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OF THE
KINGDOM AND THE AGE TO
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New Testament evidence of the Restoration of the Jews to the Land of Israel.

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The Old Testament abounds in passages which, if taken literally, plainly predict the restoration of the Jews to the land of their forefathers. There are, however, many students of Scripture who reject the literal interpretation, on the professed ground that this rule of interpretation is contrary to the spirit of the gospel dispensation. It therefore becomes necessary to examine the New Testament, with reference to

this subject, both as to the spirit and the letter of its declaration, respecting the national distinctions and privileges of the Jews. This examination will; (as appears to me,) lead to the same result as a grammatical exposition of the Old Testament predictions. It will prove that Israel still remains a peculiar people, and that they are to be restored to their own land. The reasons, which lead me to entertain this opinion, or rather to adopt this article of faith, are as follows.

- 1.** That the New Testament preserves the distinctive appellations of “Israel” and “Gentiles” in their Old Testament sense.
 - 2.** That the New Testament asserts the perpetuity of the Jewish national ‘privileges’.
 - 3.** The New Testament expounds literally certain passages of the prophecies, the literal interpretation of which necessarily implies the literal restoration of the Jews.
 - 4.** The New Testament itself contains original passages leading to the same conclusion.
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- 2.** The New Testament preserves the distinctive appellations “Israel” and “Gentiles” in their Old Testament sense.

The Old Testament sense was, that Israel meant the twelve tribes, the descendants of the twelve patriarchs. This is at least plainly the sense of the word in the historical books of Scripture. Gentile or heathen or nations, included all those nations not thus descended. The New Testament, both in the historic books and epistles, retains both these expressions in their original signification. Thus our Lord says, Go, not into the way of Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (Matt.10:5,6)

By the name of Israel the apostles generally address the Jews. Thus Peter says, “Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this?” (Acts 3:12.) And again, “Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel.” (Acts 4:8) And

here it is to be noted, that Peter thus addressed them by immediate inspiration - "Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them" Again (ver.27), we have this same word connected with Gentiles---"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the *Gentiles*, and the people of Israel, were gathered together." Again our blessed Lord, speaking to Ananias, uses the words in the same sense: "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the *Gentiles*, and kings, and the *children of Israel*". (Acts 9:15.) In the 13th chapter of the Acts we have Paul's sermon to the Jews, where he employs the same language in the same way; it begins, "Men of *Israel* and ye that fear God, give audience. The God of *this people* Israel chose our fathers," &c. and at the end of that address we read, "When the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the *Gentiles* besought that these words might be preached to them", &c. To quote all the passages where the words "Israel" and "Gentiles" occur in the Gospels and Acts, would be as tedious as it is unnecessary; we therefore proceed to give a few specimens from the Epistles. In Romans 9:4. St. Paul, speaking of the unconverted Jews, says, "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are *Israelites*". In the same chapter (ver.30,31) he says, "What shall we say then? That the *Gentiles*, which followed not after righteousness have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith. But *Israel*, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness." "Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for *Israel* is, that they might be saved." (Rom. 11:13.) "But to *Israel* he saith, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (ver.21.) "I speak to you *Gentiles*, inasmuch as I am an apostle of the *Gentiles*" (10:11) "Blindness in part is happened unto *Israel*, until the fullness of the *Gentiles* be come in. and so all Israel shall be saved". (11:25) I have selected these passages, because we have in them all one striking feature, and that is, that the Jews, though unbelievers, are still called by the favourite name Israel, and believers from amongst other nations are still called "Gentiles". But this is not peculiar to this epistle; it is the general style of the apostle. Thus in 2 Cor.3:13, the unbelieving Jews are still called "children of Israel". In Gal. 2. the term Gentiles is applied to believers, "Why compellest thou the Gentiles to

