

'Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another; and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon His Name. And they shall be Mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in the day when I shall make up My jewels.'

Malachi 3:16-17

You are warmly invited to meetings arranged by the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony, to be held, God willing, at  
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**Theme for 2021 – By the Mouth of ALL His Holy Prophets**

**October 22nd, 7pm**

Subject: The Testimony of Zechariah  
Speaker: David McMillan

**November 26th, 7pm**

Subject: The Testimony of Malachi  
Speaker: Richard Monteith

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# Watching and Waiting

LIGHT FOR PERILOUS TIMES

SCRIPTURAL

Reformed, Protestant, Puritan, Prophetical, Expository, Doctrinal

Volume 30, No 4

October-December, 2021

Quarterly, £5 per annum

**This magazine is issued by the  
SOVEREIGN GRACE ADVENT TESTIMONY**

(Registered Charity No. 261489)

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The objects are:

1. To teach the nearing approach of our Lord's return. James 5:8
2. To hold forth the Truth and to expose and resist error. Jude 3
3. To note passing events in the light of 'the Scripture of Truth.' 2 Peter 1:19
4. To unfold the Word of God by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Acts 17:11
5. To encourage missionary endeavour, and all service for Truth. Acts 1:8
6. To comfort and strengthen those who seek to stand with the Lord, apart from abounding lawlessness. 2 Timothy 2:19
7. To call for separation from false ecumenism. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

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## Israel Beloved

By Adolph Saphir

*(Many friends have shown an interest in the Exposition of Hebrews by Dr Saphir which the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony has recently republished. We thought readers would like to see this sermon which is taken from the book, 'Christ and Israel.' It was preached in May, 1868 at a meeting of Mission to Jews).*

'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; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.' – Romans 9:4-5.

Pre-eminent among the saints of God, of whom we read in the Holy Scripture, are Moses, the servant of Jehovah, who was faithful in all God's house, and Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, who was able to say, 'Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ.' When we think of these two chosen vessels of God, of their wisdom, their meekness, their self-sacrifice, their zeal for God's glory, their unwearied and ardent love, their sufferings, their patience; when we recall their tears, their words, their labours, their sufferings, we feel so amazed at the grandeur of their characters and lives that we are lifted above the lower sentiments of admiration, and above the common expressions of eulogy, and we can only glorify God in them. As when we stand before a majestic Alpine mountain height, or gaze on a bright and beautiful star, we say: How great is God's power, how beautiful are His works, how wonderful is His glory!

Moses and Paul show that love to God and love to man are one; that he who stands highest on the mount of God, and sees most of the glory of God, has the deepest compassion, the most burning love, the tenderest sympathy towards his brethren. Moses in his anguish said. 'Blot me out of Thy book.' He could not bear the thought of Israel's rejection. Paul in the intensity of his affection and sorrow could offer the same petition.

We are not able to measure such depth of love manward, because we cannot understand the height of their love Godward. We listen in silence.

Love to Israel, such as Moses and Paul felt, is a ray from that ineffable ocean of light which is in God. The Apostle, when he speaks of his great grief on account of Israel's unbelief, is conscious that this feeling is not merely one of natural patriotism and affection, but of the Spirit, by virtue of his union with Christ. 'I say the truth in Christ, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.' He who referred all feelings of true and tender love to the indwelling of God's Spirit, who longed after the Philippians in the bowels of Jesus Christ, is clearly conscious that his love to Israel is Christ-sprung, God-given, Spirit-breathed; it is the Saviour's mind and affection living in his heart. Behold, Jesus Christ still weeping over Jerusalem with the eyes of Paul.

Most impressive ought this assurance be to you, dear Gentile Christians, for who ever loved you and lived for you as the Apostle Paul? Who ever devoted his life with such

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earnestness and zeal to your welfare? Who ever equalled him in the intensity of his love, in the compass as well as the patience and wisdom of his labours? Who ever suffered so much, and accomplished such great results for the Gentiles, as the Apostle Paul? Your salvation, your liberty, your position in the Church of Christ, these were the great objects for which he testified, lived, and died. This was his glory and joy, that among the Gentiles he preached the unsearchable riches of Christ, and that he declared the mystery of the Church which had been hid for ages. He was willing to suffer persecution and reproach, to be suspected and avoided by Jewish Christians, to endure life-long sorrow and hardship, if only he was permitted to carry out the mission which on that memorable day was given to him by the blessed Saviour, to bear His name before the Gentiles and kings and children of Israel. You Gentile Churches were in his heart, and upon the sacrifice and service of your faith he was offered up with joy – so great was his love that the pain of sacrifice is forgotten, and he rejoices with you all. Him, therefore, you must love – and loving him, you must love also his intense love to Israel.

