spirit by the hearing of faith, and the Lord will restore our judges as at the first, and our counsellors as at the beginning. He will restore what He took not away; but we may not seek for signs, but only believe. For if we “believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will we believe though one rose from the dead.“

Moses is the type of the Apostleship. The Jewish Apostles had not the fulness of that ministry of the Prophet like unto Moses, the ministration of the Spirit, Paul's hope. (2 Cor. iii.) They asked the Lord about the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, and received for answer, “It is not for you to know the times and the seasons; but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth. And when He had spoken these words, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.“ But they saw Him not in glory - they only beheld Him after His resurrection, as He was before He rose from the dead; and they only

preached His resurrection, and did not speak of His glory. None of them, save Peter, James, and John, who were present at His transfiguration, had seen it. They did not preach the Gospel of Christ. They did not proclaim to the Jews the hope of glory. Their preaching was followed by gifts of the Holy Ghost coming on all who believed. But that was the end of their ministry, which is the beginning of the Gospel of Christ. The end of the Gentile dispensation, the revealing, in the sight of all nations, of the glory of the Lord, they did not know, for it belonged not to the Jews as a nation; nor did it belong to the Jewish Apostles, to have the ministration of the Spirit.

Paul was the Gentile Apostle, and to him the Lord appeared in glory. To him the Lord taught by revelation what he was to teach; and, about seventeen years after his conversion, he says (Gal. ii. 2): „I went up by revelation to Jerusalem, and communicated unto them the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles.“ And this he did privately to them of reputation; and Peter saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to Paul; and Peter, James, and John, the three Apostles who were witnesses of the transfiguration, perceived the grace given to Paul, and gave the right hand of fellowship to him and Barnabas, that they should go to the heathen.

When Paul was at Jerusalem (the visit referred to in Galatians) seeking counsel as to the Judaizing spirit that was creeping into the Churches, Peter related the conversion of the Gentiles, by his preaching Jesus and the resurrection (for this was the office of the Jewish Apostles), and the fruit of that preaching was the pouring out of the Holy Ghost. Paul and Barnabas then related what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them, and James stood up and said: "Simeon [that is, Peter] 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 [Amos ix. 11, 12], 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 these things. Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned unto God but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollution of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses hath of old time, in every City, them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." This sentence pleased the whole council, and they wrote to that effect, adding these words: "For it seemed good to

the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay on you no greater burden than these necessary things."

Now, here is to be remarked, the reason why the reading of Moses is not enjoined as a necessary thing - which was, because Moses had in every city them that preached him; not as though the Gentile Church had nothing to do with the law; for the righteousness of the law is to be fulfilled in the Gentile Church, walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; and the word (Mal. iv.) is, "Remember ye the law of Moses," &c. „Behold, I send you Elijah the prophet, before the great and terrible day of the Lord." And our Lord, after the death of John the Baptist, said, "Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things." (Mark ix. 12.)

The next thing to be observed is, that the words of the prophets, as to the tabernacle of David, were applied to the building the Gentile Church, gathered out by the preaching of the resurrection, and by the same preaching filled with the Holy Ghost; and the prophecy refers to a second work of building, and an ulterior object, viz., to bring the residue of men to seek after God; and still, though there was a building and repairing, and setting up spoken of, the Jewish Apostles did not interfere with that Church which was to be so built. Paul speaks of the building in Eph. ii.

and iv., and 1 Cor. iii. 10, saying, “According to the grace of God given to me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon ;“ and while we take the prophecy, and its interpretation, from the Jews, we learn that whatever application to those times the prophecy might have, it has a more immediate reference to us.

Concerning the tabernacle of David, we read in 2 Sam. vii. and in 1. Chron. xvii., that when David the King sat in his house, it came to pass that the King said unto Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, and the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. And Nathan said unto the King, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee. And it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan: Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in. I will ordain a place for my people Israel; and when thy days are expired, I will raise up thy seed after thee. He shall build me an house. I will be his father, and he shall be my son.“ And so glorious to David was the vision, so mighty the promise to his Seed, that he was constrained to cry out, “And is this the manner of the man, Adonai Jehovah ?“ the promised son and Lord of David, the man that is Jehovah’s fellow. David pleads this promise, and the purpose of his heart, which God accepted, and ap-

plies it himself to Sion. (Psalm cxxxii.) David is there spoken of as the anointed, the Christ; and we may freely speak of the patriarch David, who is both dead and buried, that he found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. “Howbeit, the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands.“ (Acts vii.)

