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PROF. STUART'S SERMON

AT THE

ORDINATION

OF THE

REV. WILLIAM G. SCHAUFFLER,

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# S E R M O N

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ORDINATION

OF THE

REV. WILLIAM G. SHAUFFLER,

AS

MISSIONARY TO THE JEWS.

PREACHED AT PARK-STREET CHURCH, BOSTON, ON THE EVENING OF

NOVEMBER 14, 1831.

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BY MOSES STUART,

Professor of Sacred Literature in the Theol. Seminary, Andover.

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It is proper to state here, that Mr. Shauffler was to derive his support in part from the Ladies' Society in Boston and Vicinity for Promoting Christianity among the Jews ; but that he was sent out as a Missionary under the direction of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.—The *Societies* adverted to in the sermon, are those which are named above.

A third edition of the sermon is printed so long after its delivery, because no better means is known for calling attention to the mission to the Jews in Constantinople, in which Mr. Schauffler is laboring.

*Missionary House, Boston, Aug. 26, 1845.*

# S E R M O N .

ROMANS, XI: 25—31.

*For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits,) that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.*

I have selected the whole of this passage as the theme of my discourse at the present time, because it is the most conspicuous passage respecting the conversion of the Jews to Christianity which is contained in the New Testament, and because it presents to our minds several important topics which are altogether appropriate to the present occasion.

I approach the consideration of the subject now suggested, with unfeigned diffidence and reluctance. With diffidence, because I know that it has been a stumbling-block, in some respects, to many a mind distinguished for illumination and piety; and with less attainments than such possessed, what security can I feel, that I shall not find in it some occasion of stumbling? With reluctance, because I know from experience something of the difficulties which surround the topic in question, and I have reason to

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fear that my strength is not adequate to overcome them, and that I have not sufficient discernment to avoid wandering from the path of truth myself, and becoming the occasion of error to others.

The most that I can assure this respected audience is, that I will not purposely or knowingly mislead them. I will endeavor to speak to them, plainly and simply, the convictions of my own mind; and, so far as the occasion permits, lay before them the grounds or reasons of these convictions. Were I to give an account, my hearers, of all the views which have been presented in past times respecting the conversion of the Jews, and of all which are now entertained, I must occupy your attention for many days instead of a single hour. Were I to point out in what respects the study of the Scriptures has led me to form conclusions relative to the subject before us, which differ from those that many other minds have endeavored to deduce from the Bible with regard to the same subject, and to lay before you all the grounds on which I venture to build a difference of opinion, I should occupy weeks instead of a single evening. And what is more than all, when I had gone through such an immense labor, and you had patiently attended to the whole of my discourses, you would probably be more perplexed than ever, and less able to form an impartial judgment in relation to the subject. This may seem strange to some; but I am well persuaded that it is true; for it is easy to believe that the minds of most men would naturally be perplexed by the constantly varying and endlessly different views, which have been and are maintained respecting the final return of the Jews. On this account I shall, on the present occasion, choose a path entirely simple and straight. My design (to state it in other words) is, to offer for the consideration of my hearers a simple, and what I deem to be merely scriptural, view of our subject.

Without attempting to follow my text through all the topics which it presents, (for this my limits would render impossible,) I shall select from it only some of those which are prominent at first view, or which are naturally presented to our minds by way of implication. These are,

I. That Israel has been blind as to the excellence and glory of the gospel.

II. That they will not always be so, but will be converted to the Christian faith.

III. This conversion will take place when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in.

IV. I shall inquire, by what means the Jews are to be converted, i. e. by what kind of agency, and by whom ?

When these topics shall have been discussed, some practical remarks, both in regard to the duty of Christians, and that of the missionary this evening to be consecrated to preaching salvation unto the seed of Abraham, will very naturally follow.

I. *Israel has been blind as to the excellence and glory of the gospel.*

To expend any efforts, or to occupy any time, in order to prove this, would be justly deemed, by the audience now before me, wholly superfluous. The fact is recorded in characters that stand forth in high relief, and are visible as the sun at noon-day. For eighteen centuries the Jewish nation, as a body, have openly professed their unbelief in Christianity, and have gloried in it. Did any one doubt this, the Jews could produce their thousands of martyrs to the cause of unbelief. They have cherished this sentiment in prosperity and in adversity ; in the midst of poverty and exile, of reproach and torture, they have proclaimed it. They have spread the knowledge of it over the whole earth where the providence of God has scattered them, among nations civilized and savage, among the worshippers of the true God and idolaters. Their enmity to Christians has been decidedly greater than that toward Pagans. One reason of this doubtless is, that Christianity sprung from their own bosom, and the quarrel with it is a kind of family-quarrel, if I may so speak, which above all others is apt to be bitter and lasting. Christianity, more than any other religion, provokes the indignation of their unbelieving hearts, because it comes nearer to them, and interferes more with their special claims and prejudices. It acknowledges the divine origin of their religion ; it builds its own claims to attention and respect on the validity of their ancient religion and their Scriptures. That it should do thus much, and yet do no more ; that it should

turn their own weapons against them ; that it should profess to be friendly to the claims of the Mosaic institutes, and to bow to the authority of the Hebrew Scriptures, and yet, after all, employ these very institutes and these same Scriptures as the instruments of establishing its own present exclusive claims, is, and has long been, in the eyes of the literal descendants of Abraham, an offence of the darkest hue, a treason against the God of Abraham and Moses and Elijah which is incapable of any expiation.

But whatever may have been the occasion of their unbelief, so long and so strenuously cherished, so openly and fearlessly maintained, the fact itself is before the whole world. Their children are taught, from their very infancy, to regard all Christians as perfidious, malicious, injurious, and treacherous toward them, and as blasphemers of the religion of the patriarchs and prophets. As soon as they begin to lisp, they begin to pronounce accursed the sacred name by which we are called, and which every tongue in heaven and on earth is yet to confess. They are taught to believe, that every Christian will defraud and injure them as much as may be in his power ; and therefore they consider him as their natural and perpetual enemy, of whom it is proper and lawful to take every advantage which can be safely taken. Of course, the children of the Jews grow up the natural and irreconcilable enemies of Christians in general. If there be any exceptions to this, they are, and almost always have been, few indeed. Now and then a Jewish family, especially in recent times, may be found, who have been somewhat moderate in the prejudices which they have inculcated upon their children, and who, by intercourse with Christians of an amiable character, have been disarmed in some good measure of the bitterness which the nation in general cherish toward the followers of Jesus.

When I look at this picture, I am filled with astonishment and distress. With the light which the Jews might have, by studying their own Scriptures, it does seem as if they could no longer persevere in unbelief ; it does seem, too, that their past unbelief has been altogether without excuse. They have always been looking for a Messiah who would be a temporal prince, and would exalt them as to *worldly* greatness and prosperity above all the nations of the earth. They have looked in vain. Often have they gone

out after a pretended deliverer ; and as often have all their hopes been frustrated, and they have paid the price of their delusion by their own blood.

How now can we account for facts so incredible as these seem to be ? By the common principles of our nature we cannot. All other nations on earth, that have ever been conquered and exiled and scattered, have ceased to retain, for any long period of time, their separate religion and separate national existence. Point me out one on the face of our globe, which has retained these after almost eighteen hundred years of exile and dispersion. Yet the Jews are one to the present hour ; one nation separate from all others as really as when they had the exclusive occupation of Palestine ; one in religion, one in unbelief with regard to Christianity. That a few individuals are of a different character, and have been in every age since the commencement of the Christian era, abates nothing from the force of this general remark. The apostle himself has reference to exceptions somewhat numerous, which existed in his time, when he says in our text : “Blindness *in part* is happened to Israel.” The expression is kind and sparing to the Jews. He means to say, that he does not accuse all of them, without any discrimination ; for some there were, who, like himself, were true believers in Christ. In later ages this number was greatly diminished. It has remained exceedingly small down to the present hour. There are now some conspicuous exceptions, indeed, in regard to unbelief ; but at the present time, there are not enough justly to apply to the Jewish nation the saving which the apostle designs to indicate, when he says that “blindness is *in part* happened to Israel.”