For much as he loved you, he never forgot his people; much as he rejoiced over your faith and your liberty in Christ, he continually mourned over the unbelief and bondage of the chosen people of God; and as he abounded with thanksgiving for the ingathering of the Gentiles, so he continued steadfast in the sure hope that all Israel shall be saved, and that the promises given to the fathers would be fulfilled, for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

And in this love, in this sorrow, in this hope, he is most anxious that you, Gentile Christians, should be one with him; for it is God, it is Christ, it is the Holy Ghost who have inspired him with this love, filled his heart with this sorrow, and sustained his spirit with this hope.

The Gentile Church, founded through Paul, has not remained Pauline. First, she obscured and for many centuries forsook the grand doctrine of justification by faith, until it pleased God, through the preaching of Martin Luther, John Calvin, and the other reformers, to revive the testimony of this fundamental truth. Slowly is she since then returning to the Pauline doctrine of Israel's unchanging position in the kingdom of God and of Israel's future conversion and restoration. And yet the two doctrines are so closely connected. We are saved by grace; even the chief of sinners, who has transgressed God's law, rejected the prophets, and crucified the loving Saviour, is saved by grace, eternal, abounding, unchangeable, according to the purpose of Him who is God over all. This central, vital, and comforting truth, that the grace of God saves us irrespective of our merits and works, and notwithstanding our great and grievous sins, behold, it is incarnate, it is embodied, it is manifested in concrete paradigm in the Jewish nation, chosen of God; their sins, though red as scarlet, culminating in the crucifixion of the Holy One, shall yet be forgiven, and the love of God shall visit them with everlasting redemption. Think of Israel when you think of Jesus the Saviour of sinners; think of the nation of grace, when you remember your own salvation.

Paul sees their blindness, their unbelief, their death. But he remembers what they are and what God has done for them, and in the position which God of His free grace has assigned them, and in the gifts which He has bestowed upon them, he sees the pledge of their future restoration.

**They are Israelites**, the children of Jacob, of that man who wrestled with God and prevailed; seed of the prince who, in that solemn night, achieved the greatest victory, when he wrestled with the Angel, in whom was God's countenance, and when in his weakness he was made strong; the patriarch, who, on his death-bed, invoked on his sons the blessing of the Angel who redeemed him from all evil, and wished that his name Israel be named on them, as well as the names of Abraham and Isaac. God called His people Israel, because they were called to fight the good fight of faith, to lay hold on eternal life, and in their weakness to be clothed with the strength and beauty of the everlasting God. He called them Israel, looking forward to the true Israel, who in the garden of Gethsemane offered up, with strong crying and tears, supplications and prayers, and who was heard; in whom they were chosen and called, to be the servants beloved of God. In this name were sealed to them all the promises of blessings given to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; in this name were concentrated all the high dignities, duties, and privileges of their calling.

**To them belongeth the adoption.** If men are by nature God's children, why speak of adoption as a privilege conferred, a grace bestowed? All men are God's creatures, and under His paternal benevolence and providing care, but all men are not God's children. Since the fall of Adam we are a seed of evil-doers, in whose heart is no truth, children of wrath and disobedience. But out of the fallen race of Adam He chose Israel to be His son, His firstborn: 'Ye are the children of the LORD your God,' said Moses to the people; 'Out of Egypt have I called My son,' said God by the Prophet Hosea. He adopted them by grace, to be His family, beloved and cared for and watched over by Jehovah as their Father.

**Theirs also was the glory.** Not in the sense that they had anything wherein to glory. The nations of this world speak much and proudly of their glory: Free England, Beautiful France, the Great Fatherland – all nations have a glory, of which they boast. Not so Israel, for God often reminded them that they were chosen according to grace, not by reason of any excellence and merit they possessed. They were not more numerous than other nations; theirs was no superior virtue or attraction – great was their ingratitude and their hardness of heart. What was Israel's glory? It was God's glory, which belonged to them. The manifestation of God was given unto them. While the nations were in darkness, the bright light of God's favour visited Israel. While the heathen world was in darkness and dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, while the brightest and highest point man reached was that altar in Athens, with its inscription, 'To the Unknown God,' Jehovah caused His face to shine on His chosen Israel. When He called Abram and revealed Himself to the Father of the faithful, it was as the God of glory that He appeared unto him.

