

August 3

Separate yourselves from the people of the land. Ezra 10:11

SOMEONE has well said:--"The Christian in the world is like a ship in the ocean. The ship is safe in the ocean so long as the ocean is not in the ship." One of the

NO ARTICLES FOUND ON TEXT

(Ezra 10:11)

SIMILAR CONCEPTS:

(2 Cor 6:14-17 KJV) "Be not unequally yoked... Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord..."

R2534 on Neh. 13:15-22 -- "We may draw a lesson here for Spiritual Israel, and apply the Apostle's words, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and our Lord's words, "Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world." The Spiritual Israelite is commanded to be separate from the world, and to seek his fellowships with his *own* people, the Lord's people, and not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. (2Cor. 6:14.) We may apply this specially to marriage, but to some extent it might be regarded as applicable also to business partnerships, etc. As the heathen peoples surrounding Israel exercised a continual pressure upon them, so worldly influences surrounding the Spiritual Israelites continually press them with the spirit of worldliness, which needs to be continually repelled; for once this spirit is admitted to the citadel of

great difficulties with Christianity today is that it has admitted the strangers, the "people of the land," and recognized them as Christians. It does injury, not only to the Christians, by lowering their standards (for the *average* will be considered the standard), but it also injures the "strangers," by

the heart it wars against the spirit of holiness, devotion to God, etc., and to whatever extent the worldly spirit invades the family, in that proportion the sanctifying of the spirit of truth is antagonized and off-set. Let us, as Israelites indeed, be continually on guard against all alien and alienating influences of the world, the flesh and the devil."

R2848 Lot "evidently was deluded, as many of the Lord's people of today are deluded, into association with evil influences for the sake of worldly prosperity. He no doubt persuaded himself that he could live separate from the contaminations of Sodom, and even exercise a moral influence over the unrighteous. How unwise, very unwise, his course really was may be seen in the light of his subsequent history... Abraham's course illustrates our Lord's words, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness and all these [needful] things shall be added unto you." ... Lot's quest for wealth, etc., no doubt brought rich returns...but his wealth and influence cost too much... They cost his peace of mind, for "his righteous soul was vexed;" he had no real happiness."

causing many of them to believe themselves thoroughly safe and needing no conversion, because they are outwardly respectable, and perhaps frequently attendants at public worship. Z.'99-203 R2512:4

R5179 "How many others like Lot and his wife have made the serious mistake of claiming more for the physical and temporal interests of their families than for their intellectual and moral welfare!"

R3110 "The Lord's people of Spiritual Israel will do well to bear this thought continually in mind—that spiritual interests are to be given the preference always; that temporal affairs are to be managed and controlled from the standpoint of the everlasting welfare;—from the standpoint of spiritual growth and development and prosperity;—from the standpoint of the best interests and influences upon their children. They should not only hesitate to follow any suggestion that would take themselves and their families into unfavorable, godless surroundings, but they should determine that not under any consideration would they follow such a suggestion; — that on the contrary the Lord's people should be their people, even though this meant less of the comforts and luxuries of this present life: it would surely mean greater spiritual blessings and favors."

R2510 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

WHO MAY BE COWORKERS

SEPT. 3.--EZRA 3:10 TO 4:5.

"The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."--1 Cor. 3:17.

ABOUT FOUR months must have been required for the return of the captives from Babylon to Palestine, for later Ezra, with a smaller company, required that length of time. (Ezra 7:9.) Arriving at their destination about July or August, probably the first steps were to provide at least temporary homes amid the ruins of Jerusalem and the small towns in that vicinity. But as it was a religious motive which prompted their return--faith in God and his promises--we find, as we might reasonably expect, that very speedily after their arrival the public worship of Jehovah was begun--probably about the beginning of their "new year," October.-Verse 6.

Evidently the Lord's hand was with them, and it was of his providential guidance that their first work, in connection with the restoration of the Temple and its divinely appointed services, was the building of the altar. This will at once appeal to the intelligent Christian as an illustration of the truth so forcefully set forth in the Scriptures, that all approach to God, all reconciliation, all at-onement with him, must be by and through the great sacrifice for sins which Israel's altar typically represented. Vain are all the approaches to God which recognize not as their basis the sin-offering which God himself provided--the "ransom for all."--1 Tim. 2:6.