The only tabernacle of David is the Mount Sion, which the Lord hath chosen, which He hath desired for an habitation; the tabernacle of David is the house of the Christ, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end. We are come to Mount Sion, the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and Jesus our High Priest, who is entered into the heavens, is a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle; and we are builded by the true David, the man after God’s own heart, a fit habitation for God by the Spirit.

Taking therefore to ourselves, as the house of Christ, the prophecy of Amos; the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down and in ruins, is the Spiritual Church, Christendom, a ruin, without the Spirit, the earnest of the inheritance, without the hope of the inheritance; it is the Church which should be the temple of the Holy Ghost, trodden down by the heathen, in the condition described in Psalm lxxix. and Isaiah

lxiii. The building again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, and the building again the ruins of it, and setting it up, is the restoring the Church to the first estate, and a better state still; and the purpose and end of this work of building again and setting up, is the converting the nations, and teaching them to seek after God. The materials are men and women, prepared by the outpouring again of the Spirit, as at the first, and more abundantly - the former and the latter rain together (Joel ii. 23, Hos. vi. 3); for we are builded in Him a fit habitation for God by the Spirit, and coming to Him a living stone, we also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, &c. (1 Pet. ii.) The pouring out the Spirit again is that (Acts ii. 15, &c.) whereunto the words of the prophets agree, as to the re-building, and is the assurance to us that the time is come; and our song is Psalm cii. 13, &c.; and there we learn that the Lord shall appear in glory, when He builds up Sion; that it is a *re-building* spoken of, for the saints in the meantime take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof; and according to the LXX. version, corresponding to the prophecy of Amos, the 15th and 16th verses are read thus: The nations shall fear thy name, O Lord, and all kings thy glory, when the Lord shall build up Sion, and shall appear in His glory.“

All former attempts in the flesh to separate between the good and bad have failed. But now we know that the work shall not fail, because the Spirit is poured out from on high, and the time to favour Sion, yea, the set time is come. Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret to His servants the prophets. The trumpet is blown in the city (Babylon), and the people are afraid. There is evil in the city, and the Lord hath done it. The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy? (Amos iii. 6, &c.)

There is nothing new in this. Paul, who had the Gospel of Christ committed to him, says, in reference to the house which Moses built - the law, moral, ceremonial, and judicial (Heb. iii.) “Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of these things which were to be spoken after; but Christ, as a Son over His own house, whose house are we, if,” &c.; and (Heb. v.) he says: “For we have many things to say to you of Him, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time being ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you the first principles; and are such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat;“ and in chapter vi. he says, „Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection. And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for

those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the Heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost," &c., "if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance." He was, therefore, writing to those who were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, urging them to go on to perfection. In chapter viii., the building and furniture of the tabernacle are spoken of as belonging to the Christian dispensation, the priesthood under the law as serving unto an example and pattern of the heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God as he was about to make the tabernacle. "For see," said He, "that thou make all things according to the pattern showed thee in the mount." And in chapter ix., the tabernacle, the candlestick, the table, the shew bread, the golden censer, the ark of the covenant, &c., are alluded to, and these are the things in which Moses was faithful *in all his house*, as a testimony of the things to be spoken after. St. Paul could not then speak of these things particularly, for the reason assigned in chap. v. 11, &c. In chapter x., we are told the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image, could not make the comers thereunto perfect.

The Law - the tabernacle of Moses - is the shadow which could not make the comers thereunto perfect, though it served as a testimony to the things to be spoken after, and for confirmation of them when

spoken. (Isa. viii. 18-20.) The Spiritual Church, before the Lord's second coming, is the tabernacle of Elias, built according to the mind of Christ, whereunto the law of Moses serveth for an ensample and shadow, and a testimony to the things to be spoken after; not to the making the things plain, but to the confirming those things when spoken. And this is ministered by the Prophet like unto Moses, Christ the Son, *over His own house*, and has the pattern and very image of the true tabernacle, and is for leading not us only, but also the whole Church of the first-born, together with us, unto perfection. (Heb. xi. 40.)