The glory of the Lord appeared unto Moses. It was the glory of the Lord that Isaiah beheld when he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Ezekiel saw the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord, even the appearance of a Man above the throne, which was like a sapphire stone.

The glory of the Lord went before the people in a pillar of cloud and of fire in the wilderness; the glory appeared on Mount Sinai, it was seen as a cloud in the tabernacle and temple. Theirs was the glory, and in the fullness of time Jesus appeared, the Word

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tabernacled among them, and they beheld the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father. He adopted them as children. He revealed among them His glory.

**Theirs are the covenants.** God of His free mercy appeared unto Abraham and unto Isaac and unto Jacob, and in His sovereign love established an everlasting and immutable covenant, which no disobedience on man's part can annul, which no power on earth or in hell can destroy. In the divine covenants there are no contingencies, no uncertainties, no failures. God secures their conditions and fulfilments. He promises and His counsel stands fast. Men's transgressions and failings cannot change the purposes of His love; sinful and weak as we are, the covenants remain firm and steadfast as the rocks and mountains which He has established. In the covenants which God in His sovereignty made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He inseparably connected three promises: a numerous nation, Messiah, the seed, in whom all families of the earth would be blessed, and the land of Canaan, which He gave to the Children of Israel for an inheritance. The nation, the Messiah, the land – the threefold promise God gave and confirmed with His oath. He is called the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, because according to the covenants made with them are all the dealings of His grace and all the purposes of His kingdom.

**To them pertaineth the giving of the law.** That was a wonderful manifestation of divine power and love. God compares the exodus of Israel to the calling forth of His Son. But He uses another illustration. Israel was His Bride, whom He brought forth out of Egypt, the house of bondage. 'I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.' He brought them out of Egypt and led them forth to Mount Sinai, and there, as at His altar, He betrothed Himself unto them, and avouched them to be His peculiar people. When God came forth from Paran, when His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise, when clouds of darkness were round about Him, and amid thunder and lightning there was heard the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, when God appeared with twenty thousand, even thousands of angels, as His chariots – then He gave to Israel the law, which is holy and true and good; perfect, beautiful, and pure; the Ten Commandments, which contain the basis, and breathe the spirit, of all godliness and morality, and that perfect legislation, in which alone is the solution of all social and national problems. To Israel pertaineth the giving of the law, of that law which has never yet been fulfilled, but which awaits its true manifestation in the Millennium, when Israel as a nation shall observe the just and loving and health-giving ordinances and statutes of Jehovah, and when Israel's legislation shall become the model of all the kingdoms of the earth. Then shall it be seen that Israel's King, Jesus, is not merely Saviour of sinners, but Judge of judges, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

**To them pertaineth the service.** Think not of ritual invented by man, imposed by human authority, and arranged according to man's ingenuity and aesthetic feeling. The tabernacle with its laver and altars, its sanctuary and holy of holies, the institution of the priesthood with its vestments, down to the detail of the colours, fringes, and pomegranates; the festivals, fast-days, jubilees; the purifications and divers washings, the whole cultus was God-given; here everything is of divine authority and full of

meaning. When Moses was on the mount forty days and forty nights, God showed him these things. Here are shadows and types of glorious and everlasting realities; here the Holy Ghost Himself teaches by signs. Thus we are taught in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It was not man that invented these emblems. The Spirit of God Himself chose to teach by these signs; representations of mysteries, of pardon and renewal, of worship and consecration, hidden wonderful things, which David and all God-fearing Jews besought God to reveal unto them – ‘Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.’ Here is a cultus, not invented by human ingenuity, and consecrated by ancient tradition, but the gift of divine wisdom and love – adumbrations full of light, shadows full of brightness – but the body is of Christ.

**To them pertain the promises;** promises which embrace the Gentiles, and which are full of exultation and joy over the prosperity and peace of the world, are given by Israel’s prophets; in words, in symbols, in visions, and also in living type, as David and Solomon. Of these promises the whole world is the circumference, but Israel the centre, and of Israel Jesus is the central soul and spirit. The great joy of David and all the prophets was that all ends of the earth shall be blessed and enjoy the knowledge and peace of God. Theirs was a world-wide hope. Never was a nation cosmopolitan, except Israel; no other nation was taught from the very commencement of its existence that its object was to benefit all the world, that its mission was to be a light-bearer to all people that on earth do dwell, to be a blessing to the isles afar off. The promises refer to your blessedness, O Gentile lands, but remember the custodians of your promises are the Israelites; the glad tidings of your future light and glory were entrusted by God through Jewish prophets to the seed of Abraham. The promises are numerous and manifold, and yet are one great promise, illumining the horizon, unto which our twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night hope to come.