The site of the Temple was Mount Moriah, and one of the most prominent spots on that mount is supposed to have been the site of the altar. This place selected for the altar, under divine guidance, is believed to have been the same spot upon which Abraham offered his son, Isaac, the type of Christ, and received him again as from the dead in a figure, the Lord providing as his representative, upon the same spot, the ram caught in a neighboring thicket.--Gen. 22:3-13; Heb. 11:17-19.

It is supposed that this same spot was subsequently the threshing-floor of Araunah, where David offered the acceptable sacrifice to the Lord which stayed the plague. (2 Sam. 24:21-25.) The Mosque of Omar now occupies the site of the ancient Temple built by Solomon; and the Mohammedans, who have great respect for the holy places, have left the site of the ancient altar exposed to view, protecting it with a railing. The visitor may there see to-day the very spot on which thousands of typical sin-offerings were sacrificed, the base of the various altars which were erected from time to time. It is of solid rock, and has a rather distinct groove or trench about it, which probably conducted the blood of the slain animals to what seems to be a natural drain or sewer by which the blood flowed in the direction of the Valley of Jehoshaphat--the valley of graves.

As we viewed this historic rock some years ago, and thought of the thousands of beasts slain there as types of the great ransom sacrifice, and noted the natural passageway by which the blood was carried off, our thoughts reverted to the Lamb of God, the great sacrifice for sins, and how the life which he laid down became a fountain or stream of life, not only for the dead of Israel, but all who died in Adam. The flow of blood toward the valley of graves seems to speak symbolically of life for the dead, secured through our dear Redeemer's sacrifice. But we remember that not only the bullock of the sin-offering was slain at this altar, but as well the goat of the sin-offering was slain there: not only the blood of the typical bullock, but also the blood of the typical goat, then, must have passed through that natural channel or drain; and this reminds us of how the Church, as members of the body of Christ, are during this age filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, sacrificing even unto death--for we know that, as the bullock represented the great High Priest, our Lord, so the goat represented the under-priests, the Church which is his body.* (Col. 1:24; Rom. 8:17.) And, as we have already seen, all the members of the body of Christ, the Church, must finish their course and lay down their lives, before the great work of this Atonement Day, the Gospel age, will be accomplished, and the healing and life-giving stream reaches the dead world with blessings and opportunities of eternal life.

The beginning of the offering of sacrifices in connection with the Feast of Tabernacles, at the beginning of their "new year" (in the seventh month of their civil year), was a time of special rejoicing with the Israelites --it was always the most joyous season, but on this occasion the return from Babylon and recent evidences of returning divine favor added to its joys. And immediately the work of repairing the Temple was decided upon. They had brought certain gifts from the Israelites still remaining in Babylonia, and these were added to from the means of those who had returned, and the sum thus accumulated gives good evidence of the zeal of all concerned. As nearly as we may be able to judge, the total value of the gold and silver donated would amount to about \$400,000. (Ezra 2:68,69.) It would appear that this sum was of three parts of about equal proportions, one-third contributed by those who remained in Babylonia, one-third by the few wealthy of the returned Israelites, and one-third

* See *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices*

contributed by the mass of the people, about \$3 each.-- Nehemiah 7:71,72.

We have never considered it proper to solicit money for the Lord's cause, after the common custom; and yet we are thoroughly convinced that there is a great blessing in giving, and that those who do not learn to give deprive themselves of a great spiritual grace, and endanger their spiritual prosperity, if not their spiritual life itself. But the giving, to be acceptable in the Lord's sight, must be voluntary--free-will offerings --"not of constraint." Accordingly, it is our judgment that money raised by the various begging devices in the name of our Lord is offensive, unacceptable to him, and does not bring his blessing either upon the givers or the work accomplished. "The Lord loveth a cheerful [willing] giver." He seeketh such to worship him as worship and serve in spirit and in truth. --2 Cor. 9:7; John 4:23,24.