The great problem still remains to be solved, how the Jews have continued to be one as a nation, while they have been scattered over the whole earth for more than seventeen centuries, and almost one in regard to unbelief. In respect to the first of these facts, I must regard their unity in a national respect, as neither more nor less than a standing miracle, in attestation of the truth of the Scriptures. And as to their unbelief, I am forced to look at the awful imprecation which they uttered before the bar of Pilate, where they had placed that innocent victim, the Lamb of God, in order that they might legalize his murder. The Roman

governor said to them : " What evil hath he done ? " They all said to him : " Let him be crucified." Then Pilate took water and washed his hands, in token of innocence, and said to them : " I am innocent of the blood of this just person ; see ye to it." And what was the reply ? I shudder to relate it ; " Then answered all the people and said : " His blood be on us, and on our children ! " Matt. 27 : 22—24.

On them, and on their children, this blood has been. Here the mystery of their dispersion and of their unbelief is all unfolded. O tremendous imprecation ! Almost eighteen hundred years has it been fulfilled. Humanity recoils at its effects ; Christian benevolence should weep over it. If the disciples of Jesus feel as their blessed Master did, when he looked on unbelieving Jerusalem devoted to destruction, they would weep over the unbelieving Jews of the present day, and pity them, and strive to reclaim them, instead of persecuting and maligning them, and subjecting them to reproach and contempt and every species of oppression and indignity.

But how long,—the benevolent disciple of Jesus will exclaim,—O Lord, how long are the consequences of the dreadful imprecation to last ? Always ? ' Will God utterly cast away his people whom he foreknew ? ' Is there to be no end to the exiled state of the seed of Abraham ? No cessation of unbelief, and reproach, and indignity, and oppression ? God be thanked, these questions may be answered in a way that will dilate every heart of benevolence with pleasure. For,

## II. *The Jews will yet be converted to the Christian faith.*

I shall be very brief here ; for the assurances are so direct, plain, and certain, that no doubt can remain in the mind of any of any one who credits divine revelation. '

The apostle directly and positively affirms in our text, that " all Israel shall be saved." Nor does he rest this merely on his own declaration ; although this would be a sufficient voucher for us, who believe that he was a divinely inspired teacher. He appeals to the Jewish Scriptures in confirmation of this. Isaiah declares, that " out of Zion shall come forth a Deliverer, who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Is. 59 : 20. Jeremiah also declares, ' that a *new* covenant shall be made with them, when

their sins shall be taken away.' Jer. 31 : 31—34. The apostle goes on still further to confirm all this by adding, that although the Jewish nation were then at enmity with God, and broken off from his covenant by unbelief, yet God had not forgotten them, nor cast them off forever. They are still "beloved for the fathers' sakes." He means by this to say, that the precious promises made to the fathers, respecting the future salvation of their children, would in due time be remembered and fulfilled. God can never forget what he has once promised. So says the apostle: "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance;" that is, the gifts which he has engaged to bestow, the calling to gospel privileges which he has pledged himself to the ancient fathers to vouchsafe unto their descendants, God will never repent of. He is true to his promise; and it will therefore be fulfilled with absolute certainty.

Do sceptical minds call this in question? Do they urge upon us considerations that might lead to doubt, inasmuch as they are drawn from eighteen centuries of experience; from the deeply tinctured superstitions of the children of Abraham; from the haughty spirit which they possess, and the contempt which they feel for all who are Gentiles; from the influence which their rabbies or teachers have over them, in training up their minds to indulge an unrelenting hatred to Christianity and to all who profess it, and in debarring them from all access to sources of Christian instruction; do they insist on all these and the like reasons, as proofs that all attempts to bring about the conversion of the Jews will be hopeless and altogether fruitless? I acknowledge that I cannot help feeling the full force of all such arguments; yet I am not at all convinced or moved by them. Certain I am, that we ought not to be influenced in this way. For who were those to whom Peter preached on the day of Pentecost? Those very persons, I answer, whose hands were yet reeking with the Savior's blood. "God," said this fearless preacher to them, "hath made that same Jesus *whom ye have crucified*, both Lord and Christ." Acts 2 : 36. And yet three thousand of these men were converted under the preaching of a single sermon.

Who, I ask again, were the five thousand, converted under the preaching of the apostles soon after the day of Pentecost? And the answer again must be: They were Jews, unbelieving, hard-hearted, persecuting Jews. Acts 4: 1—4. Who were they to whom the apostles and other primitive preachers of Christianity first addressed themselves in every place where they went to proclaim the gospel, and from whom they won many and many a thousand to the religion of Jesus? I answer once more, that they were Jews.

Of what avail then are the doubts and fears, the cold speculations, and timid conclusions of sceptics, and of half-sceptics, in relation to the deeply interesting subject before us? Of none at all. Men who doubt and reason thus, do in their own hearts make the work of conversion a mere business of moral suasion by force of reasoning and argument. They overlook the omnipotence of that Spirit, whose office it is to bow the stubborn will and soften the hearts of the unbelieving. What? Are not all things possible with God? Can he not "make the people willing in the day of his power?" Cannot he, who works in men "according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead," can he not make the deaf to hear, and the blind to see? Can he not raise the dead to life? Has he not promised to do all this? Has he not often repeated the assurance that he will do it? Has he not done it in numberless instances? Are not myriads now worshipping before the throne of glory above, that can testify to the truth of this; multitudes who bow before his foot-stool on earth, that will unite in the same testimony? Is any thing too hard for God? Are not 'all hearts in his hand;' and so in it, that he can turn them whithersoever he will, even as the rivers of water are turned? Can any resist God's will? And above all, shall we, who are the descendants of savage and idolatrous heathen, who trace our origin to the superstitious and bloody devotees of Thor and Woden—shall we call in question the power of divine grace over the hearts of men? Cannot he, whose mighty power bowed the hearts of our pagan ancestors—cannot he bow the hearts of the children of Abraham? With the apostle, in our context, I

answer : " The Jews also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in ; for God is able to graff them in." Rom. 11 : 23. And how can they abide in unbelief, when, according to the promise of God, of which he will never repent, the seed of Abraham shall have a new heart and a right spirit given to them? The supposition calls in question the veracity of God. To doubt on this subject, is to question his power and his truth, the reality of the Christian religion and the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit. Believers in the Scriptures are not permitted to doubt. The thing is certain. The decree has gone forth, stamped with heaven's own seal upon it. Jehovah hath sworn by himself, that ' *every knee* shall yet bow to Jesus, and every tongue confess that he is Lord.'

Away then—forever away—with all doubt and fear in regard to this part of our subject. The day and the hour, when all which has been promised may be fulfilled, we may not know. It is not essential that we should know them. But the promises of God, the facts which he has declared shall take place, are certain. To doubt, is to call his veracity in question ; to deny, is to tax him with having said that which is not true.

I am fully aware, how hardly these declarations will be treated by some. I know there are doubters on the great subject under consideration. I have read, more than once, in a journal of a foreign country, which claims to be a general or universal Journal of Literature and Religion, and is edited by men who bear the Christian name and have a high standing and office, the most taunting scoffs at those who believe in the future conversion of the Jews, and have witnessed the most contemptuous sneers at all who indulge the hope that the seed of Abraham are yet to become Christians. When I see this, I can almost forgive the Jew his unbelief, who has from his cradle been taught it, and who perhaps has never once come where the light shone fully upon him. But that men, with the records of Christianity in their hands, should think and speak thus, manifests a degree of scepticism and a contempt for divine truth, which one would hope to find only in the abodes of everlasting darkness.