**Theirs are the fathers.** Abraham, called the friend of God; Isaac, the son of promise, and Jacob, whom God loved, and who during his whole life waited for the salvation of God.

But Israel possesses yet a more exalted privilege, a greater and higher blessing. **Of them, as concerning the flesh, came Christ the Lord.** Born of the Virgin Mary, of the seed of David, of the seed of Abraham, in Bethlehem Ephrata – Jesus is theirs. And this Jesus, who is thus truly and really the son of David, is Lord; He is over all, God blessed for ever. He is not merely offspring, but root of David. David, to whom he was promised as his son and the heir of his throne, calls Him by the Spirit Lord. Abraham rejoiced to see Christ’s day, and was glad in it, and yet before Abraham was, Jesus is. Bethlehem is His starting-point, yet His goings forth are from of old, even from everlasting. He is Zion’s Son and Zion’s Lord; He is God Almighty, high above all, the object of Israel’s homage and adoration. Oh, what a glory is this, that the Lord Himself was born of the virgin daughter of Zion! Happy art thou, O Israel! Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD?

How great and how painful is the contrast when we look from the high position and blessings God gave to Israel, to their actual condition of unbelief and darkness! For, as Jesus is the centre of Israel, their life, light, and glory, death has been the consequence of their rejection of Jehovah manifest. Therefore are they compared to dead bones, very

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many and very dry. They are dead, because Jehovah, God-manifest, is the Life, the Spirit of the nation, and in rejecting Jesus they have forsaken the fountain of their life, the strength and substance of their existence. Behold their house is left unto them desolate. What is their house? Jerusalem and the pleasant land? It is trodden under foot of the Gentiles. What is their house, their dwelling-place? The Scriptures? Behold, they read Moses and the Prophets wearily, blindly they wander to and fro in the sacred record, but the veil is on their hearts, and as they do not discern Messiah, of whom the Scriptures testify, they find no light and peace there. Their house is left unto them desolate. What is their house? Their beautiful Sabbaths and festivals, the lovely Passover, Pentecost, Feast of Tabernacles, their solemn Day of Atonement? Alas, where is the Lamb which God has chosen, the blood of sprinkling for the remission of sins, the high priest to enter into the holy of holies? They dwell in a desolate house, and cannot find rest for their souls, and cannot see the beauty of the Lord. Their house is left desolate, Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles; the Scripture and the services are to them empty and void, without power and without peace. Ichabod, the glory has departed; Israel's glory, the Shechinah; for the glory of God is beheld only in the face of His Son Jesus Christ.

Sorrow must fill our hearts when we think of Israelites without Christ. But this sorrow ought to express itself in the exercise of love, as it ought to seek consolation in the hope of a bright future. Israel, scattered among the nations, is a witness for God. They are the fulfilment of prophecy, the monuments of God's faithfulness and truth. No greater evidence for the truth of Scripture can be given than the existence and history of the Jews. Here is a book of many pages, held up for the reading and instruction of all nations.

Frederick the Great said one day, before a large company of sceptics and unbelievers, to his general, Ziethen, whose courage and loyalty were as well known as his simple faith and piety: 'Give us a good argument to prove Christianity, but something short and convincing.' 'The Jews, your Majesty,' replied the veteran; and the company was silent. The existence of the Jewish nation is indeed an unanswerable proof of the truth of the prophetic Word.

But while they confirm the truth, and while they have been the channel of blessing to you, remember that they have been placed within your reach in order that you may bring nigh unto them the gospel of peace. Through your mercy they are to obtain mercy. You owe them a debt of gratitude, you are bound to them by the most tender and sacred ties. The Scriptures, which make you wise unto salvation, the apostles, who have brought the Name of Jesus to the nations, the Lord of Glory Himself, have come from Israel. And as it is God's will to gather them under their own King David, and to establish them again in peace and holiness, so is it His will that the Church should not be ignorant of this mystery, should not forget the priority of Israel in the kingdom, and should continually remember the chosen people in love and kindness. And in the exercise of this love there is encouragement, for God hath not cast away His people even in this dispensation; there have always been and always will be a remnant according to the election of grace; there are in our days many Israelites who, through the prayers, the love, and the mission of the Christian Church, have come to faith in the Messiah.