Full of zeal for the Lord's cause, the people celebrated the corner-stone laying of the new Temple with great *eclat*. One of the special features of their worship was praise, and we think it safe to say that singing the Lord's praise has been amongst the greatest blessings and privileges of worship enjoyed by the largest number of the Lord's people throughout this Gospel age also. The power to praise God in song has been conferred upon man only of all earthly creatures, and how appropriate that he should use this power to praise the King of kings!

If those Israelites, the house of servants, returning from their bondage, and remembering the covenant promises of God to them, had cause for singing and shouting Jehovah's praise, much more have we, who belong to the house of sons, great cause to tell abroad the great things which the Lord hath done for us. We were all servants of sin once, under the bondage of sin, ignorance, superstition and death, but God, through the great Cyrus, has permitted us to go free. Appropriately, therefore, our first step should be to recognize the sacrifice of the altar, and then to offer praise to him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, for "He hath put a new song into our mouths, even the loving kindness of our God."

The Apostle assures us that, however appropriate, inspiring and refreshing are the songs of our lips, still more appropriate and still more appreciated of the Lord are our heart-songs, the joy and rejoicing of the new nature--"singing and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord." (Eph. 5:19.) And this joy and singing in the heart, this heart-thankfulness to the giver of all good, necessarily finds expression, not only in Christian carols, but also in all the acts and words of life--all of which constitute the hymn of praise and thanksgiving continually ascending before God from his people.

"My life flows on in endless song,
Above earth's lamentation;
I catch the sweet not far-off hymn
That hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife
I hear the music ringing;
It finds an echo in my soul;
How can I keep from singing!"

We read, "They sang one to another in praising and giving thanks to the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth forever toward Israel." (*Rev. Ver.*) This is considered by some to be an indication of the Lord's will respecting Christian worship--that it should be done by choirs instead of by the congregation, and that it should be in the nature of solos and choruses. There can be no doubt whatever that selected and trained choirs can render better music than can the general average of Christians. Nor can we doubt that this would be particularly true of the time mentioned in our lesson, when musical and other education was very deficient, and when the most that the majority of people could do was to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord." But two things in this connection should be kept in mind:--

(1) That so far as the Christian Church is concerned, the Lord has left her entirely without restrictions in such matters--to praise the Lord with heart and voice, according to her love and zeal and judgment. It is not, therefore, for one to judge another respecting the use of his love, zeal and judgment in offering the Lord worship in songs of praise, whether with instrumental accompaniment or without: it is for each individual and each church to exercise the liberty which the Lord has granted. However, we do urge that all remember that it is not the excellence of our music that will make it acceptable to our Lord. For we may well suppose that the harmonies of the heavenly choirs quite outmeasure the best efforts of earthly choirs, and hence could not hope that the Lord will receive our songs of praise because of their intrinsic merit. Their acceptance at all will be because they are expressions of the heart sentiments; and this being true all who have heart sentiments of thankfulness and gratitude

should be encouraged to make "a joyful noise unto the Lord," as acceptable and pleasing to him through the merit of our Redeemer.

"Let all his children sing
Glad songs of praise to God!
The children of the heavenly King
Should tell their joys abroad."

(2) It should be remembered that fleshly Israel was typical, and that their priests and Levites, selected for the offering of sacrifice and for the offering of praise, typified the Church, the "royal priesthood," and household of faith. We are to remember, too, that their songs of praise typified the songs and melodies of *our hearts*. From this standpoint we see that the setting apart of a special choir of Levites for praise would not be in any sense of the word a sanction or command for the selection of trained choirs, separate and distinct from the congregation of the Lord's people: indeed, it would quite contradict the common practice of hiring unbelievers to do church singing. None can offer acceptable praise to God except those who are of the priestly tribe,--"the household of faith."