The Lord and all His saints revealed from Heaven, in the glory of His Father, and His own glory, and the glory of the holy angels, the New Jerusalem (Rev. xxi.) which comes down from Heaven, constitute the true tabernacle, the building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens, with which the Church desires to be clothed upon, that death may be swallowed up of life.

These are the three tabernacles of which Peter spoke, not knowing what he said, when Jesus was transfigured; and the three shall be seen in glory when the Lord appears; and He shall appear when the Church, instead of seeking to evangelize the world without Jesus, shall set about making herself perfect.

And, now that the Lord has sent the cry that the Bridegroom cometh, restoring what He took not away, and is setting His Apostles, and is giving again His Prophets, and is restoring the Fourfold Ministry which is for the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, the building up the Body, till we come to the measure of the stature of His fulness, it is time for us to awake and to press towards the mark; it is time for us to go forth to meet the Bridegroom; it is time for us to put away lying, and to speak every one truth with his neighbour. The foundation of God standeth sure: "The Lord knoweth them that are His, and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

Paul was the foreshower of the Apostleship in the Gentile Church. God does not make any man the depository of His secrets. The secret things belong to God. The times and the seasons are in the Father's hand; and though the purpose of God is one, and never is added to nor taken from, yet the way in which that purpose shall be brought out belongs not to any man, or nation, or time, but to Him before whom man, in his best estate, is vanity, and the nations as the small dust in the balance, and a day as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Of this there is an example in the falling-away spoken of by Paul in 2 Thess. ii., and the revelation of the man

of sin. He had no conception of the duration of that falling away, which has now extended through seventeen centuries. He had no notion of a revelation of a man of sin, such as is unfolded in the Papacy, and such as is to be unfolded in these days. Yet the purpose, as accomplished before our eyes, was clearly and plainly declared. In the same way, when he spoke of the Gentile apostleship, and himself as the Gentile Apostle, and of the office as belonging to him, doubtless the purpose was then revealed; but the way of the Lord is only known to us, whose habitation is set in these days of fear and of hope, of marvellous light, and of gross darkness, of the overspreading of the abomination that maketh desolate, and of the consummation of all blessing and blessedness, in the bringing-in of everlasting righteousness.

"Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counsellor hath taught Him? With whom took He counsel, and made him understand, and taught him the path of judgment? All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted as less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken Me? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their hosts by number. He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth." (Isa. xl. 13, &c.) The Lord knoweth

the thoughts of the wise that they are vain. Let us not glory in men. Who is Paul that we should swear to him? All things are ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. There is no searching of His understanding.

It is quite clear that Paul's hands did not accomplish what his mouth declared respecting the apostleship. And, indeed, he gives a key to the interpretation of his words, when he says (Rom. xi. 13), "I speak to you Gentiles, forasmuch as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office;" and again (Rom. xv. 15), "I have written the more boldly unto you as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God," &c.; and (verse 28), "I will come by you to Spain. And when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ." In the first chapter, he says "I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end that ye may be established." Paul, then, beseeches them to strive together with him in their prayers to God for him, that he might be delivered from them that did not believe in Judea. The purpose spoken of was not accomplished. He went to Rome, not indeed as an Apostle and minister of the Spirit, but as a prisoner in the flesh. In all his Epistles the same thing is manifest,

viz., that Paul was shown the purpose of God by the Gentile apostleship, and spoke of himself officially as the Apostle of the Gentiles, and of what he would do, but did not. It were a bold thing for any man to stand up and say, that God had a purpose by the Gentile apostleship, but Paul was bound by the Romans, and therefore God's purpose has failed. It is not so. In vain is the snare laid in the sight of the bird. The Holy Ghost did foreshow what should happen to Paul; and the purpose of God, by the Gentile apostleship, still standeth sure, and though we have not believed, God remaineth faithful. If we deny Him, He will deny us; but He cannot deny Himself. And though Paul suffered trouble even unto bonds, and afterwards unto death, yet the word of God is not bound. (2 Tim. ii. 7-14.)