I believe there are men of the like spirit, in our own country. Certain it is, that the hearts of multitudes are quite cold and sciep-

tical, in respect to the great truth which I have now been laboring to confirm and illustrate; men whose hands are closed up as to all contributions in aid of the object for which the societies present this evening are pleading. I invite all such to read their Bible. The controversy between them and the Bible is, whether God has promised that which will *not* be performed; whether he has said, and it shall *not* come to pass.

On this point the audience before me have no doubt. I may pass on, therefore, to the next head of my discourse: which is,

III. *That the conversion of the Jews will take place, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in.*

It were easy to occupy not merely the time allotted for the whole of my discourse, with this point, but to write a volume upon it. It is obvious, however, that I must content myself, on this occasion, with a few brief remarks.

It is impossible for me to enter, this evening, into a discussion of the question so often agitated by commentators and theologians, whether the period when the season of millennial glory will commence, is *definitely* marked out in the prophetic parts of the Scriptures. Every one who is conversant with this subject, well knows what a variety of conjectures have been made relative to it, and that many different opinions have been strenuously defended. Whoever is skilled in the business of interpretation, will naturally suspect, that where so much discrepancy of opinion exists, on such a point, there must have been a neglect or an overlooking, on the part of some, of the simple and solid principles of explaining the prophetic language of the Scriptures. The Revelation of John has been the principal source, from which most who have written treatises respecting the time of the Millennium, have professed to derive their proof. This book is more closely allied, in its diction, to the Old Testament Scriptures, than any other part of the New Testament. One might well say, that it is made up of expressions and imagery of the same cast with those to be found in the Hebrew prophets. Yet there have been many commentators on this book, commentators that have published treatises on the Millennium, who were not even capable of reading the Hebrew prophets in their original language. Of course it was not possible, that they should rightly and fully estimate the

diction of the Apocalypse. Yet they have not been restrained by this consideration. They have gone on to compose books respecting the millennial day, seemingly with almost as much confidence as John himself may be supposed to have felt when he wrote his Revelation. How can we wonder, then, at the crudities which have sometimes been presented to the world, under the title of commentaries, or dissertations, or remarks, on the prophecies respecting the latter day of glory?

But let us quit this unwelcome theme, and inquire whether the apostle Paul has given us any clue to the investigation of the subject before us, viz. *When will the Jews be converted?*

My answer is, that he has given us some *general* information, without any particular specification of exact time. "Blindness," says he, "in part has happened to Israel." For how long a time? "Until the *fulness* of the Gentiles be come in." And what is to follow then, after this fulness shall have come in? To this the answer is: "And so," i. e. when the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in, "all Israel shall be saved."

The whole matter, then, as to what Paul has said respecting the time when the blindness of the Jews in general shall cease, rests on the import of the word *fulness*. When this shall have come in, i. e. when the *fulness of the Gentiles* shall have been converted to the Christian faith, then—and not till then—shall the body of the Jewish nation be converted to Christianity, or be saved.

It becomes therefore an inquiry of deep interest, what the meaning of the word *fulness* is. The Greek word translated *fulness* (*πλήρωμα*) is applied in various ways, and has different shades of meaning, according to the subject of the discourse. When it has respect to a law, it means *complete obedience* to it, or the *fulfilling* of it; e. g. Rom. 13:10, "Love is the *fulfilling* of the law." When connected with time, it means the *completing* or the *full measure* of such time; e. g. Gal. 4:4, "When the *fulness* of time had come;" Eph. 1:10, "In the dispensation of the *fulness* of times." But when the word is differently connected, it means *abundance, copiousness, plenitude, a great multitude*, etc. Thus, for example, John 1:16, "Of his *fulness* have we all received, even grace for grace;" 1 Cor. 10:26, "The earth

is the Lord's, and the *fulness* thereof." Rom. 15 : 29, "I shall come in the *fulness* of the blessing of the gospel of Christ;" Col. 1 : 19, "It pleased the Father, that in him [Christ] all *fulness* should dwell;" Col. 2 : 9, "In him [Christ] dwelleth all the *fulness* of the Godhead bodily."

In accordance, now, with this latter class of meanings, the word *fulness* in our text is employed. *The fulness of the Gentiles* means therefore, *the abundance*, or *an abundance* of the Gentiles, *great numbers* of the Gentiles, or (if I may so speak) *a copiousness* or *plenitude* of the Gentiles, *a multitude* of them.

Thus far our way seems to be plain. But how many constitute an *abundance*, a *copiousness*, a *plenitude* of the Gentiles? Exactly how many, it is of course impossible for us to say; nor is it at all probable that the apostle had any *definite* number in view, in his own mind. Whenever the day arrives, in which it may be truly said that an *abundance* of Gentiles have become believers, then is the time in which salvation will be sent to Israel.

Observe that the apostle does not say a word about a specific time, a definite year or day. Whether this was revealed to him, we may doubt. But be this as it may, it is clear that he has not fixed upon a definite time.

Nor am I at all persuaded that the apostle John intended, any more than Paul, exactly to limit the time when the Jews shall be brought in, and the reign of Christ become universal. I know well that many will be surprised at such a declaration. But I have long and painfully sought for the true import of the apparent designations of time in the Apocalypse, and I am quite persuaded that the *literal* interpretation of them has no solid foundation in the just laws of exposition. The "time and times and half a time" of Daniel, the forty and two months (Rev. 11 : 2, 13 : 5,) and the twelve hundred and sixty days of John (Rev. 12 : 6,) during which time the holy city is to be trodden under foot, and the power of the beast is to continue, I must regard as symbolical designations of time never intended to be *literally* understood, but designed merely to signify *a considerable space of time*, without exactly defining its length. In all the prophecies of high importance, I know of but two literal designations of time; and these are the seventy years captivity of the Jews in Babylon, and the

time of the slavery of the Hebrews in Egypt. Even these, as history shews, were not designed to be very exact; inasmuch as the actual period of these events differs several years from the time specified.

You will not understand me, my friends, as avowing the opinion, that God has not fixed a time in his own mind, when the Jews will be converted. Most certainly he has. But the question whether he has disclosed the year or the day to us, is one of a very different nature from this. If "the time and times and half a time," "the forty and two months," and "the twelve hundred and sixty days" of prophecy, (which are equivalent to each other,) be intended as literal and exact designations of time, then they amount only and merely to three and a half years. But this interpretation almost all agree in rejecting. Many, however, remind us confidently, that in prophecy one day always stands for a year, because this is expressly said to be so in one or two cases. But I ask, whether the seventy years of Babylonish exile, or the four hundred of Egyptian slavery, or the one thousand of millennial glory, are to be construed in this manner? In a word, nothing is more certain, than that this principle cannot be carried through. And if it could, where are we to begin to count the years in question?\*

A multitude of periods, fixed upon by speculators upon the prophecies respecting the Millennium, have already passed by, and yet the Jews are not converted. Many more are near at hand, and will probably pass by in like manner. Yet the advocates for such definite periods have, and always will have, this salvo for their failures, viz. that they did not begin the date of the twelve hundred and sixty days at the right period; of course they could not make them end at the right one. In this way, the period in question has become, if we are to trust these expositors, an ever varying and moving one; and, so far as I can see, it is likely still to continue such, for some time to come.

With God, I repeat it, this period is clearly and certainly defined. But that the sacred writers did not intend to enable us exactly to define it, by any designations of time which they have

\*See Note A.

employed, I am fully persuaded. And I must leave the subject with saying this, because I cannot now say any more. I only add, in order to prevent being misunderstood, that although the designations of time in the prophecies respecting the millennial day, are not such as will enable us to fix upon the exact period when it will come; yet there are other evidences of its approach, other "signs of the times," by which we may acquire all the satisfaction in regard to this subject which is necessary and proper for us.