Amongst those who were present at the laying of the foundation stone at the rebuilding of the Temple were some who probably as small children could dimly recollect the glorious Temple of Solomon, and who now, returning from seventy years' captivity, were eighty or more years old. These wept as they contrasted the glorious things of the past with the small beginnings before them. Doubtless there was a great contrast, and yet quite probably distance and childhood's eyes lent an enchanted glory to their recollection of the former things. But their cries were drowned with the rejoicing of hope, and this was well. So with Christians who have gotten free from Babylon, and who are seeking by the Lord's grace to build their faith again on the old foundation laid by Christ and the apostles at the beginning of this age--they are apt to think backward to the blessings and privileges of the early Church, and to weep and sigh for those by-gone blessings. It is well that we should highly esteem the favors of God manifested in the primitive Church, its simplicity of worship and purity of faith and apostolic privileges, to the intent that these may stand before our minds as ideals in the work of reconstructing our faith and hope and love upon the old foundation; but it would be quite improper for us to give way to weeping at such moments; rather should the necessities and exigencies of our time lead us to energy and the thought of divine favor in our deliverance from Babylon, lead us to rejoice and to sing the new song which the Lord has put into our mouths, even his loving kindness.

"The people of the land" were of mixed nationality, placed as colonists in that portion of the country of Palestine previously occupied by the ten tribes. This colonizing of mixed peoples was in pursuance of the general policy of the Assyrian and Chaldean empires, of removing captives from their native soil to new homes, thus breaking the ties of the fatherland, destroying patriotic feelings, that by these means the sympathies and interests of the people might be the more readily attracted to and united with the one central government at Babylon.

These "people of the land" (subsequently known as Samaritans) were disposed to be friendly to the returned Israelites, and proffered their aid in the building of the Temple, but their assistance was refused, the Israelites realizing that if these "strangers" were permitted to share in the work of constructing the Temple they could with propriety claim a share also in the character of the worship which would be established therein, and they foresaw that it would open the door to laxity in religious matters, and perhaps to the old idolatry, on account of which the Lord had so severely chastised them. Their course in this matter has been freely criticised as "narrow" and ungenerous, by those who have not rightly appreciated the situation. We are to remember that God's covenants were exclusively to the seed of Abraham, and not to other peoples, who were known as Gentiles.

As an illustration of this exclusiveness, and a proof of its propriety, we note the fact that our Lord did not preach to others than the seed of Abraham, saying to his disciples, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And of himself he said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."--Matt. 10:5; 15:24.

It would be well for those of Spiritual Israel who are now returning from captivity in the various provinces of "Babylon the Great" to remember this lesson. They find mixed peoples ready to express more or less of sympathy with them, and to offer more or less of cooperation in the reestablishment of the true worship of God in its primitive simplicity. The natural inclination would be to accept such proffered assistance, and to call every such assistant a "brother," and to accept and use not only the labor but the gold proffered, regardless of the fact that it comes not from true Israelites. Indeed,

the general tendency of our time is not only to be willing to accept the money and other aid of worldly people in the Lord's service, but to beg for it, and to scheme to get it by every device conceivable,—fairs, suppers, subscriptions, collections, etc., etc. The tendency in every case must be to bring in a foreign and unsanctified influence, and to do great injury to the true Israelites. This indeed may be said to be one of the chief troubles with nominal Protestantism to-day. Zion is full of "strange children," and their voice and influence predominate in the business affairs of the churches, in the doctrines, etc., etc. The true Israelites in comparison are but as a little flock of sheep amongst many goats and some wolves.

When "the people of the land" found that their money and services were not acceptable, and that they could have neither part nor lot in the construction of the Lord's house, it offended them and made them enemies; and from that time onward they persistently opposed the work of the Israelites. So it will be with Spiritual Israel; ⁽¹⁾those who conscientiously live separate from the world in spiritual matters, and recognize as brethren in Christ only those who confess to circumcision of the heart and adoption into God's family, will find themselves opposed by moralists, liberalists and higher critics, as well as by the masses, who hate the light, because it condemns their darkness—doctrinal and otherwise. Nevertheless, this is the only good and safe course to pursue. Better far is it that only true Israelites should be recognized as brethren, and thus the wheat be separated from the tares.

⁽²⁾Some one has well said:—"The Christian in the world is like a ship in the ocean. The ship is safe in the ocean so long as the ocean is not in the ship." One of the great difficulties with Christianity to-

⁽¹⁾ Sept 15 Manna, 2 Cor. 6:17

⁽²⁾ Aug. 3 Manna, Ezra 10:11

R3648 (From HTDBv10)

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE

—EZRA 3:10-4:5.—OCTOBER 22.—

Golden Text:—"The Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are."—1 Cor. 3:17

LOYALTY to the Lord, and faith in his promises, are costly. The Lord has so arranged the matter, to the intent that only those who are willing to pay the price may enjoy these blessings. Only the faithful and the obedient are willing to pay the price. Thus the Lord proves his people, separating the merely nominal believers from the true, selecting to himself his "jewels," his "peculiar people."