live as do the Jews?” And again (Eph. 3:1), “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles”. In the whole New Testament, so far as I know, there is but one passage in which there can be any reasonable doubt as to the meaning of the word Israel. In Gal. 6:16, St. Paul says, “As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God”. This then has been commonly received as signifying the spiritual Israel as it is called. But is it agreeable to sound criticism to assign to a word in one solitary passage a sense which it never has in all the numerous passages where it occurs in the New Testament? St. Paul, universally, in every other passage of his writings where the word occurs, uses it to signify his people according to the flesh, even where he speaks of those in a state of unbelief. What reason, then, is there for asserting that this word here has not the same signification? Is it because this sense would destroy the beauty or force of the whole passage? This cannot be pretended. Is it that a prayer for the literal Israel would be at variance with St. Paul's known feelings? By no means, for he tells us that his heart's desire and prayer is that they may be saved. On the contrary, there is a peculiar propriety in his praying for Israel in this passage. He had just asserted that in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but a new creature, i.e., that the national privileges could do nothing for their salvation. When, therefore, he prays for peace and mercy on those that are renewed creatures, he naturally adds a petition for the same mercy and peace, without which all national blessings are nothing, upon the Israel of God.

The result in every case remains the same. Even conceding this passage to the spiritual interpreters, it cannot be denied that the New Testament preserves the distinctive appellations of Israel and the Gentiles in their Old Testament sense. I infer from this New Testament usage two things:- *First*, that a national distinction is intended. If it had been the will of God to amalgamate the Israelites with other nations in the Christian Church, there could have been no more distinct intimation of this than the transfer of their national name to the Church generally, and the non-application of the word “Gentile” to believers. But if we find it to be the uniform practice of our Lord and his apostles, who spoke and wrote by inspiration, to appropriate the word Israel to the lit-

eral Israel, and the word Gentiles to the other nations, even though believers, must we not infer that this is done, not by chance, but by design? And if by design, what other design, can there be, than that which was manifestly the design of the Holy Spirit in using the same phraseology in the Old Testament — to assert a national distinction, and to prevent a national amalgamation. If this be admitted, then I ask, if the Jews are not to be amalgamated amongst the nations, what is to become of them? — are they to remain a distinct people in the dispersion, or are they to be restored? I ask *secondly*, if Israel in the historical parts and in the fulfilled prophecies of the Old Testament always signifies the literal Israel, and in the New Testament has the same signification, by what rule is it that in the unfulfilled prophecies this same word Israel has a signification contrary to the usage both of Old and New Testaments?

2. I do not mean to rest the belief in the restoration of Israel on this appellative distinction. I think it conveys a strong intimation of God's purpose. But the New Testament furnishes other and stronger evidence.

It expressly asserts the perpetuity of the Jewish national privileges.

Those who deny the restoration of Israel affirm, that in the Gospel dispensation all national distinction has ceased, and that the Gentiles and the Jews stand on an equality as to privileges. In one respect I admit that Jew and Gentile are on a perfect equality, and that is, as sinners, to be saved only by the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Here there is no difference, — the Gentile is nothing inferior to the Jew, and the Jew is as well off as the Gentile. Neither Jew nor Gentile will be accepted or rejected simply because he is a Jew or a Gentile, “for God is no respecter of persons”. But from this admission, it will not follow that there is no national distinction between them, particularly when it is remembered that the New Testament expressly asserts the continuance of the distinction. Before I produce passages in support of this assertion, it is necessary to consider two passages on which the asserters of amalgamation principally rest. One is Colossians 3:11 “Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian,

bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all". The other is found in Gal. 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus". Here, it is said, the apostle declares that all distinction between Jew and Gentile is at an end. No doubt he does. But in these same passages he asserts,

1st

that all distinction between Greek and Scythian had also ceased. Do you then mean to say that a believer born a Greek ceased to be a Greek? that a believer born a Scythian ceased to be a Scythian? and that now there is no *national* distinction between them? He asserts,

2dly

that all distinction had ceased between slaves and freemen: do you infer that a slave by becoming a Christian ceased to be a slave, and that a freeman becoming a Christian ceased to be a freeman? He asserts,

3dly

that all distinction had ceased between circumcision and uncircumcision: do you believe, then, that a believing Jew ceases to be circumcised, and a believing Gentile ceases to be uncircumcised? He asserts,

4thly

that all distinction hath ceased between male and female: is it true, then, that by faith the distinction of the sexes is done away? You believe none of these things; you believe that in Christ Jesus, before God, with reference to eternity, all these distinctions have ceased, but that in time, and in this world, the difference between Greek and Scythian as to nationality---the difference between bond and free as to liberty---the difference between circumcised and uncircumcised as to state---the difference between male and female as to sex, all may and do continue. You therefore prove that the national distinction between Jew and Gentile in this world is not affected by either of these passages. We may therefore, according to the true sense of apostle's words, be all one in Christ Jesus, and yet national distinction between Jew and Gentile may continue. That it does really continue will appear from the following passages, in which the New Testament asserts the perpetuity of Israel's privileges.