Instances of a purpose of God declared by Paul, as the Gentile Apostle, and not wrought out by him, will be found.(1 Cor. xi. 34; 2 Cor. x. 1.-11, xii. 14, &c., xiii. 1, &c.; Phil. ii. 24.; 1 Tim. iii. 14, 15, iv. 13.; Philem. 22.)

However, the purpose of God remains. And Paul, after his bonds and imprisonment, continued in the flesh, the ambassador in bonds, to make known the purpose; and lived, not to proclaim its accomplishment, but to tell of the turning away of all in Asia,

and to charge Timothy to commit what had been taught him to faithful men, who might teach others; to remind him of the faithfulness of God; and to declare the apostasy of the last days, and his own speedy departure, having finished his course and kept the faith; and then he fell asleep, having laid the foundation on which others are to build.

The history of the binding of the apostleship is told thus, in Acts xx. Paul was very desirous to be in Jerusalem at Pentecost. He therefore passed by Ephesus, and sending thither from Miletus for the elders, told them of his conduct in Asia, and then said: "And now, behold, I go *bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem*, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But, none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. I have not shunned to declare to you all the counsel of God. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to *build you up, and to give you an inheritance* among all them which are sanctified." The disciples at Ephesus

understood that they would see his face no more, and that they were not to be builded-up by him. But Paul does not seem to have known how the building would be accomplished (v. 32).

In chapter xxi., we find that at Tyre there were disciples which said to Paul, through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem. At Caesarea also, Agabus, a prophet from Judea, took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles: which when the disciples heard they besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. But he said, What, mean ye to weep and to break my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he could not be persuaded they ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done."

Paul arrived at Jerusalem, and there the disciples and apostles (after hearing the relation of his ministry and success among the Gentles), "glorified the Lord, and said, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying they ought not

to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it, therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow upon them; them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.“

Paul followed their advice; and, when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews of Asia stirred up the people, and laid hands on him, and the people went about to kill him, when the Roman chief captain came and commanded him to be bound with two chains. This is the account, not of Paul's being bound in the Spirit, whereby he knew not what should befall him at Jerusalem, but of the binding of his body, through which bodily captivity he was saved from death for a season, and was enabled to witness for the Lord to the Jews at Jerusalem, as is recounted (ch. xxii.); after which he was to witness at Rome, also

(eh. xxiii.). His life, saved by the Romans, was prolonged by his bodily chains, whereby he was enabled to fulfil the part of an ambassador in bonds, to make known the mystery of the Gospel of Christ; which ministry seems to have been committed to him after the binding of the Spirit in him was accomplished.

The binding of the Spirit, we can trace out in the Epistles; and in them we see what the reality of that was: and it was nothing less than the failing altogether, *for that time*, of the purpose of God by the Gentile apostleship, and the taking away of him that did let, and would let until taken away, the fruit of which is the present now divided state of the Church of God.

In looking at the Epistles of Paul, we find that some of them were written before the journey to Jerusalem, and some after. This is plain from the allusion which he makes in some of them to his bonds.

Both Epistles to the Thessalonians, those to the Galatians and Corinthians, as well as that to the Romans, were written before he went up this third time to Jerusalem.

The Epistles to the Thessalonians, which, by almost universal consent, are admitted to be the first

written of all the Epistles, probably by three or four years, set forth the state of the Church at that time. "Our gospel," he says, "came to you, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. So that in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that all the Churches shew concerning you, how ye turned from idols to serve the living God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." They received the word, not as man's word, but as the word of God, and were walking in faith and charity, desiring to see Paul, and he desiring to come to them, that he might perfect what was lacking in their faith; and they were so constantly expecting the coming of the Lord, that there was need to comfort them concerning those who fell asleep, that they would not lose that hope, but would be also partakers of the resurrection, and of the glory. In the second Epistle, their faith and charity appear still to have increased, as well as their expectation of the Lord's speedy coming, so that Satan took advantage of it to tempt them; which gave occasion to Paul's warning that they should not be soon shaken by spirit or word, or by letter, as from him, that the day of Christ was near, for that day should not come, except there should come a falling away first. In these Epistles there is evidence of apostolic authority assumed and exercised by Paul. (1 Thess. iii. 5-10; 2 Thess. iii. 6, to end.)