Leaving all conjectures then out of view, let us take the more solid and certain ground marked out by the apostle Paul, viz. that the Jews will be saved, whenever an abundance of the Gentiles shall have been brought in.

And is not that time either actually come, my friends, or at least is it not near at hand? The glorious triumphs of divine grace, within a few years past, both at home and abroad, proclaim the probability of this, and give us ground of hope. These triumphs are extended among the heathen, as well as among nations called Christian. The isles have begun to wait for the law of God; Ethiopia is stretching out her hand to him. Christians are waking up to a sense of duty, to prayer, to efforts for the salvation of the perishing, never known before since the primitive ages of the Church. God is pouring out his Spirit in a manner before unknown, since the same ages. Is not all this ground to hope, that the *abundance* of the Gentiles is going to be gathered in, or is already gathering in? I cannot refuse to hope this; and if it be true, then the time is near at hand, when the blindness of the Jews will be removed, and the veil be taken from their hearts. It is time then to be up and doing, with respect to them. The Lord be praised that the Societies before me this evening, are engaged in this blessed work!

Be not disheartened if augurers tell you, that the time to build the Lord's house is not yet come. Leave those to fix upon particular dates for the conversion of the Jews, who confide more in their own sagacity, than in the declaration of the Savior, when his disciples asked him concerning the definite period of his coming. "It is not for you," said he to his inquisitive followers, "to know the times or the seasons, *which the Father hath kept in his own*

power.” Acts 1 : 7. I have come to believe, my hearers, that it is now as it was then, in regard to *definite* years or days ; God still ‘keeps them in his own power.’ But signs enough to convince us of approaching better days, we do see. ‘Let us not be faithless, but believing.’ And if believing, then we may indulge the hope that the time to begin the building of the Lord’s house has come, and that no delay should be made in preparing materials for this purpose. But,

IV. *By what means will the Jews be converted? What is the kind of agency to be employed, and by whom?*

This is our last head of discourse, and, so far as it respects our duty, not less important than either of those already discussed.

In answer to the questions just stated, I remark, (1.) That the *efficient cause* of conversion, in every case, whether of Jew or Gentile, is, and must be, the Spirit of God. ‘It is the same Spirit who worketh in all.’ His office it is to bow the rebellious will, to break the stubborn heart, to bring down every high imagination that exalteth itself against God, to ‘create a new heart, and to renew a right spirit in perishing sinners. ‘Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but the increase must come from him.’ To him must be attributed the glory of the new creation ; it is he who ‘maketh all things new.’ But while we most cheerfully acknowledge and strenuously maintain this truth, we must also hold it to be equally clear and certain, that he employs means for the accomplishment of the great and glorious ends of redeeming mercy. For,

(2.) Divine truth is the appointed means of conversion, both to Jew and Gentile.

It is now true, as it has been and ever will be, that “the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul ; the testimonies of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple.” Paul was the instrument of begetting spiritual children among the Corinthians, and elsewhere, ‘through the truth of the Gospel.’ It is ‘the truth which is to make sinners free.’ And were I to quote all the texts of Scripture, which have a bearing on this point, I must occupy more than the time allotted to the whole of my discourse, in order to recite them. There is an *efficient cause* of conversion, which is

the grace and power of God ; and there is an *instrumental cause* of conversion, which is the truth of the gospel. Of course,

(3.) The Gospel must be preached to the Jews, before we can expect them to be converted.

I ask the question, long ago urged with so much force : “ How can they hear without a preacher ? ” It carries along with it its own answer, and needs no other. The Jews then, in order to be brought into the kingdom of Christ, whether sooner or later, must hear the gospel. But who shall preach it to them ? Will they, of their own accord, provide themselves with Christian preachers ? Never ; their unbelief forbids it. Will they attend, where they have opportunity, on Christian instruction, without its being specially designed for them ? Cases of this nature are exceedingly rare ; and the obvious reason is, that the man among them who takes such a course, is subject to excommunication from their synagogue, is regarded by them as a faithless, treacherous renegade, and is shunned as an object of universal abhorrence. In not a few cases, his life even is in danger. Can it be rationally expected that men thus situated, and brought up in all the deep-rooted prejudices of Jews, will volunteer at first in seeking after Christian instruction ? Nothing but the exertion of a miraculous power would bring them to do it.

It is now, therefore, as our Savior represents it to be in the parable ; the servants of him who gives the invitation to the feast, are required to go out into the highways and the hedges, and to compel guests to come in, that his house may be filled.

In this way more or less of the Jews, in every age, have been won over to Christianity. In latter ages, the number has indeed been few. In the apostles' day it was great. Paul could say : “ At this present time there is a remnant, according to the election of grace.” Rom. 11 : 5. So, we trust, it is now. There is evidently a listening ear, among some of the sons of Abraham. There is a growing disposition to read and investigate. Talmudic and Rabbinic superstitions are losing their power and authority among them. All the unbelief which they possess, all the prejudices in which they have been nurtured, all the hatred of Christianity which they have been taught to feel and have so heartily

exercised, are not proof against the power of the gospel and the omnipotence of the Divine Spirit.

When the Societies before me, then, are asked, Why do you expend your money and time, in providing Christian instruction for the Jews? they may make an answer always conclusive, and satisfactory to Christian benevolence. This is, that the Savior has commanded his "gospel to be preached to *every* creature;" and that divine truth is "mighty, through God, to the pulling down of all the strong holds of Satan." Ours is the duty to propagate it; to God we may safely intrust its success.

And are not the Jews—the descendants of those immortal patriarchs and prophets and martyrs, whose history is recorded in the Old Testament; the once chosen and beloved people of God, "to whom pertained the adoption, and the covenant, and the glory, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever"—are not these a part of our brethren of the human race, who are to be regarded by Christian benevolence, and made the subjects of Christian efforts to reclaim? God forbid, my friends, that we should ever for a moment doubt on this subject. Of all people on earth, the religious world is most indebted to the Hebrew nation. They have indeed "been broken off by unbelief." But "God is able to graff them in;" and he has promised to do it. In all their wanderings from their Father's house, they are still looked upon with an eye of pity by him. For the sake of their ancestors, they are still regarded with affection. God has chastised them long and sore, for their unbelief and contumacy in rejecting the only Savior of men. But he still looks with compassion upon them, and is determined yet to bring them back to their Father's house.

Why should we not send preachers to them? Are they, I ask again, more improbable subjects of conversion than our pagan ancestors were? And have they not all the feelings, affections, sympathies, in a word—all the attributes, of men? I venture to say, they not only have them, but have them in a high degree. More native talent, keenness of perception, and energy joined with activity of mind, exist nowhere, in no nation under heaven. All nations, it is true, have for ages agreed to harrass, to oppress,

to despise, and to malign the Jews. The so called Christian rulers of Europe have hunted them from society. The Inquisition has made them hypocrites by its terrors, or burned them at the stake, when steadfast in their professions. The heathen persecute and despise them, because they will not bow down before their idols. They have been treated, in general, as the Greeks were by the devotees of Mohammedism. They are excluded from the rank and privileges of freemen, and put below slaves. And nations called Christian despise them, because they are as a body vicious and degraded. A monstrous inconsistency, an unpardonable abuse of power, a high-handed act of tyranny and oppression, first to make them lower than slaves, and then to complain that they are so! It is in vain that Christians attempt to justify their oppressive dealings with the Jews, by pleading the unbelief of this nation, and the awful imprecation which they made upon themselves before the bar of Pilate. It is in vain that they aim to justify their conduct, by pleading that they are only instruments in the hand of heaven, of inflicting upon the Israelites a punishment which they deserve. Sennacherib too, in ancient times, justified his rapacity and ambition and cruelty in the same way. He was an instrument, in the hands of God, of threshing the nations. But then he lost all sight and sense of this, in the accomplishment of his own selfish ends. And so it has been among Christian nations. They have oppressed and maltreated the Jews so long, that they seem to feel a right by prescription to do so; and this because the Jews are professedly unbelievers in Christianity. Are there not, then, millions of unbelievers among themselves; and such too as have more deeply embued their hands in a Savior's blood, than any of the Jews now living? For it is, in a peculiar sense, the condemnation of many Christians so called, that "light hath come into the world, and they have loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

If the Jews are ever to be won to Christianity, they are to be treated as fellow men, as human beings, entitled to our sympathies and our benevolence. They must be restored to equal rights in society. The looks of reproach and contempt, which they have been accustomed to encounter, must be exchanged for the aspect of kindness and benevolence. How can they ever be made to

feel that Christianity is a religion of benevolence, while they see nothing but hatred and aversion toward them in its professors? The thing is impossible. Nor can the great Head of the Church be expected to hear the prayers, or to bless the efforts of his followers, in respect to the Jews, until he sees them feeling as Paul did, whose "heart's desire and prayer to God for them was, that they might be saved;" or as the holy Savior did, when he wept over Jerusalem.