This principle applied to the Jews who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon captivity, in response to the Lord's provision through the proclamation of King Cyrus. Out of the great hosts of that nation carried captive—first the ten tribes, and later the two tribes—there were only Forty-two Thousand Three Hundred Sixty (42,360) of the proper faith in God and the Abrahamic promise, and of the proper zeal and courage, etc., ready to respond. The remainder of the nation had become so comfortably settled in Babylon, socially and financially, that their interests in these things outweighed their faith in the Abrahamic promise. Thus God sifted the nation, and in this motley group from all the tribes he had the jewel class—the very best and most loyal part of all the seed of Abraham. As the Apostle explains in respect to the elect Church in this gospel age, so we might say of these Jews returning from Babylonian exile, that there were not many of them great, or wise, or learned, or noble, according to the course and wisdom of this world.

HOPES DEFERRED. TRIALS MANY.

Nor had their trials ceased with the surrender of brighter prospects in Babylonia. They left their friends in Babylon, full of zeal, and to some extent admired by their more worldly-wise compatriots, who preferred to remain in the foreign land. The escort granted them by the king, the presents of money, and the costly vessels of the temple service, were with them, and their hopes ran high as they began their journey of nearly 800 miles, about the distance from Philadelphia to Chicago. According to tradition, they must have been about four months travelling, whereas an express train in our day would make the distance in seventeen hours.

The toilsome journey ended, they finally rested at Jerusalem, only to find still greater discouragements. But a very few of them had ever seen the place before, and those few had seen through the eyes of childhood, for the city had lain desolate, according to the Word of the Lord, for seventy years. (2 Chron. 36:21.) The wall and the temple had been demolished by Nebuchadnezzar's orders, and many of the private residences were also left in ruins, and now for seventy years of such desolations, "without inhabitant," the place was a wilderness. Trees were growing in what formerly were streets. Everything was disorder. Any other class than those full of faith and zeal, as these were, would have been utterly discour-

aged. We are to remember that the Lord thus tries our courage, and faith and zeal, not to destroy these qualities, but to deepen and fix them—to establish us, to develop us in character. As with the typical Israelites there, so it is now with the spiritual Israelites—all such trying experiences, under divine providence, will work out to our advantage if we will but persevere in our faith, and love, and zeal.

It required more than a year to put themselves in reasonable condition for living, and then their attention turned to the rebuilding of the temple. That they should have begun so soon to think of the house of the Lord speaks well of their spiritual condition. It is at this point that our lesson properly begins, describing the laying of the foundation of the temple, and the priests and the Levites, appropriately robed, making a joyful noise before the Lord, as representing the faith and confidence of the people in the precious promises associated with that temple and with that city. Alas, poor Jews! we sympathize with them greatly as we remember that as a nation they clung to those Abrahamic promises for over 1,600 years, and yet finally rejected the Prince of life, and in consequence were left desolate, as a house, or nation. The Apostle remarks, concerning their faith in the Abrahamic promise, "unto which promise our twelve tribes instantly serving God hope to come."

How glad we are for the poor Jews that although Israel hath not obtained the chiefest favor, but only the "elect" have obtained it, while the rest were blinded, nevertheless God's mercy and favor still have them in mind, and assure us that they shall obtain mercy through our mercy, shortly—that the blindness that has been on Israel, during the selection of Spiritual Israel, will surely pass away, furnishing them the chief opportunity for reconciliation to God, under the New Covenant provisions of the Millennial age.—Heb. 8:10-12.