Here was the Church growing in faith, and in love, and in hope of the Lord's coming, and walking orderly in all things.

But this state of the Church was not of long continuance; they soon grew weary of waiting. The Jewish leaven began to work, and shewed itself in the Galatian Church. In the Epistle to this Church, Paul begins by saying, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you unto the grace of Christ, into 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 another gospel, let him be accursed." Here was the beginning of the Judaizing spirit, which brought the Church down; and here Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, magnifies his office, reproving Peter, vindicating his own office from all connection with that of the Jewish apostleship; and here he takes occasion to shew that this gospel was only known to the Jewish Apostles by his preaching, and he thus exclaims: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? Received ye the Spirit by the hearing of faith, or by the works of the law? He that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the hearing of faith, or by the works of the law? I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labour in vain. Ye know how, through infirmity of the flesh, I

preached the gospel unto to you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is the blessedness ye spake of? Am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth? My little children, of whom I travail in birth till Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice, for I stand in doubt of you. We, brethren, are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free. Stand fast in the liberty of Christ. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.“ He then reproves them of envy and jealousy, and vain-glory, and warns them not to substitute the law of bondage for the law of love, and, in grief of spirit, bids them beware of the circumcision of the flesh.

The evil broke out in the Galatian Church, but here also the authority of the Apostle is still seen, though there was a manifest departure from the faith and love which were in the Church at the time the Epistles to the Thessalonians were written, and also a lack of that hope which purifieth.

In the first Epistle to the Corinthians, we learn that the leaven was indeed leavening the whole lump; for there were contentions, one saying I am of Paul, another, I am of Apollos; there were envyings, and strife, and divisions among them; there was also for-

nication among them, such as was disgraceful even among the Gentiles, and the rest were puffed up because of it; there were disputes, one going to law with another, and that before the unbelievers, and there was questioning his authority; there was moreover disorder, in partaking of the Lord's Supper, one hungry, and another drunken; and there was the necessary consequence of all these evils, the abuse of spiritual gifts by the unruliness of those who spoke by the Spirit. There was a departing from the gospel of the resurrection.

At the time of the writing of the second Epistle, the questioning of the Apostle's authority seems to have increased, and open murmurings were made against him, making it needful for him to become a fool in glorying, and compelling him to threaten the disobedient that they should feel his power; but still the apostolic authority is assumed and exercised by Paul in all its fulness. (See particularly 1 Cor. v. 3-5, for an example of the apostolic spirit in the Church, before the apostleship was bound, and of its power as put forth in the ministries. See also 1 Tim. i. 20.)

And in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, which was written just before he went to Jerusalem (Rom. xv. 25), there is still the exercise of apostolic authority, or rather the assumption of it (Rom. i. 11); but at

the same time the Church appears gradually to have declined from the hope with which it abounded at the first. The little leaven had been working, and the whole lump was becoming leavened.

Shortly after this Epistle was written, Paul sent for the elders of the Church of Ephesus, and spoke of his going bound in spirit to Jerusalem.¹

The rest of Paul's Epistles were written after he had been to Jerusalem, and had fallen into the hands of the Romans, for in all of them he speaks of his bonds. (Eph. iii. 1, iv. 1, vi. 20; Phil. i. 12, &c.; Col. iv. 3-18.) Now, in all these Epistles, there is no assumption of any apostolic power, no more of the authority of the Apostle, no more of the blessed fruits of the apostolic spirit for rule and for building up. The character of his ministry is wholly changed. Paul now appears as an ambassador in bonds, to make known the mystery of the Gospel of glory committed to him for the Gentiles. He is in a strait betwixt² two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far

¹ The exact order in which the several Epistles were written is not clearly ascertained; but this uncertainty does not materially affect the argument derived from the several Epistles as to the gradual development, in the Christian Church, of various forms of evil as they manifested themselves in the different Churches set up by St. Paul.