Firstly :-

From Rom. 3:1, &c., “What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way”. Here the apostle positively declares that the Jew has much advantage, and circumcision much profit. And it is to be noted, that the declaration was drawn forth in order to guard against a false conclusion from premises very similar to those which we have just considered. He had asserted that “he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Inaccurate reasoners might conclude, then a Jew has no advantage, and circumcision is of no use, yea, and that it never was of any use, for the above — cited words were as true the first day that circumcision was instituted as now, 1800 years after the introduction of the Gospel dispensation. Gentile Christians especially might infer, and have actually inferred from these words, that all Jewish privileges have ceased. The apostle therefore endeavors to guard against such false conclusions, and says “What advantage then hath the Jew? or, what profit is there of circumcision?” and answers, not in the language of the amalgamators, None at all, but, “Much every way:” and immediately gives an instance in the oracles of God. But the apostle is not content with this declaration — he foresaw how it might be, and actually has been, evaded; he knew that Gentile Christians might, and would say: “Very true; *the Jews once* had great privileges by virtue of the covenant of circumcision but they have lost them all by unbelief.” Wrong again, says the apostle; you say that *the Jews* have not believed: I grant that some have not believed. Well, what then?---- “what if *some* did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? GOD FORBID; yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.” The unbelief of individuals has nothing to do with Jewish privileges, nor with the profit of circumcision. These things rest on the fidelity of God, which is not to be shaken by the folly or the wickedness of men. Whatsoever, therefore, was the profit of circumcision, it still remains, because the faith of God cannot be made without effect. But one profit of circumcision was the grant of the land of Israel: that grant, therefore, still continues in force. Men may work at the wording of the original covenant, and make out, by dint or twisting, that ever-

lasting covenant means a temporary covenant, and everlasting possession a temporary possession; but they cannot shake the force of the apostle's language, "Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid". Whatsoever was promised by circumcision remains secure. That the land was promised in the covenant of circumcision may be seen by referring to Gen. 17:7,8, &c., where God says, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." If it be asked, how then is it that the Jews have not had possession of this land for 1700 years? I answer, just as their forefathers, to whom the land was promised at the Exodus, never possessed it, but died in the wilderness through unbelief. Though that particular generation died, yet the land remained the property of the nation, which is not limited to a generation, and was in due time given to them. Thus at present the unbelievers are excluded from the land which still belongs to the nation. The unbelief of some does not render ineffectual the faith of God to the whole nation.

Secondly :-

The apostle asserts in Rom. 9:4, that the Jewish privileges still belong to the Jews in spite of their unbelief. Speaking of those on whose account he had great heaviness and continual sorrow, i.e. the unbelieving Jews, he says, "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and THE COVENANTS, and the giving. of the law, and the service of God, and the PROMISES. In this long enumeration of privileges, there are two which call for immediate attention. He says that to Israel belong the covenants, and the promises. Christians will grant them the Sinai covenant, but the apostle is more liberal: he says that theirs are the covenants and that without any limitation. Theirs is therefore the New Covenant. To my own mind the language of this single verse is sufficiently clear to establish the fact. But a certain vague opinion that the New Covenant is not Jewish, makes it necessary to confirm this interpretation by a few more remarks.

1st

The Mediator of the New Covenant was a Jew: “for it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah.” (Heb. 7),

2nd

His appearance is hailed as the salvation of Israel. “He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; as he spake to our fathers, Abraham, and his seed for ever.” (Luke 2:54,55.) Again, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people - to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant - the oath which he sware to our father Abraham.”

3rd

For Jews primarily the blood of the New Testament was shed. “Being high priest for that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation, and not for that nation only, but also that he should gather in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.” (John 11:51,52.)