The future of Israel is bright and glorious, and bound up with the manifestation of Christ the Lord. Hence it has a special place in the Christian's heart. We cannot regard the Jewish Mission as one among many missions. The nation has a position, central and unique, according to the divine purpose. We cannot measure the importance of the Jewish Mission by the numerical greatness either of the nation or of converts; we measure it by the value assigned to them in the Scripture, by the decisive love with which God regards them, and by the special influence which they are to exert on the whole world. God divides all nations into Jews and Gentiles; His purpose and wish is that we should commence with Jerusalem, and His promise teaches us that through the restoration of Israel the golden era of the world will be ushered in.

And as the mission to Israel stands out pre-eminent, so we have a promise of special blessing for all who bless Abraham. Oh, become partakers of this blessing, and be in this also a follower of your great Apostle Paul. Encouraged by so many tokens of God's presence and grace among the Jews, look, above all, to the word and promise which cannot fail, to the Crucified One, over whose cross was written: 'Jesus Christ, King of the Jews;' to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose faithfulness is above the heavens. And let all the remembrances by which God brings Israel before you recall to you Israel's claim, and deepen your love to God's people. When you think of the grace that has brought salvation to you, remember Israel, the nation of grace. When you think of the sweet sound of the Name Jesus, remember it is a Hebrew Name – Jehoshua, Saviour. When you think of departed saints and the heavenly city, remember that it is Jerusalem, in which as an emblem God hath shown you the eternal home. When after your petitions you utter the word so full of consolation and hope, Amen, remember it is Israel who hath taught you 'the God Amen,' who is Hearer of prayer. (El-Amen [Isaiah 65:16], translated in the Authorised Version, 'God of truth'). And when overwhelmed with joy and praise you abound with thanksgiving to the God who hath done great marvels, and say Hallelujah, remember that Israel was the first, and shall again be the foremost in the great chorus of nations.

Creation also reminds you of Israel. As you behold the sun by day, and the moon and stars by night, remember that the Lord who hath given them hath said, 'The LORD of Hosts is His name;' 'if those ordinances depart from before Me, then the seed of Israel shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever' (Jeremiah 31:35-36). See how easy God makes it for us to remember and to believe that all Israel shall be saved. Lift up then the eyes of your heart, and behold who hath created these things, and hope for the restoration of Israel.

And as creation proclaims God's purpose regarding His people, our faith in the Resurrection points to the same great manifestation of divine power. Israel's conversion will be a marvel of omnipotent love. When Ezekiel beheld the valley of dry bones, and was asked, 'Son of man, can these bones live?' he felt that with man it was impossible, and in humility of faith he replied, 'Thou, Lord, knowest.' Yes, in their graves they shall hear the voice of God. He who can raise the dead and call them out of their graves shall send forth His Spirit, and breathe upon the dry bones and they shall live, and stand up an exceeding great army.

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Let us give then our aid to the Jewish Mission, in faith, in love, in hope, and let us seek to enter into the mind of God, and to look forward to that great promise which all the fathers embraced, and held fast even unto the end. May there be given unto us also, out of that wonderful and infinite ocean of divine love to Israel, a little love to God's ancient people. Amen.

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# Malachi

By John Hunt Lynn

*(These notes, compiled by the first chairman of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony, were taken from Watching and Waiting, February, 1931).*

Malachi – My Messenger. The Book is divisible into nine sections.

### **Section 1 (1:1-5) – Jehovah's Love to Jacob and Indignation against Edom**

'The burden of Dabar Jehovah to Israel by My Messenger: I have loved YOU, saith Jehovah.' Emphasised in Isaiah 63:9, 'In all their afflictions HE was afflicted ... in His LOVE and in His pity He redeemed them.' This initial and supreme fact in relation to Israel is variously expressed: 'Jehovah thy God turned the curse into blessing unto THEE, because Jehovah thy God loved thee' (Deuteronomy 23:5). In relation to the last days and Israel's coming blessedness, Jeremiah wrote (31:3-4): 'Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel.' See also Hosea 14:4 – Love's persistency.

Edom's bitterness, denounced so forcibly by Obadiah, is condemned; and effort to recover her from destruction declared futile; but Jehovah will be magnified from the border of Israel (the land of Edom) (1:5) in every place among the nations (verse 11).