² Between = betwixt (obsolete literary) ; note by reader!

better; while, nevertheless, he knows that it is needful for them that he should abide still in the flesh. And he desires the prayers of the Church that God would open a door of utterance to him to speak the mystery of Christ, for which he is in bonds. And the character of his preaching and teaching is that of one not preparing them to meet the Lord, but to undergo a long captivity in the world, urging on them obedience to the powers that be. He teaches the duties of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, &c. The Apostle is changed into the teacher; but why this change? Simply, because the Lord could not bring the Church on to perfection, and could not put forth the power of the Apostle in the Church, which was full of sin and uncleanness. The purpose, so far as Paul was concerned, had failed, and the Lord was using him for another purpose. This is more manifest in the Epistles of Timothy and Titus, though it appears from the 1st Epistle to Timothy that Paul had not lost all hope of being again set free.

By comparing the tenor of Paul's instructions to Timothy with his Epistles to the Thessalonians, it will be clearly seen that the coming of the Lord was no more an im-mediate hope. In 1st Timothy, Paul gives him a charge, adding these words, "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come to thee shortly; but if I tarry long that thou mightest know how thou ought-

est to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God.“ He again says, „Till I come give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.“ He orders Titus to set in order the things that are in Crete, and to ordain elders in every city.

In 2nd Timothy, written after his second appearance before the Roman Emperor, when he seems to have become aware that the deliverance of the Church was not to be by his hand, he charges Timothy not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of him, His prisoner; bids him hold fast the form of sound words; reminds him that all in Asia had turned away from him; and bids him commit to faithful men the things he had heard from him among many witnesses, that they might teach others. He tells him of the perilous times that should come in the last days, charging him to preach the word in season and out of season; to watch in all things, to do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of his ministry; and then, in faith, he sings his own departing song of triumph: “I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.“ And he again recurs to the ministry of preaching committed to him, saying; “At my first answer no man stood with me, but all forsook

me. I pray God it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.“ His hope of being restored, and of accomplishing the ministry, had failed. He knew not, or at least was not permitted to declare, how God would fulfil the purpose; and unto this day the same ignorance has continued.

The only authority in the Church has been that which Paul delegated to Timothy and Titus, until he should come again; and such has been the authority in the ministries of the Church, wherever there have been faithful men appointed. But all the charges which Paul gave to Timothy and Titus went not to supplant the office of the Apostles, but to supply the present emergency, until that office should be restored; and now that the apostleship is restored, and the cry is going up to the Lord to loose its bonds, the condemnation to the Churches will be their refusing to adopt and to walk in the more perfect way of the Lord, when He again introduces it; their refusing the evidence of the Scriptures, the teaching of Paul, saying, We want no Apostles.

The ministries have been, in the Lord’s hand, the channels of blessing to those who trusted in Him.

God has not forsaken His people, though He led them into captivity beyond Babylon. He is now gathering them back, and giving Apostles, and loosing the bonds; and where are those who will give up the praise of men and the good report of the world? Strait is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

The hope of the Lord's immediate coming was the strength of the Church. The hope departed, and sin came in. The Lord is reviving the hope, and he who has this hope in Him purifies himself even as He is pure.

The apostolic power could not be exercised where the whole Church was full of sin, as Paul says (2 Cor. i. 23, x. 1-11, xii. 19, &c., and xiii. 2, 3), and sin in the Church was the cause of the binding of the apostleship; for the power of God in the midst of the unclean and polluted would be as a consuming fire. Peter's warning as to the conduct of scoffers in the last days, walking after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things remain as they were from the beginning of the creation," is a warning to us. We learn also by the same Epistle (2 Peter iii. 15,16) to account the long-suffering of God to be our salvation. Peter also gives us a key to the reading of Paul's Epis-

les, telling us that this - viz., the coming of the Lord, and His delaying that coming that we may be ready to meet Him, is what Paul, according to the wisdom given unto him, has written unto us, as also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things, and that the unlearned and unstable wrest them and all the other Scriptures to their own destruction, for they do greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. It behoveth us, therefore, seriously to lay to heart these things, while we cry for the loosing the apostleship, lest we ask for what will be for our destruction; for Paul, speaking of these things, says: „When I come the third time I will not spare;“ and again, "Such as we are in words by letter when absent, such will we also be in deed when present," which words refer to the apostolic office when brought out in its fulness.