4th

With Jews exclusively for some years the New Covenant was confirmed.

5th

By Jews it was communicated to the other nations of the world.

6th,

It is only by being grafted into the Jewish olive-tree that the Gentiles participate in the blessings. (Rom.11:17.)

7th

They do not inherit these blessings independently of the Jews, but are only admitted to be “*fellow*-heirs, and of the same body,” they being the original heirs as well as the natural branches. The Jews, therefore, have not lost their privileges by the New Covenant on the contrary, it is one of them.

But the apostle says also, that to them belong “the promises.” What promises? No doubt the promises contained in the Old Testament. But some of these are promises of restoration and national glory. With what right, then, can the Gentile believers say that these promises do not belong to Israel, but to the Church, and that they will never be ful-

filled to those to whom they belong?

Thirdly :-

The apostle asserts that God hath not cast away his people — “I say, then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid.” (Rom. 11:1.) Now the only sense in which Israel were God's people was national. They were not elected, as the rabbies suppose, to eternal life, but to be his “peculiar treasure above all people — a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” The rabbies, and with them many Christians, have altogether mistaken the relation in which Israel stood to God. The grand feature was that it was *temporal*, first, as the family of Abraham, and secondly as the nation of Israel, - both of which relations exist only in time. The societies of men, greater or smaller, are distinguished according to their families and their nations. Many are the families into which the descendants of Adam are divided. There is but one with which God has condescended to enter into a public and solemn covenant, and that one is the family of Abraham— “You only have I known of all the families of the earth.” (Amos 3:2) Many are the kindreds, and tongues, and peoples, and nations, but to Israel alone He hath said, “Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are on the face of the earth.” (Deut. 7: 6) The descendants of Abraham are a family like other families; their privilege is, that, as such, God has entered into covenant with them. The nation of Israel is a special people or nation unto the Lord, but still a nation “on the face or the earth.” And hence it is that the blessings and the curses are temporal — the blessing, prosperity in a particular country — the curse, temporal affliction in a state of dispersion. The doctrine of existence after death, and eternal life, may be plainly and satisfactorily inferred from many passages of the law of Moses. But eternal life could not be promised to a whole nation. It is one of the sanctions of the divine law as respects individuals whose existence is eternal, but could not be a sanction of a national law, inasmuch as the national existence is only temporal. And thus it is that individual Israelites may, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, become heirs of everlasting life, though their nation at large still remains under the national curse of temporal affliction.

Their individual faith saves themselves, but nothing short of national faith can deliver the nation. And hence also the believing Israelites, at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, were involved in the national calamity. Safe for eternity by their personal faith, they were exiled from their native land because of the national disobedience. As the relation, then in which the literal Israel stands to God is national, and therefore temporal, we infer that the blessing attendant upon Israel's national repentance will be temporal also. And as the curse inflicted upon the nation for their rejection of the Gospel was not amalgamation, but the destruction of their city and exile from their land, we naturally infer that the blessing consequent upon their reception of the Gospel will be analogous, that is, that they will be gathered from their dispersion, and restored to their own land.

Fourthly :-

The apostle, when asserting that the Jews are still beloved for the fathers' sakes, lays down as a general principle "that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance." Now one of God's gifts to the fathers, and through them to the nation, was the land of Canaan. Nothing ever bestowed upon them was more freely an act of God's grace, or more solemnly confirmed by covenant, than the land of Israel. "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "Unto thy seed have I given this land." (Gen. 15:18) This grant was confirmed by a second covenant in circumcision — "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee. and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession." (Gen. 17:7-8.) The grant was renewed to Isaac with a solemn reference to the oath of God : "Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee and thy seed I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father." (Gen. 26:3) To Jacob the same promise was made. "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed." (Gen. 28:13) Now here is a threefold promise made in the most solemn manner to Israel,— made not through the law, but through grace — made without

any limitation or condition, — though temporal as referring to a land, yet nowhere said to be temporary; but, on the contrary, called “an everlasting covenant” to the seed of Abraham “in their generations.” And here is an apostolic declaration, “that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance.” What else, then, can we conclude, but that the gift of the land is without repentance also, and that therefore when Abraham's children have his faith, they shall have his land also.