The great declaration of Jehovah's love was questioned (verse 2), also other declarations of the prophet (see 1:6; 2:14,17; 3:7,8,13). All questionings are repelled and answered in 3:6; 'I am Jehovah, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.'

### **Section 2 (1:6-10) – Priestly Despising of The Name**

In verse 6 they are rebuked by Jehovah Sabaoth: 'O priests, that despise My Name.' God's messenger (verses 7-8) denounces their offering of 'polluted bread upon Mine altar,' their saying that Jehovah's table is contemptible, and their offering of the blind for sacrifice and the lame and sick. Bread upon the altar was the meat-offering, composed of fine flour mingled and anointed with oil; this bread, or cake, with frankincense was burned on the altar for a sweet savour unto Jehovah (Leviticus 2:1),

denoting the unsulliable life of God's Anointed and His immaculately pure fragrance when He offered a sweetsmelling savour to God. As to the sacrifices referred to, the word of the Lord directs that such shall be 'without blemish' and 'shall be perfect to be accepted' (Leviticus 22:18-24) and 'blind, or broken, or maimed' etc. were specifically prohibited (verse 22). Verse 9 indicates that appeal for conciliation would be unavailing, and verse 10 that offerings would be for nought, Jehovah Sabaoth having no pleasure in them, He would not accept an offering at their hand.

### **Section 3 (1:11-14) – Jehovah's Name Great among the Nations**

This section reverts to the closing words of Section 1: 'From the border of Israel' declares that from the rising of the sun to its setting, Jehovah's Name shall be great among the nations, and that in every place incense shall be offered. After completing expostulations, the prophet predicts the ultimate and far-flung GLORY of Jehovah's Royalty – called by the Septuagint *Epiphany*: 'I am a Great King, saith Jehovah Sabaoth, and My Name shall be feared among the nations' (verse 14).

### **Section 4 (2:1-9) – Further Expostulation with the Priests**

After the expostulation of verses 1-3, verse 4 propounds the Covenant Faithfulness of God, and the consequent renewal of the priestly charge: 'I have sent this CHARGE to you BECAUSE My Covenant was with Levi, saith Jehovah Sabaoth.' See Numbers 25:10-13: 'Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas ... hath turned away My wrath from the children of Israel ... that I consumed not the children of Israel ... Behold, I give unto him My Covenant of Peace: and he shall have it, and his seed after him, the Covenant of an everlasting priesthood.' Verse 7 indicates that the priest is messenger of Jehovah Sabaoth, but (verse 8) these had departed from the way, and the Messenger denounced: 'Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base to all people, according as ye have not kept My ways, but have been partial in the law' (verse 9).

### **Section 5 (2:10-17) – Expostulation with Judah**

Verse 10 alludes to Judah's treachery, and profanation of 'the covenant of our fathers.' Judah's sin was denounced by Ezra, who promoted purgation but in the time of Nehemiah there was relapse (See Nehemiah 13:23-29). Our prophet showed that Judah's evil 'profaned the SANCTUARY of Jehovah which He loved' (verse 11). Verse 13 affirms, 'This ye have done a second time' and Malachi's language implies that the offence was more aggravated than formerly and the temper of the offenders more defiant. Verses 14 and 15 contain the people's argument couched in their question, 'Wherefore?' Verse 15 closes with the prophet's counsel and verse 16 shows God's abhorrence of their sin. Verse 17 declares, 'Ye have provoked the LORD with your words, yet ye say, wherein have we provoked Him?' The Messenger replies that they aver that Jehovah delights in the evildoer, and that they repudiate the God of judgment.

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### Section 6 (3:1-6) – The Coming of the Lord