The whole of Moses' life, character, and history shadow forth the apostleship, the ministry of Jesus in the Apostolic Church; and Stephen's testimony against the Jews for resisting the Holy Ghost (Acts vii.) applies equally to us. The rejection of Moses by his countrymen, as a ruler and a judge, is the binding of the apostleship; and the restoration of the apostleship is the sending him again to be a ruler and a deliverer. The Lord, giving commandment to the Apostles by the Holy Ghost, is the antitype of the Angel in

the bush speaking to Moses. The receiving by Moses of the living oracles to give to us, is the giving of the Spirit and the ministration of the Spirit, and the showing forth the Church, the living Epistle of God, which is the end of the giving of the Holy Ghost, and the fulfilment of the ministration of the Spirit. All this belongs to the Apostolic office. The people bidding Aaron to make a calf is the setting up one subordinate ministry, the priesthood, as sufficient without the other and higher office of the apostleship, after the binding of the latter, in consequence of the Church having turned in their hearts unto Egypt, and having refused to obey Moses, saying, "As for this Moses, we wot not what is become of him." The tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, which our fathers had, as the Lord had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion he had seen, figures forth the ordering the Church, so far as it was ordered in the first days, according to the pattern of which the law was a shadow. The forms of a Spiritual Church, still existing in the Catholic and Protestant rituals, are the same tabernacle brought into possession of the Gentiles. "Howbeit, the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands," as saith the Prophet, "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What house will ye build me? saith the Lord. Ye stiff necked and uncircumcised of heart and ears, ye do always resist the

Holy Ghost, as your fathers did so do ye." So saith the same witness to them who look not beyond an earthly building, and desire not the coming of the Lord, nor the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and say, We want neither Holy Ghost nor Apostles.

Moses was to be a God to Aaron. The apostleship is the ordinance for communicating the mind of God to the priesthood. "He shall be thy spokesman unto the people, and he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God." The Apostles rule *over* Churches, and the Elders minister and rule *in* Churches.

Moses had to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. The apostleship, and the ministers under it, are to lead Israel, the Son, the first-born, into the glory, preparing the Church for the coming of the Lord.

Moses had the building of the tabernacle in the wilderness, and the setting it up. The apostleship has the ordering of the Churches, after the pattern of the true tabernacle, in this dispensation.

Moses, as a servant, builded his house, the law. The true Moses, Jesus, the Apostle of our profession,

is the Son, building by the twelve, His master-builders, His own house. Moses' tabernacle was one of witness and testimony of things to be spoken after. Jesus, in His Apostles, ruling and ordering all things, and building up the Church after the pattern which Moses saw on the mount, is the Prophet like unto Moses, who is to speak those things. "Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." The rejection of Paul's gospel by the Jews, was their casting off.

Moses appointed captains of thousands and of hundreds, &c. The Apostleship is the one office of authority in the Church, and all offices of authority are carved out of it, partaking in measure of the spirit that is on Moses, but not being anything without him (Exod. xviii.), nor having any separate existence, and only possessing the fulness of their measure, as the first ordinance is brought forth in its fulness - "*first*, Apostles," - and only recognised of God, while subject to Jesus, in His apostleship; as subjection to the authority of Moses, was insisted on by God from the Israelites. (Num. xii., xiv.)

Looking to Paul's Epistles to discover the purpose of God by an Apostleship in the Gentile Church, we

find that they are the wise master-builders to build the tabernacle, Christ's house. They are labourers together with God in the Church, which is God's Husbandry, God's building. They are the channels for blessing and filling the Church with the Holy Ghost, the witnesses to the Man Jesus at the right hand of God, who baptizes with the Holy Ghost, and there could be no witness to this, the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son of Man, except the gifts were ministered through men. Nor would there be any power to rule spirits were there not a witness for the Man Jesus, in whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily. They are the ministers of the Spirit to the Church, shewing her forth, the Epistle of God written in their hearts, known and read of all. They are the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, of whom it is required that they be found faithful; but no man may judge them. They are the preparers of the Bride of the Lamb for her marriage. They are the espousers of the Church to one husband, to present her a chaste virgin to Christ, preparing the New Jerusalem, as a bride adorned for her husband. They are the fathers of the Church, as Paul says, "Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." They are the heads of the Twelve Tribes, the Israel of God. They are nurses to the infant, cherishing the children, labour-