I confess that to my own mind these assertions of the apostle amount to demonstration, but the New Testament furnishes another argument equally strong.

3. It expounds literally certain passages of the prophecies, the literal interpretation of which necessarily implies the literal restoration of the Jews

To examine all the passages quoted in the New Testament. and where literal exposition would lead to this conclusion, would far exceed the limits which I have proposed to myself. I select three as quite sufficient to prove my assertion.

Firstly

In Rom. 11:26,27, the apostle proves the future national conversion of Israel by a citation from the 59th chapter of Isaiah; — “And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins.” Now the manner and object of this citation proves two things, — Ist, that this passage of the prophet refers to the literal Israel. — 2ndly, that it refers to a time yet to come. But what is the immediate context. “Arise, shine: for thy light is come. . . . Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the holy One of Israel. because he hath glorified thee. . . . Violence shall no more be heard within thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders.” To separate this whole 60th chapter from the two preceding verses is impossible; but, if it be connected with them, then it refers,

according to the apostle, to some future period of the literal Israel's history, and predicts their restoration to their own land. I do not enter into the chapter itself, because I wish to confine myself to arguments furnished by the New Testament,

Secondly

The apostle proves, in Rom. 15:10. the call of the Gentiles, by a citation from the 32nd chapter of Deut: "And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people." This citation also proves two things — 1st, that Gentiles means Gentiles, and "his people," with whom they rejoice, means the literal Israel. — 2nd, That this rejoicing of the Gentiles with his people was to take place after the giving of the Gospel dispensation. With these apostolic principles of interpretation, then, let us turn to the passage itself: "Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people; for he will avenge the blood of his servants. and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his *land*, and to his people," (Deut. 32:43,) and we have it at once proved, that, after the calling of the Gentiles, God will yet be merciful to his land and to his people. What else can this mean but a restoration of his people to his land?

Thirdly

The Apostle (Rom. 15:12) quotes the 11th. of Isaiah also to prove the call of the Gentiles: "And again Isaias saith, "There shall be a root of Jesse. and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust." Here we have again a literal exposition: the root of Jesse is taken literally — believers from amongst the nations are called Gentiles. But when we turn to the passage in the prophet, we find immediately after the call of the Gentiles another prophecy relating to his people — " And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Isa. 11:11,12.) Who are here meant by his people cannot be doubtful. They

are not the believing Gentiles, for of them, according to the apostle, the prophet had already spoken. And the words “his people,” according to the same apostle's preceding citation, signifies the literal Israel. Here, then, after the appearance of the Messiah and the call of the Gentiles, we have a gathering together of all Israel from the four corners of the earth. These three passages, therefore, according to the apostle's inspired interpretation, refer to a future period, and predict the restoration of the literal Israel to their own land. .

4. But besides this application of Old Testament prophecies, there are original passages in the New Testament which imply the restoration of the Jews,

First

Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist, foretells the redemption of Israel from the power of all his enemies. — “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David ; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: that we should be saved from the hands of our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life” (Luke 1:68, &c.) Here a temporal deliverance of Israel is plainly predicted. I do not mean to deny that the spiritual deliverance is included, but I am quite sure that a temporal deliverance *in this life* is predicted. The concluding words of the citation put this beyond all doubt. — “That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness *all the days of our life.*” “All the days of our life,” do not and cannot refer to eternity, but to our life in this world. Has this prediction, then, ever yet been fulfilled? Is not Israel still in the hands of his enemies? Has he ever, since the coming of our Lord, been saved from the hands of them that hate him? Has he ever served God in holiness and righteousness all the days of his life?

The plain and only answer is, No. Then these blessings are yet in store, and the prophecy is still to be accomplished. It is vain to urge that the enemies here spoken of are spiritual enemies, for even if this be admitted, Israel is not delivered from them until the punishment of his sin be removed. But the punishment of Israel's sin was dispersion. Until Israel's dispersion cease, he is still unredeemed as a nation, and except as a nation Israel has no existence.