Verse 1 brings in the Prophet, John the Baptist – ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness, to prepare the way of the LORD.’ The first fourteen words of this announce the Baptist and describe his mission, which the Gospels depict in detail; (see Isaiah 40:3, Matthew 3:3). (Reference to Elijah is in verse 5 of chapter 4). The period between the first and second advents of our Lord and the intervening events are not recorded in this section, but the Prophet predicts the Coming in power and glory, not to consume the sons of Jacob (verse 6), but to purify the sons of Levi (verse 3), and fulfil the announcement of Psalm 110:3, ‘Thy people shall be *free-will offering* in the day of Thy power.’ (This word is related to Offering 24 times in the Hebrew text, and, if Psalm 110:3 be included, 16 of these occurrences are rendered free-will offerings, and all the other 8 have similar sense). So the announcement runs, ‘The Messenger of the Covenant – Malach Berith – whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith Jehovah Sabaoth.’ Malach Berith. Compare Isaiah 42:6, 49:8, Immanuel given for a Covenant, or as Berith, to the people. Covenant faithfulness to Abraham and to Levi necessitated the blessing of verse 6. Ezekiel refers to the blessed issue of the purifying of this section (Ezekiel 44:15-16. The awful work of the Refiner (verse 3) is depicted in Ezekiel 22:19-22). The phrase, ‘Whom ye delight in’ will be abundantly and most blessedly confirmed in the event, ‘This is our God; we have waited for Him ... we will be glad and rejoice in His Salvation’ (Isaiah 25:9).

### Section 7 (3:7-12) – Exhortations and Promises

Denouncing departure from God’s ordinances ‘from the days of your fathers,’ this message bids return. Showing how they robbed God, Grace calls for the tithes that proof herewith may prelude overflowing blessing. They dispute the accusation, but Grace, telescoping tribulation, presents its preview of the eternal purpose of Him who opened Malachi’s message with, ‘I have loved YOU.’ He now announces (verse 12), ‘All nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith Jehovah Sabaoth.’

### Section 8 (3:13-18) – The Nation and the Remnant that Fear the Lord

Review of the arrogance of apostates and their contempt of God’s service and ordinances, ‘We call the proud happy.’ The wicked are ‘set up,’ and ‘they that tempt God’ prosper. But Jehovah is not without witness. A remnant fear Him, and THINK UPON His Name. This term is delightfully associated. Psalm 40:17. The Man of Sorrows: ‘JEHOVAH THINKETH UPON Me. But we ESTEEMED (same word) Him not’ (Isaiah 53:3). Yet in the efficacy of Grace we are brought into Hebrews 3:1, to consider, esteem, think upon the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. There are 13 words in the Hebrew rendered ‘think.’ The word here has very precious associations. In the tabernacle (as a substantive) ‘cunning-work.’ These thinkers of Malachi are recorded in the book of Remembrance, ‘record’ in Esther 6:1. The word for Remembrance is rendered ‘Memorial’ in 17 of its 24 occurrences. The crowns of

Zechariah 6:14 were for a memorial in the Temple. Their names in the Book are a record of Effectual Grace.

### Section 9 (4:1-6) – The Day of the Lord

Verse 1 deals with the wicked of 3:15. The day shall burn THEM up; but those of 3:16, who fear the Lord, shall know the healing in the wings of the Sun of Righteousness. The Elijah ministry is announced as before the great and terrible day of the LORD come. Elijah met Immanuel on the holy mount in the days of His humiliation, and immediately afterwards the Lord re-affirmed Malachi's testimony as to His coming in the days of Israel's humiliation.

He whom we, through Grace, delight in will suddenly come and fulfil to us John 14:3. EVEN SO COME, LORD JESUS.

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## The Gospel of the Grace of God

### 4

By Dr Cecil Yates Biss

*(Continued from page 42).*

This choice by God of the objects of His mercy – a choice which is obviously rendered necessary by the nature of the case – is the Scriptural doctrine of Election. It is taught in the words, 'According to the good pleasure of His own will He hath chosen us that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself' (Ephesians 1:4-5); and in a text of, if possible, more solemn emphasis, God has declared 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.' 'For it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy' (Romans 9:15-16). This truth, therefore, is another of the essential conditions which underlie the proclamation of the Gospel; and no preaching of the Gospel could ever be Scriptural, or in its nature rightly adjusted, which left out of account the electing grace of God.

And will any say that Election is a forbidding truth, a discouraging truth, a truth which, because it is calculated to awaken the hostility of the fallen heart of man towards God, should be left out of its proper place in the testimony of one who would declare the whole counsel of God? Discouraging it is to man's pride, irritating it may be to man's rebelliousness, but it is not ours to determine what are the truths we shall declare, nor are we responsible for their consequences if we faithfully declare them. We shall be 'a sweet savour of Christ unto God, in them that are saved, and in them that perish,' and 'God will make manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place,' if our effort

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is to speak according to His wisdom and His authority, and not our own. It is not intended by this that every preacher of the Gospel upon every occasion of his preaching, should expound, or even explicitly refer to the doctrine of Election – whether this should, or should not be done, will remain to be determined by the guidance of God and the nature of the circumstances at the time – but it is intended to urge that no preaching of the Gospel can be right which is so framed as to shut this truth out of view as one of the essential conditions of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. The preacher who apprehends it will be filled with a lowly sense of his own insignificance and insufficiency: the sinner who by the Spirit's teaching bows to it, will be brought into humble submission to the God from whom he deserves nothing, but who will be found to be 'the God of all grace' by those who cast themselves upon His grace.