A NEW SONG IN MY MOUTH

As with the mind's eye we see those poor but faithful Israelites, out of all the tribes, praising God as they laid the foundation of the Temple, it suggests to us how much more the spiritual Israelites who have returned from mystic Babylon should shout and sing the praises of our King from our higher standpoint of knowledge and appreciation of his grace and truth. Speaking of us, the spiritual Israelites, the Prophet declares, "Thou hast put a new song into my mouth, even the loving-kindness of our God." All spiritual Israelites, who are in the right attitude of heart toward the Lord, are full of songs of gratitude and praise—not always audibly, however, for many can best sing and make melody in their hearts unto the Lord; and indeed the Psalm of Life, which each of the Lord's followers declares in actions and words to those about him, is the best testimony, the best

praise we can raise, more to the glory of our King than any others.

If the Israelites who remained in Babylon, whose faith and courage were insufficient, could have witnessed the scene at a distance, they doubtless would have shouted for joy, that they had not undertaken such a pilgrimage and such a work of restoration; but as Paul and Silas could sing in the prison, with their backs bleeding from the cruel lash, while others enjoying every luxury of life in the same city were miserable, so it was with those returned Israelites. Full of faith and hope, they were also filled with joy as they looked forward in prospect for still further favors from the Lord, in harmony with his glorious promises. And so it is with the Lord's people to-day: our rejoicing is not because of temporal favors and advantages and privileges, but on account of those joys which are ours through faith and hope, inspired by the divine promises—the culmination of the same promises for which the natural Israelites were aspiring, and which are secured to us through the great Jew of the seed of Abraham, our Redeemer, our Bridegroom.

The shouts were discordant—some of joy, some of weeping. Those who looked forward in hope shouted for joy. Those who looked backward, and pictured before their minds Solomon's grand Temple, wept as they thought of the insignificance of the present one in comparison. And so to-day among spiritual Israelites, there are some who weep for the past, when they should be rejoicing for the future. The Apostle exhorts us to "forget the things which are behind, and to press forward to the things which are before." The lessons we learn from past experiences, even from adverse experiences, while they should be kept in memory, need not be mourned over by spiritual Israelites, for they can call to mind that the merit of Christ's sacrifice covers all of their unwilling blemishes and mistakes. Carrying with them their experiences they should press forward to fresh victories and fresh joys in the Lord.

"FIRST PURE, THEN PEACEABLE"

We are to remember that these 42,000 people, about 35,000 of whom are supposed to have belonged to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and Levi, and about 11,000 from the other nine tribes, occupied only a small district in Palestine, about twenty-five miles square, Jerusalem being the center. The remainder of the territory of Palestine was more or less settled by immigrants. The king of Babylon followed the practice of moving the captives from one nation into the territory of another, so that their old associations being broken up they would be more dependent upon the Babylonian government and lose their own natural traits. These people of various nationalities that had settled in Palestine had acquired some of the traditions of the land and its religious customs, and in our Lord's day, 566 years later, they were known as the Samaritans. Of them our Lord said, "Ye believe ye know not what; we know what we believe, for salvation is of the Jews." Respecting the same people, we remember our Lord's commandments as he sent forth the twelve apostles and later also the seventy disciples to proclaim him, he said, "Go not into the way of the 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.

These mixed peoples, whom we will for convenience call Samaritans, paid little attention to the Jews returned from Babylon until they heard of their project of rebuilding the Temple on its own site, the consecrated site, for it is supposed that Abraham's typical offering of Isaac was made upon this very "dome of the rock" upon which the Temple was built, a rock that to this day is held sacred by Musselmans, Jews and Christians. The Samaritans had been unneighborly up to this time, but now seemed to catch an inspiration from this Temple building as they remembered the ancient glories of the nation of this land, whose great king Solomon had built the first Temple. Ceasing to act as enemies, the Samaritans proffered their assistance in the building of the Temple. We cannot doubt that they were sincere in this proposition, and that really their religious fervor impelled them to make it.

Many commentators think the Israelites made a great mistake in rejecting their aid and declining to affiliate with them. But such commentators are evidently in error, since our Lord Jesus by his conduct and words fully substantiated the thought that the Samaritans had nothing whatever to do with the true Temple and its building. God had been sifting the true seed of Abraham to select from it the faithful few, and now to have invited the Samaritans to come in and join them in the Temple building and Temple services would have been to bring in a semi-heathen mixture, which the Lord did not desire. Why the Lord did not desire it can be seen only from the one standpoint—not that it was his wish to send those Samaritans to eternal torment, nor that he wished to destroy them in the Second Death, but that he has for future development a great plan of salvation which will affect every nation, people, kindred and tongue, including these Samaritans. In the interim he wished to develop the

typical seed of Abraham, and subsequently the spiritual seed of Abraham, to be his agents and representatives in conferring his blessings upon all nations.