I turn with aversion from the general history of the past, in respect to the treatment of the Jews, and look with anxious expectation toward the future. What remains to be done, in order effectually to promote the great end which the Societies before me have in view?

The very thing, I answer, that they are about to do; to send to the Jews teachers of divine truth; and I would add, to send those who are *Gentiles* by birth, and not Jews. I know that the convictions of many on this subject have been different from my own. They have been anxious to obtain Jewish converts, in order to make of them missionaries to the Jewish nation. Facts, however, speak against the present success of this scheme. The Jews regard with universal horror, the man who has deserted their ranks and gone over to Christianity. They will not hear him. They name him *Meshummadh* (משומד), i. e. he who is accursed, or ought to be devoted to utter destruction. They will not believe it possible, that he can be sincere. But a Gentile has not the same prejudices to encounter. He knows, indeed, that the Jews are unbelievers; but they know that he, having never been a member of their community, may very sincerely and honestly be attached to another. They listen to him without the disadvantage of believing him to be a hypocrite; and therefore they listen with more candor and patience.

But I have a stronger reason than this. It is one drawn from our text. Paul distinctly intimates, that the Gentiles are to be the instruments of converting the Jews. "Through your mercy," says he, i. e. through the mercy vouchsafed to you Gentiles, "they [the Jews] also will obtain mercy." Rom. 11: 31. What God has done for the Gentiles, by means of the gospel, is designed to be the first and great means of impressing their minds in

a saving manner. That the Gentiles are to be the instruments in making this impression, seems of course to be involved in what is said. And such being the case, the Societies just named have taken scriptural ground, in sending out a Gentile missionary to the Jews.

I have a multitude of things which I could desire to say, in respect to the means of converting the Jews. But I must forego them all, as I have already exceeded the bounds which propriety sets to a discourse, on an occasion like the present. I cannot however conclude, without some brief hints, by way of caution against some of the speculations and measures of the times relative to the conversion of the Jews.

Among these I mention the long cherished and warmly supported opinion, that *the Jews are again to return to the literal Palestine, and there assume an attitude and station which will give them a civil and social, as well as a sacred pre-eminence over all the nations of the earth.* That their literal return to Palestine is possible, I would not deny; that the Scriptures have not expressly denied it, I readily concede. But it seems to me quite as certain, that the Scriptures have nowhere taught us that they will return thither. I know there are texts not a few, which seem to teach this; and which, if literally construed, must be considered as teaching it. But on this point turns the whole issue of the question. Are such Scriptures to be *literally* interpreted? If so, then by the very same principles of interpretation, I will prove to a certainty that the Levitical priesthood, and ritual, and sacrifices, are to be reinstated in more than all their primitive pomp and glory; I will shew that every Jew on earth is literally to be a prince or king; that all the Gentiles are to be literally hewers of wood and drawers of water to them; I will not only demonstrate all this, but I will shew that "from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall go up, and worship before the Lord at Jerusalem." Is. 66: 23.

Are you ready, my friends, to subscribe to all this? It is the very same principle of interpretation that obliges you to do so, which is employed in proving the *literal* return of the Jews to Palestine. Nay, I may add, it is the very same principle of interpretation which the Jews of our Savior's time employed, in

satisfying their minds that their Messiah was to be a *temporal* instead of a spiritual king. Have not Christ and his apostles said enough to guard against such principles of explaining the prophecies? Have they not shewn us, that the true seed of Abraham are his children by faith, whether Jews or Gentiles; and that the Jerusalem we now seek after, is that 'which cometh down from God out of heaven,' that which 'is from above, and is the mother of us all?' Where, in all the New Testament, has the Savior spoken of the literal return of the Jews to Palestine? Where has Paul, or any other apostle, uttered a word of this nature? If there ever was or could be occasion of saying such a thing, that occasion existed when Paul was writing the words of our text. Yet, grateful as it was to him to find any thing in the opinions of the Jews with which he could accord and which he could praise, he does not even hint at a literal return from their dispersion. Why not? How could he avoid it, when directly treating of the subject of their restoration to the favor of God? Why should he pass the whole matter over entirely, when a hint would be so grateful to the national feelings of the Jews? Only one answer, as it seems to me, can be given to these questions; and this is, that Paul did not himself believe in the literal return of the Jews to Palestine.

And why should he? What purpose is to be answered by it? Are we indeed to have a renewed system of Levitical rites and sacrifices? The New Testament teaches us, that they are forever abolished by the death of Christ. Are we again to see a magnificent temple at Jerusalem, the dwelling-place of God, the place of worship, and the only acceptable one on the face of all the earth? Our Savior has taught us, that neither on the temple-mountain of Samaria, nor yet on that at Jerusalem, the Father is to be worshipped; for God is a Spirit, and demands spiritual worshippers, and his temple is the whole earth, nay, every heart which is humble and contrite. Is God any more to be exclusively the covenant God of the Hebrews? Paul assures us, that he is the God of the Gentiles as well as the Jews, and that he enters into the same covenant with both, and stands in the very same relation. Are the worship and faith of the Jews, congregated in Palestine, to be different from that of other Christians? Paul tells

us, that as there is one God and Father of all, and one Lord Jesus, so there will be one faith and one baptism. Is the Jewish nation then to become more distinguished than any Gentile one, and are the Hebrews to remain, as such, a people separate from all the earth besides? Paul tells us again, that in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free, but all are to be *one* in him. For what purpose, then, are the Jews to be separated from all other nations, during the latter day of glory, and to dwell in a secluded state? I know of none; I cannot even conjecture any. Is it to foster national pride, and teach them the glories of a pre-eminence dependent on their lineage? The gospel forbids, instead of cherishing, such a spirit as this.

But suppose now the Jews, scattered by a mysterious Providence over the whole earth, should be converted by divine grace, and changed into so many Pauls, and commissioned to preach unto the nations; then we might expect the latter day to burst upon the earth with an overwhelming and irresistible flood of light, and the glory of the Lord forthwith to fill the earth as the waters fill the seas.

When I revolve this whole subject in my mind, it seems to me so plain, so clear, so convincing, that I must regard as dreams all speculations about the literal return of the Jews. The very same principles of interpretation that would prove this, would prove also a complete restoration of the whole Jewish ritual, sacrifices, temple, and priesthood. The gospel forbids us to credit this.\*

Kindred to the ideas that have just been examined, is the notion that *converted Jews must have a separate community*. For what purpose I ask? Are they to be taught again the old doctrine of separation and pre-eminence? Never, never. 'They that be of the faith, are now children of Abraham,' and have the same covenant God with his offspring who are believers. Why then separate Jewish converts from other Christians? It is the very last thing that ought to be done; for it is either cherishing their former national pride, or else it is saying that they are unworthy of the confidence or the society of the Gentiles. Neither

\*See Note B.

of these can be prudent or proper. It is the very thing which the apostle Paul did not do. Where in all the history of him, and in all his epistles, is there any indication that he formed Jewish and Gentile converts into separate communities? There is not a word to this purpose. Nay more; we know that the contrary of this is true; for nothing is more certain than that his epistles are directed to churches which consist of both Jews and Gentiles. That to the Hebrews, is the only one to be excepted; and this was doubtless written to Hebrews in Palestine, among whom there were but very few Gentiles. If then his example is any thing to the purpose, it is conclusive on the point before us.