Secondly

The angel Gabriel promises to our Lord the throne of David; “The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” (Luke 1:32,33) As to the place or nature of David's throne no one can doubt: David's throne was in Jerusalem,— “over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba.” (2 Sam. 3:10.) If, therefore, our Lord is to have the throne or kingdom of David, the kingdom itself must first be restored — the twelve tribes must be reunited in the land of Israel. It cannot be pretended that David ever reigned in heaven, or over any other kingdom than that of the literal Israel. Neither can it be said that the language of the angel is ambiguous: he specifies not only the throne but also the people — “the house of Jacob.” The expression Jacob, or house of Jacob, is never applied, either in the Old or the New Testament, to gentile converts; and taken in connection with the “throne of David,” it must be interpreted literally. If so, this prophecy has never been fulfilled. We must therefore expect its accomplishment by the gathering together of the twelve tribes, and the re-establishment of the kingdom of Israel.

Thirdly

Our blessed Lord made a similar promise to the twelve disciples that they should judge the twelve tribes of Israel. “And Jesus said unto them, verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Matt. 19:28). This promise is given also on another occasion in St. Luke's Gospel — “I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my king-

dom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Luke 22:29-30.) In these two promises we have first to inquire who are intended by the twelve tribes, and then what is meant by the office of judging. Doddridge understands by the twelve tribes of Israel the Jewish nation and the professed members of the Christian Church, who will appear before the throne of Christ after the resurrection; and by judgment he understands the final doom to eternal happiness or misery. He says, “In the great renovation of all things, when all the children of God shall, as it were, be born anew from their graves; when created nature shall put on its fairest forms to receive them, and the Son of Man, presiding over that august assembly, *shall sit on the throne of his glory*, exalted above the highest Angels of God, *you also*, my faithful apostles, shall sit around me *upon twelve radiant thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel*; concurring joyfully with me in the sentence which shall then be passed on the Jewish nation, and on all the professed members of my Church, as they have been sincere or faithless in their profession, and in the observance of those laws which you, by authority from me, their exalted Sovereign, shall have given them”. Here Doddridge acknowledges that twelve tribes do at least include the literal descendants of Israel; and this he could not well avoid, for it is the uniform sense in the New Testament. I do not refer to the Revelation of St. John, because it is a prophetic book, and I wish to avoid passages which are commonly considered obscure. But I reject his interpretation of the judgment here spoken,

Firstly

Because it appears to me inconsistent with the circumstances of the last judgment. The twelve tribes of Israel will not then be judged, and no sentence will be passed on the Jewish nation. The individuals, - which the tribes were composed, will then appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and be judged; but it can hardly be said that the nation will be judged, when the nation has ceased to exist. A national judgment can only be in time.

Secondly

This interpretation is utterly inconsistent with the opinions of those whom our Lord addressed. The apostles, from their previous Jewish notions, could never have understood it in this sense. When they heard of sitting on twelve thrones, and judging the twelve tribes of Israel,

they would naturally think of Jephtha, Samson.. Samuel, and others who had judged Israel, and expect that in themselves should be fulfilled the prophetic promise, "I will restore thy judges as at the first." (Isaiah 1:26.) That they did understand these words in the Jewish sense appears clear from the next chapter of Matthew's Gospel, where the mother of Zebedee's children asks that her two sons may sit, the one on his right hand and the other on his left in his kingdom. (Matt. 20:21.) Now I cannot believe that our Lord, who well knew the hearts of his apostles, would employ language directly calculated to confirm them in error, or that he would intentionally give them a promise which he knew they would understand in one sense and he in another. It would certainly be considered as inconsistent with common worldly integrity to make a promise to a servant, which might lead him to suppose that the warmest wish and fondest expectation of his heart were to be gratified, when no such thing was intended, and the Master understood the words in an entirely different sense. *The language of a promise should be precise. sacred, and free from all equivocation.*

Thirdly

This interpretation of Doddridge is at variance with our Lord's own interpretation of the words. He makes the promise of sitting on twelve thrones, and judging the twelve tribes of Israel, parallel with the appointment to a kingdom — "I appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The appointment to a kingdom certainly implies the idea of rule and government, and that for a continuance. This brings us therefore to the Jewish idea of judging Israel. And when we remember that the throne which the angel promised to our Lord was the throne of his father David, over the house of Jacob, it seems a natural consequence that the apostolic appointment to judgment over the twelve tribes of Israel should be considered as a portion of that royalty.