"WHICH TEMPLE YE ARE"

We find the same thought abroad to-day, troubling those who have come out of Babylon, and who are wishing to build the true Temple of God referred to in our golden text—the holy temple, the antitypical temple, "which temple ye are." The foundations of our temple were laid at Pentecost, under apparently very unfavorable conditions from the world's standpoint—a dead leader, and a handful of a few hundred disciples scattered and considerably discouraged. Nevertheless, those who recognize the Lord's hand in the matter see things differently: with the eye of faith they discern in Jesus the great rock of our Salvation typified by the "rock of the dome," the top of Mt. Zion, on which the altar of sacrifice stood. The same eye of faith now discerns that the twelve apostles are the foundation stones of divine appointment, built upon the rock Christ Jesus; and that upon the ministries of those appointed representatives of Christ, a glorious church, a glorious temple of the Lord is being erected. Those who then had the eye of faith shouted for joy, and all who since possess the same spiritual vision rejoice in the greater work which the Lord is accomplishing, as they see the preparation now of the "living stones," which, by and by, in the first resurrection, shall be brought together complete as the glorious temple of God, in and through which all the families of the earth may have intercourse with God to their blessing.

There are numerous "Samaritans" to-day who have neither part nor lot in this great temple and its construction. These Samaritans are found in churches of nearly all denominations, men and women of good character and of religious inclinations. Some of them are "good Samaritans," ready to relieve the sick, the indigent. Worldly wisdom says that these should all be recognized as "Israelites indeed," even though they be not fully consecrated to the Lord to do his will. Many are inclined to upbraid us now, as they upbraided the natural Israelites, for refusing the fellowship and cooperation of the Samaritans of their day.

ONLY ONE NARROW WAY

There is but one course for the Lord's people to follow: they should appreciate whatever is good in these their neighbors and friends, they should deal justly and kindly with them, but they should remember that as oil and water will not mix, so likewise there cannot be any real union between the consecrated and the unconsecrated in respect to their religious views and their endeavors to cooperate in the divine service. Their standpoints are opposite, affiliations are injurious to both parties. If the spiritually begotten ones, the Israelites indeed, attempt to meet the ideas of the Samaritan class, they will be compromising their own covenant with the Lord. Likewise, if the Samaritan class or the churchianity class of our day be encouraged to affiliate with the consecrated, it will injure them in that it will deceive them into thinking that they have become joint-heirs in the divine promises; whereas none can inherit under those promises except through faith in the Redeemer, circumcision in the heart, and a full consecration unto the death. Such only become regularly and legitimately Israelites indeed, probationary members of the "very elect" Church.

When their cooperation in temple building, etc., was declined, the Samaritans became the bitter opponents of the Jews, whom they, no doubt, described as bigoted. Consistently with their views of the subject they did all in their power, politically and otherwise, to hinder the temple building, and thus the trials and difficulties of the servants of God were greatly increased and multiplied.

So it is to-day. Those who are faithful to the Lord, "the people who do know their God," are esteemed to be religious bigots and fanatics by some of the respectable of churchianity, who, in harmony with their erroneous conceptions of the situation, are doing all in their power to hinder us in the great work of this Gospel age, the preparation of the living stones of this Temple. We need to understand the situation properly, otherwise we would soon be discouraged, and think of God as being against us because he permits such opposition. But with the right view of things before our minds we may realize that all the oppositions of churchianity are really beneficial to us, helpful in that they serve to do the chiseling and polishing of our characters, necessary to fit and prepare us for honorable stations in the temple of glory soon to be completed. One thought not to be lost sight of is, that in the Lord's arrangement we are the stones, he the master workman—and all the trials and difficulties and oppositions and perplexities and disappointments of our experience are the chisels and the wheels and the emery-sand for our preparation. From this standpoint only are we able to follow the Apostle's advice to rejoice in tribulations also.