My Christian friends, I repeat it: There is *one* God and Father of all; *one* Lord Jesus Christ, our only and all sufficient Savior; *one* faith and *one* baptism; *one* heart and *one* soul; among *all* the true disciples of Jesus. The middle wall of partition is broken down, forever prostrated, which existed between Gentiles and Jews. The blood of Jesus has eternally removed it.

If I am right in these views, then, I would say in the last place, is the path of duty plain to the Societies specially interested in the present occasion. Send the gospel to the Jews, my Christian friends; teach them, beseech them, to be reconciled to God in Christ; do kindness to them, just as you would do to others. They have the same sympathies, and are to be wrought upon by the same means. Strive to convince all who have oppressed and maltreated them, that their conduct is an outrage on the laws of Christian benevolence, and a high-handed offence in the sight of heaven. Appeal to Christians, to magistrates, to the whole world, in behalf of this injured people. Shew them that you are, with all your hearts, aiming at their spiritual and temporal good. Then will they begin to lend your missionaries a listening ear. Then may you expect him who wept over perishing Jerusalem, to bless you, and to accept your efforts in behalf of his ancient covenant people.

I would, at the same time, caution you against all and any measures, which may foster the national pride, the vain and earthly hopes, or the exclusive and arrogating spirit, of the carnal descendants of Abraham. As there is but one fold, and one shep-

herd, and one God, and one Savior, and one faith, and one heart, for and in all the children of Abraham by faith, never approve or promote a single measure, that will help again to erect and establish the separating wall that has been broken down by the blood of Christ.

Persevere in the noble cause, in which you are engaged. Your efforts in it deserve the more credit, inasmuch as they have met with so many discouragements, and are, I may say, so unpopular. Persevere, I say again ; it is a noble cause ; the cause of God ; the cause which dwells on the heart of everlasting love. He does remember his people ; and with loving kindness will he yet return and visit them.

There is then no discouragement which ought to make you despond in the least. If the time for the full conversion of the Jewish nation be not yet come, there is, at least, the same field open for winning some souls among them, that there was in the days of Paul. In due time, then, you shall reap, if you faint not. You cannot lose, at all events, the glorious reward of Christian effort and Christian benevolence.

May the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of the Jew and Gentile, bless, guide, and accept you, in all your efforts to do good to the seed of Abraham, his friend, and make you the happy instruments of promoting a Savior's love in their hearts ! And so, may the Lord, the righteous judge, give you and them, at last, a crown of glory which will not fade away !

To the **DEAR YOUNG MAN**, who is to be consecrated on this occasion as your missionary unto the seed of Abraham, I have time to say only a word. Friend of my heart, be what Paul was, when he expressed himself willing to be "accursed from Christ," if he might by this save his perishing kinsmen from final perdition. Rom. 9: 1—3. Let your conscience bear you witness in the Holy Ghost, that you have 'continual sorrow and heaviness of mind' for the unbelieving Jews, and that your 'heart's desire and prayer to God for them is, that they might be saved.' Labor, pray, teach, love, live, entirely for the purposes of your important mission. May he who dwelt between the cherubim, in the temple of old, yet bring your feet to stand on the sacred ground which Jesus trod ; to plead with Jews where he pleaded with them and

wept over them ; and if your blood, like his, must flow to satiate the rage of persecution, then follow in the Savior's steps, bearing his cross, presenting your hands to the nails, and your side to the spear. If you suffer with him, remember that you are to reign with him on his throne of glory above. Go then, in his name ; proclaim his dying love to the perishing Jews ; set before them that Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world ; that great High Priest in the sanctuary above, who ever liveth to intercede for them ; and that temple which is not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. May the Spirit of the living God protect, guide, sanctify, bless, and save you ! May he give the truths which you shall declare, access to all hearts, bow before them every stubborn will, and thus bring back many wandering children to the house of their Father, from which they have so long strayed, and produce a final and everlasting reconciliation of them to their God and Savior ! **AMEN.**

## NOTES.

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### NOTE A.

No one, who is acquainted with the difficulties that lie in the way of computing periods of time named in the prophecies, will expect a formal discussion of such a subject in a note to a sermon. The most which I shall undertake to do, is to suggest a few hints, in order that the reader may see some of the grounds on which I build my interpretation of "a time and times and half a time," or "twelve hundred and sixty days," which is a period of the same measure.

1. The period in question is applied to different events, in the Scriptures. In Dan. 7: 25, it is applied to designate the time in which "another king" (different from the ten kings of the Roman empire that had been mentioned) "shall arise," who will persecute the saints for "a time and times and the dividing [i. e. half] of time." In Dan. 12: 7, it is applied to the period in which some mighty oppressor, (probably Antiochus Epiphanes,) shall afflict and trouble the holy land and the people of God; compare Dan. 11, and 12: 1—6, with 12: 7. In Rev. 12: 14, it is applied to the time that the "woman is nourished in the wilderness," who has "fled from the face of the serpent." In Rev. 12: 2, "the Gentiles" are said to "tread under foot the holy city, for *forty and two months*," i. e. three years and six months, which equal "a time and times and half a time." In Rev. 11: 3, "the two witnesses" are said "to prophesy a *thousand two hundred and threescore days*," i. e. forty-two months or three and a half years, as before. In Rev. 12: 6, 'the woman who flees from the great red dragon into the wilderness,' is fed there "*a thousand two hundred and threescore days*."

How now are we to make all these events, so different in kind, character, and occasion, exactly and *literally* to synchronize? If the period named be in fact twelve hundred and sixty years, i. e. if *each day* in the period named stands for *one year*, as has so often and confidently been asserted, then are we of course brought to the conclusion, that the king of the Roman empire, who should rise up "after the ten," as described in Dan. 7, would live and persecute the saints for twelve hundred and sixty years. Then would Antiochus Epiphanes, also, as described in Dan. 11 and 12, live and persecute the saints for the same period. And finally, the two witnesses mentioned in Rev. 11: 3, would live and preach the gospel, for the same period of time. How is all this to be reconciled with fact? And how is the interpretation, which assigns to each day of the period in question a corresponding literal year, to be sustained?

I might even venture to say, that this exegesis is a desperate one; for the simple reason, that all the cases being put together where *three years and a half* are prophetically designated, they do on the very face of them shew that an interpretation such as that which I have rejected, is impossible. But I have to suggest,

2. That the number *three and a half* seems to be symbolically employed as being half of the sacred number *seven*.

To prove that *seven* is often employed without any intention of being *literally* and *definitely* understood, seems hardly to be necessary. Let any one reflect for a moment on such expressions as the following: Gen. 41: 2, 3, 4, 18, 19, 20, 26, 27, *seven* well-favored kine, and *seven* lean kine; Gen. 41: 5, 6, etc., *seven* good ears of corn, and *seven* poor ones; Num. 23: 1, *seven* altars, *seven* oxen, *seven* rams; Deut. 28: 7, *thine* enemies shall flee before thee *seven* ways; Deut. 28: 25, thou shalt flee *seven* ways before them; Judg. 16: 7, if they bind me with *seven* withs: Judg. 16: 13, *seven* locks; 1 Sam. 2: 5, the barren hath borne *seven* sons; Job. 5: 19, in *seven* troubles no evil shall touch thee; Prov. 9: 1, wisdom hath hewn out her *seven* pillars; Prov. 26: 25, there are *seven* abominations in his heart; Ecc. 11: 2, give a portion to *seven*; Is. 4: 1, in that day *seven* women shall take hold of one man; Mic. 5: 5, we shall raise against him *seven* shepherds; Zech. 3: 9, on one stone shall be *seven* eyes; Zech. 4: 2. *seven* lamps, *seven* pipes; and so in a multitude of other cases, in the Old Testament

So also in the New Testament: Matt. 12: 45, *seven* spirits more wicked than the first; Rev. 1: 4, *seven* spirits before the throne; Rev. 3: 1, *seven* spirits of God; Rev. 4: 5, *seven* lamps, *seven* spirits; and elsewhere in this book, *seven* stars, *seven* angels, *seven* churches, *seven* golden candlesticks, *seven* horns, *seven* eyes, *seven* thunders, *seven* heads, *seven* crowns, *seven* plagues, *seven* vials, *seven* mountains, *seven* kings, etc. etc. So in the Gospels: Luke 17: 4, if thy brother trespass *seven* times; Matt. 18: 21, shall I forgive until *seven* times?