ing day and night, feeding them as babes and carnal with the milk, and ministering to them strong meat when they can bear it (which never was the case in the first ages, nor has yet been). They are the bringers of the child, the man-child, to the inheritance of glory. They are the foundations of the City, the New Jerusalem, the Church perfected, and the crown of twelve stars on her head. They have the twofold office of Moses bringing out of Egypt, and of Joshua, the captain of the hosts of the Lord, by the twelve men, one out of each tribe, bringing into the Land of Promise Israel, the Son, the first-born. They have the full ministry of Jesus raised from the dead, and fulfilling the office of the Prophet like unto Moses. All offices of authority in the Church are carved out of the Apostleship, and are contained in it, and whosoever rejects their authority, put forth in the ministries, shall be cut off from Israel. They are instead of God to Aaron, the priesthood of the Church; and to Israel, the Church to bless; and in the place of God to Pharaoh, the world, for judgment. Theirs is not the word of God coming in vision or in dream, as it comes to the Prophets, but it is the word of the Son of Man, the Man of God's image, having the mind of Christ, and speaking God's word. The token of the Prophet or spiritual man is, "that he shall acknowledge the things which I write," says Paul, "to be the commandment of God." If any man be ignorant, let him be

ignorant. If any man be wise, let him hear wisdom and acknowledge it. They are what Paul said he should be when he should come the third time. They have the care of all the Churches, and are to the whole Church what Angels and Elders, Deacons and Governments are to each - the servants of all. They shall lead the Church now into the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, the fulness of grace and truth, and shall also prepare the saints for the visible glory, to be revealed when the Son of Man cometh.

Such is the office of the Apostleship in the Christian Church. But it is an office to be brought out *now for the first time*. Nothing that was seen in the first days, in the infancy of the Church, was a manifestation of the office. Paul never was in presence and indeed a manifestation of the office, nor did he attain to the ministration of the Spirit, though it was his hope. It is reserved for us to look into those things which angels desire to look into, and to behold the days which many prophets and wise men desired to see and were not able.

The Elders who rule well are to be counted worthy of double honour, and in the Church of Christ the faces of the Elders shall be honoured; for the labourer is worthy of his hire. The Prophet also is not without honour, except in his own country, and among his

kindred. The Deacons and Governments are to be respected in the Church; for they are judges and princes in Israel. And the Assembly and Church of the first-born has Angels for its ministers, as it is written, „Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation.“ “All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours. Ye are full, ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us.“ But what says the Scripture of Apostles: “I think God hath set forth us, the Apostles, last, as it were appointed unto death, for we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ’s sake; we are weak; we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place, and labour, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we entreat, We are made as the filth of the earth, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.“ Despised by the Church, despised by the world, rejected of all. “And we rejoice in our sufferings, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh for His Body’s sake.“

Obedience unto death, and the shedding of their blood, is the calling of those who would follow the

Lamb. The evil days are at hand, spoken of in Eccles. xii.: The silver cord shall be loosed, the golden bowl be broken. The dust shall return to the earth, as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it. For God shall bring every work unto judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good or evil. The wall shall be broken down, the city taken, the women ravished; the two witnesses who prophecy shall finish their testimony, and the beast shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. The dwellers on the earth shall rejoice and make merry, and send gifts to one another, because the witnesses are slain. The travail of the woman, and the great tribulation shall come. Woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days; but he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved. It is “a little while, and again a little while.“ When all had forsaken Him and fled, Jesus cried, “It is finished, and bowed His head and gave up the ghost.“ So the work of God shall be brought into judgment. They shall say, We trusted it had been he that should have redeemed Israel. Many shall be left to weep. “Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice, and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in travail, hath sorrow because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. Ye now, therefore,

have sorrow, but *I will see you again*, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.“ The witnesses shall again stand on their feet, and the Lamb shall stand on the mount Sion with the one hundred and forty and four thousand. Rejoice in the Lord, and again, I say, rejoice. The Lord is at hand. “The Spirit saith, Come, and the Bride saith, Come. He that testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus.”