Fourthly

Our Lord, when the question concerning the coming restoration of Israel was directly put to him, intimated in his answer that in due time Israel should be restored. The apostles looked upon our Lord as the Messiah; they therefore "trusted that it had been he which should have

redeemed Israel;” and this hope must have been much confirmed by our Lord's promises to them that they should judge the twelve tribes of Israel. After our Lord's resurrection, “he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself” — “He opened their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures” — for forty days he continued “speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” And yet with an opened understanding, and with all this instruction, we still find that they hold the same Jewish opinions, and ask, “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel.” (Acts 1:6). We may fairly infer, then, that during all this forty days’ instruction our Lord had not said anything to show that their expectations were erroneous. He evidently did teach them that their ideas of a merely glorious Messiah were false. Their hopes concerning the restoration of Israel were intimately connected with the idea of the Messiah. Why, then, did our Lord not set them right here if they were wrong? But why, above all, when they came to put the last question that ever they could put upon earth, and this question was still concerning the restoration of the kingdom of Israel, why did he not then explain to them the baselessness of their hope? Our blessed Lord gives an answer calculated to confirm them in their expectations — “It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father has put in his own power.” Now if he meant that the kingdom was never to be restored, he could not have used this language, for then there are no times nor seasons which the Father could put in his power. The plain meaning of our Lord’s answer is — Israel is to be restored, but I cannot make known to you the time. Such at least would be the meaning conveyed to those who expected to see our Lord on the throne of David, and hoped themselves to sit on twelve thrones judging the tribes of Israel; and we cannot suppose that our Lord would condescend to that most base and cowardly breach of good faith, equivocation, or mental reservation.

Fifthly

After the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, the apostle Peter still uses similar language. Addressing the Jews he says, “Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne.” (Acts 2:30.) Here Peter is speaking of the resurrection, and proving that Jesus is Christ, but he still holds out to the Jews

the promise and oath that the Messiah was to sit on the throne of David. When speaking by the Holy Ghost, he does not show them the erroneousness of their general expectations, but only of their mistake as to the person. He proves that Jesus is the Christ, but still refers to the hope of Israel as to the kingdom of David.

Again, in Acts. 3:21, he refers to the Jewish hope of the restitution of all things. That the apostle refers to the Jewish hope, is fully admitted by Lightfoot, who was no Chiliast. He first proposes that the passage should be thus translated — “Repent, therefore, and be converted, *that* (not *when*) the times of refreshing may come, and God may send Jesus Christ to you,” and then gives a paraphrase containing his reasons, and showing how Peter met the objection that would naturally occur to a Jewish mind, namely, if Jesus be the Messiah, then all our hopes of refreshment by him are vanished. No, says, St. Peter, “Repent that the times of refreshment may come from the presence of the Lord.” Jesus has ascended into the heavens until the time of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. In what sense his audience would understand this *restitution* cannot be doubtful. It is the same word which the apostles employed when asking, “Wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?” In what sense his audience would understand the prophets to whom Peter refers is equally certain. There can be no doubt about their interpreting them literally. The minds of the Jewish people were at this time full of the hope of the restoration of the theocracy. Peter well knew the state of their minds: is it to be conceived then that he would buoy them up with a false hope, or use language directly calculated to confirm them in error? Upon what principle, then, can we explain this fact that the New Testament nowhere, not even in the epistles to the Gentile Churches, declares that the Jewish hope of the restoration of the kingdom of Israel is fallacious, and that wherever it does speak on the subject it speaks in language adapted to strengthen them in that hope? Zechariah the priest speaks of a national redemption. The angel promises to our Lord the throne of David over the house of Jacob. Our Lord himself twice promises the apostles dominion over the twelve tribes of Israel. He intimates in his last words that there is a time

and season in which the kingdom of Israel shall be restored. The apostle Peter still holds out the hope of a restitution of all things. How is it, I say, that this language is adopted, and no one warning against mistake vouchsafed, if the Jews are not to be restored to the land of Israel?

Notes