All these are but a part of the examples. Let any one take his Concordance and go over the whole, and he will settle the question with himself forever, in respect to the use of the number *seven* in a figurative or symbolical way. He will see that a certain and definite number is put for an uncertain or limited one; because the mind naturally cleaves to, and takes pleasure in, definite modes of expression.

But what is there to shew that *three and a half* is ever employed in the like way? This number, it will of course be perceived, is *one half* of the sacred number *seven*. The probability that it might be employed in the like way, is therefore somewhat strong. And so facts seem to speak. The wicked exult over the dead bodies of the slain witnesses, "three days and a half." Rev. 11: 9. After "three days and a half," these witnesses rise from the dead. Rev. 11: 11. Elijah prayed, and it rained not upon the earth, by the space of three years and six months," i. e. three years and a half. James 5: 17; "in the days of Elias, the heaven was shut up three years and six months." Luke 4: 25. It should be noted, that in 1 Kings 17: 1, the expression is הַשָּׁנִים הָאֵלֶּה, *these years*; a well known expression in Hebrew, to designate a *considerable space of time, some time*. There is nothing in the original history in 1 Kings 17, which serves to determine the exact period of the famine. There seems but little room to doubt, that the expression *three years and six months*, in the times of our Savior and the apostles, was employed as being equivalent to the phrase *these years*, in 1 Kings 17: 1.

3. Additional confirmation of this is found, in the later usage of the Jewish Rabbies. E. g. in the work called *Echa* it is said: "Adrian besieged Bither three years and a half." R. II. 2. Again: "Seek the Lord while he may be found [Is. 55: 6;] this predicted three years and a half

before the destruction of Jerusalem." Praef. f. 40. 4. Again: "He sent Nebuzaradan, that he might lay waste Jerusalem; and he did this three years and a half." IV. 12. "The judgment of Nebuchadnezzar [i. e. his punishment in hell,] and the judgment of Vespasian, shall continue "three years and a half." I. 12. Once more: "Three years and a half did Vespasian besiege Jerusalem." I. 5.

Now as none of these periods can be *literally* understood, the expressions cited plainly shew, that the *usus loquendi* in question, with regard to *three years and six months*, was common among the Jews.

I might easily go on, and adduce numerous other examples from the prophecies, where numbers are employed merely in a symbolical way, and evidently were not designed to be literally understood. E. g. what are the *ten days*, in Rev. 2: 10? The *five months*, in Rev. 9: 5? In short, it is impossible for those who maintain the *literal* interpretation of most of the periods mentioned in the prophetic writings, adequately to support such an interpretation.

To all this it may be added, that it seems improbable, that God would *definitely* designate the periods in which great events are to be accomplished, when men are to be employed as the instruments in accomplishing them. This would have the effect to discourage all efforts of such a nature, until the period should arrive. Had Christians known from the beginning, that great multitudes of the Gentiles, or of the Jews, could not be converted until such or such a year, the effect would have been to paralyze all their efforts to evangelize the world; an effect to be deeply deplored, so far as their own growth in grace and Christian benevolence is concerned, if not in other respects.

These are some of the reasons why I cannot accede to that method of interpretation, which assigns a *definite* number of years to the prophetic period in question. From the nature of gospel truth, and from the manner in which it ever has been propagated, we may also well suppose that the conversion of the Gentiles and Jews will be *gradual*, and not all take place in a single particular year.

It would be well, if the prognosticators of recent and present times had seen fit to examine the *usus loquendi* of prophecy, and the nature of the events connected with the period of the *three years and a half*, or *twelve hundred and sixty days*, before they gave judgment with so much confidence, in relation to this subject. Curiosity may be stimulated and gratified, by confident declarations as to the precise time of the ingathering of the Jews; but fundamental investigation and sober judgment will hesitate about making such declarations. The tendency of them must, on the whole, be productive of serious evil. By and by the time elapses, in which the millennium was to take place, (so it has already done;) and then as it does not take place, unbelievers will scoff, and Christians will be stumbled. The best *faith*, as I apprehend, is the faith which believes that "the Father keeps the times and seasons in his own power," and that in due time he will fully accomplish all that he has promised. The best *practice* is that, which leads Christians habitually to feel and act as if the speedy coming of the Millennium was connected with every effort which they can make, for the conversion of Jew or Gentile. Ours is the duty to break up the ground and sow the seed; the great Lord of all will take care of the harvest.

## NOTE B.

I do not intend to intimate, by any thing which I have said in the sermon, that there will be no return, in any measure, of the Jews to Palestine, when this nation shall be converted to the Christian faith. It is very natural to suppose, that, when the infidel power which holds the rod of iron over the promised land shall have ceased, and liberty of access to their ancient country is given to the Jews, those who are in the neighboring countries will, more or less of them, emigrate thither. The places where our Savior lived, and taught, and suffered, will remain objects of intense interest to all his followers, down to the end of time. The Christian may reasonably anticipate, that during *millennial days*, Palestine will be the central spot of sacred curiosity, and attract every year its tens of thousands, both of Jews and Gentiles, to visit it and survey it. But all this does not render it certain, nor even probable, that the Jews as a body will emigrate and settle there, from all parts of the earth. For what purpose can this be supposed to take place? Christianity will dissolve the national feeling. It will dispense with rites and forms; with a magnificent temple, and the *special dwelling place of Jehovah*; with all that separated Jew from Gentile; and thus the desire to return, which now animates the breasts of so many Jews, will no longer exist. Then why should the *Christian Jew* leave, for example, the vale of the Mississippi, where a mere pittance of labor secures him an ample maintenance, for a land where drought and locusts so often put him in peril of life? If you say: '*National feeling* will lead him to do this;' my answer is, that such national feeling is connected with his being a *Jew*, and will cease when he really becomes a Christian.

When I read the works of those, who have most strenuously defended the literal return of the Jews as a body to Palestine, I am reminded, at almost every turn, of the power of a favorite notion to influence our interpretation of Scripture. Passages which have respect to the literal return of the Jews from Babylon, are not unfrequently adduced in order to prove a literal return from the present dispersion of this nation. It needs foresight, and study, and patient consideration, in order to avoid such mistakes. And these have not always been exhibited.

Then I cannot help being surprised again, to see how one part of a prophecy, which predicts the renewal of temple sacrifices and worship attended with all the Mosaic ritual, is construed as being *figurative*; while another part of the same prophecy, which has respect to the *return* of the Jews, is construed as being *literal*. Who cannot prove any thing from Scripture, in such a way as this? Or rather, I may ask, if such principles of interpretation are admissible, then how can we ever feel that we are consistent and secure, in any conclusions which we can make from the Bible?

In a word, the literal return of the Jews is possible, but not probable. It may be true; but, if it is, I think no one can prove that it is revealed in the Scriptures. Farther than this, I neither mean nor desire to go.

## INSTRUCTIONS.

*of the PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE to the REV. WILLIAM GOTTLIEB  
SCHAUFFLEB, Missionary of the American Board of Commis-  
sioners for Foreign Missions to the Jews in Turkey.*

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REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

Your particular designation as a missionary of the cross, is to the JEWS;—a people, to whom pertained “the adoption, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose were the fathers; and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever;”—a people, peculiar in their history, opinions, prejudices, habits, character and condition; and who are not only a standing fulfilment of prophecy and divine threatenings, but are destined, we believe, to afford also a glorious illustration of the faithfulness of God in performing his promises. Yes, dear Brother, you are sent on no hopeless embassy. The conversion of the Jews to Christianity is certain. Out of Zion shall come forth a Deliverer, who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, “and so all Israel shall be saved.”

On this theme the Committee must not dwell; and, after the ample discussion of it in the sermon preached at your ordination, they need not;—for there you will find the rays of light from the sacred pages made to converge brightly upon it, without those fanciful speculations by which the subject has so often been obscured.

You go forth to prepare the way for the Deliverer to come among the descendants of Israel, and restore them to the great “family in heaven and earth,” from which they have been alienated: so that they, being “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.”

You will give yourself no anxious concern in the question, whether the Jews are to be returned to the land of their fathers; and you will have no agency in measures for associating them in colonies by themselves. The great object of your labors and prayers will be, their spiritual renovation in the several places of their dispersion. Let your “heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel” continually be, “that they might be saved.” To this end preach the Gospel in simplicity; preach “Christ crucified,” though to the ancient Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. Preach to the Jew as you would to the Gentile. Approach him as a man—a member of the human family estranged from God—a man posses-

sing the like nature with other men. Preach to him the law, "holy, just, and good," explaining its spirituality, extent and reasonableness, its claims and sanctions, till he perceives himself to be condemned, and is ready to cry out, What shall I do? Then will he feel his need of the Messiah revealed in the Gospel. Then you may preach "Christ crucified," and he will hear. The doctrine will no longer be "a stumbling-stone and rock of offence," but "the wisdom of God and the power of God."

The apostles presented the same views of the Gospel, substantially, wherever they went, believing them to be equally suited to affect the hearts of all tribes and conditions of men. And though the circumstances of the Jew have changed since then, and education is more industriously employed to fortify his childhood against Christianity, there is probably no more, on the whole, to deter him from embracing the religion of Jesus, when truly presented, than there was before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Indeed the hearts of many of them begin already to sicken with hope deferred, and the ground fails on which to build their expectations of another Messiah, to reign among the mountains of Judea as universal monarch of the earth.

The successful attention you have paid to the peculiar literature of the modern Jews, will enable you to avail yourself of the occasional assistance which may be derived from that quarter. An acquaintance with the sources of the knowledge prevalent among the Jews, and with their opinions and prejudices, their habits of thinking, their modes of reasoning, and their standards of religious faith, cannot be of small importance to one who would "commend the truth" to their consciences. You will thereby be able the better to discern the favorable times and seasons for exhibiting the several doctrines of the Gospel; and, like the apostle when writing to the Hebrews, and like the Lord Jesus Christ himself when addressing that people, you will know how to adapt your illustrations to the peculiar habits of their minds.

But the Committee anticipate far greater benefit from the acquisitions you have made in the sacred literature of God's holy word. At this hallowed fountain you have delighted to dwell, and to draw from thence the waters of salvation; and we doubt not but you will continue to familiarize yourself more and more with the original languages of the Bible, and, renouncing conjectural and fanciful interpretations, will strive daily to know accurately and assuredly what is "the mind of the Spirit," as contained in the entire volume of inspiration. Thus, if at the same time you cultivate the graces of the Spirit, and rely wholly on his powerful aid, you will be invested with the panoply of the Gospel, and become stronger than "the strong man armed," and able to contend even with "principalities," and "powers," and "the rulers of the darkness of this world," and "spiritual wickedness in high places."

Having spent five years in this country, you have become a citizen of these United States.\* This has been for the purpose of securing to yourself, when in the East, the rights and immunities of a member of our Republic. You have no political designs to answer. The kingdom, in which you are specially interested, belongeth not to this world.

Embarking at New York, you will proceed first to Paris, where you will spend the winter in attendance on the public lectures of that city, so far as they can be made useful to your main object. While there, you will take special pains to ascertain, for the use of the Committee,

\* Mr. Schaffler is by birth a German.

how far that city affords *peculiar* facilities to the missionary for prosecuting studies that are important to his usefulness when in the field. These and other results of your inquiries you will draw up with as much care and conciseness as possible, and transmit to this country before leaving France.

Having secured the objects of your visit to the French metropolis, you will hasten to that of the Turkish Empire, where will be the seat and centre of your missionary labors. At Constantinople you will find Mr. Goodell, and probably Mr. Dwight, with whom, though their attention is directed chiefly to the Armenian people, you will often take sweet counsel. Your predecessor in the Jewish mission, Mr. Brewer, now residing at Smyrna, will doubtless give you the aid of his experience. With Messrs. Bird and Whiting, your brethren in Syria, you will open a fraternal correspondence. In liberated Greece there are no Jews; but Mr. King, to whose influence your coming to this country is chiefly attributable, will be disposed and able to assist you in your researches. Malta will be your principal store-house of books and tracts; and should it result from your inquiries, that it is expedient to add a fount of Hebrew types to those already provided in the establishment, the Committee will order one to be procured. With missionaries of European societies in the various countries of the East, you will maintain such an understanding and correspondence, as shall be likely to conduce to the interests of your mission.

Your special subjects of inquiry will be these;—the number, situation, occupations, and history of the Jews in the Turkish empire—the parts of the empire in which they are most numerous—how far they are stationary—in what manner they are regarded and treated by the Turkish government—their feelings towards Mohammedans, and towards the various sects of Christians—the feelings of different Christian denominations towards them—the probable origin and present state of the spirit of free religious inquiry among the Jews of Constantinople, described by Mr. Brewer, Mr. Hartly, and others—the conduct of the Armenians towards those Jewish converts who were banished to Cæsarea—the subsequent history of those converts—how far it is the policy of the Turkish government to discourage proselyting from one religious sect to another—whether a convert from Judaism to Christianity is incapacitated from obtaining a livelihood in Turkey—how far the Jews of Turkey are an educated people, and what is the nature of their schools—how far a reading people, and what are their books—how far attentive to the rites and ceremonies of their own religion—how far accessible to Christian influence; etc. The number, character, and condition of the Caraites, or Protestant Jews, will every where be an object of your special inquiry.

At proper seasons you will visit, at your discretion, some of the more remarkable places of Jewish residence; such as Smyrna, Salonica in Macedonia, Larissa, in Thessaly, perhaps the Crimea, and perhaps even the venerated land of their fathers' sepulchres, and also the great seat of their modern population in the countries of the Danube.

In every place of your abode, and in all your journies, you will keep full and accurate journals of facts and opinions, which you will transmit to the Committee as often as possible; and annually, if practicable semi-annually, you will feel bound to make a communication to the Ladies' Society of Boston and Vicinity for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, which provides generously for your support.

Dear Brother, you need not fear, and you do not; being fully assured that you go in obedience to the command of the Lord Jesus, and that you may plead the promise of divine attendance as being certainly yours.

With the Lord Jesus to aid you, what can you not do? With him to support you, what can you not suffer? With him to go with you, where should you decline to go? In him be strong, and in the power of his might, and you will never be overcome, nor fail of victory, in the day of conflict. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your heart and mind through Christ Jesus."

By order of the Prudential Committee.

R. ANDERSON,  
DAVID GREENE.

*Missionary Rooms, Boston, Nov. 30, 1831.*





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