Nor can the great truth of the sovereignty of God be evaded in other connections, even if we exclude it from its due relation to the Gospel. It opens the story of man's ruin. In sovereign authority God permitted the Tempter to enter Eden because He chose to place man under probation. In sovereign grace God gave the promise that the Deliverer, the Seed of the Woman, should in due time come forth for man's salvation, because He chose thus in mercy to interpose: no petition from man, and no deserving on man's part, elicited this promise of grace. God passed by 'the angels who sinned' ('He taketh hold of angels,' i.e., to deliver them, 'but of the seed of Abraham,' i.e., believing men, 'He taketh hold') and left them without redemption 'in chains under darkness to the judgment of the great day,' while He has ordained that guilty sinners of the human race should be rescued from the consequences of their sin, not because they willed it, but because He wills it. (*N.B. Not on men as men, or else the phrase would have been 'the seed of Adam,' but of men who should believe as Abraham did, and hence called 'the seed of Abraham'*).

The marvel is not that **all** have not been chosen to salvation, but that **any** have been chosen unto salvation, man's only desert from God being righteous judgment and condemnation for sin. That any should be saved, under these circumstances, is a proof and display of sovereign and undeserved goodness and mercy from God. God is sovereign, and we may not deny to Him the title to act according to His own sovereign will; nor shall we wish to do so when we realise, as every one taught of the Spirit of God does realise, that that will is good. For God to act according to His own will is for Him to do what is right, and what is good.

But, excluding the question of salvation, the sovereignty of God is equally seen in His appointing to men, both to natural men, and to His believing people alike, all the circumstances of their earthly lot – race and country, station and wealth, sickness and health, and all the circumstances of life. All believers receive this truth, and find it to be a reason not for rebellion and discontent, but for resignation, trustfulness, and peace.

To know that God is God, is to know that the ill that He sends me is designed for my good; that the sorrow He appoints for me is chosen that it may work out for me eternal joy. Believers do not fret themselves against the truth of a divine choice when it touches the question of their earthly lot; and even men at large – all at least who believe in the

existence of God – do not deny that it is, and must be, His sovereign will that determines all things in connection with this life, although they may in rebellion murmur against His decrees. Throughout the Scripture it stands that God is God alone. ‘He doeth according to His will in the army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?’ (Daniel 4:35). ‘How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things’ (Romans 11:33-36). He worketh all for the end and object of His own glory. And if we are disposed to murmur that we do not know all the reasons for what He does, we have but to remember that what we see of His work is not the whole; that what we are told is not all that we might be told; that these are but ‘parts of His ways: and how little a portion is heard of Him, but the thunder of His power who can understand?’ (Job 26:14).

*(To be continued)*

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## Some S.G.A.T. Publications You Should Purchase

**The Comng of Christ and Other Papers.** This book is full of good sound teaching. It contains papers written by Pastor James Stephens which were included in the magazine of the church where he ministered so faithfully for 46 years at Highgate Road in north London. Mr Stephens was one of the original seven ministers who took a stand against the Downgrade in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The articles he wrote for the magazine are short and easy to read.

**Israel and the Nations.** This book contains the messages given at a series of meetings of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony held during 1995, The studies that year consisted of expositions of the Minor Prophets and consequently, there are ten different authors. Amongst professing Christians, there is much ignorance of the messages of these prophets but their writings are as much inspired as any other parts of Holy Scripture and should be considered by God’s people.

**Champion for the Truth.** This book was published to mark the 60th anniversary of the home-call of the Rev E J Poole-Connor. Mr Poole-Conner was largely responsible for the formation of the F.I.E.C. which he intended should be a suitable home for those desiring to separate from apostasy. He was Pastor at the Talbot Tabernacle in Bayswater, Principal of the All Nations Bible College at Taplow, Editor of the Bible League Quarterly and he also fulfilled many other offices. The book contains many of the articles that he wrote and they are all instructive and helpful.

**One Thousand Bible Questions.** This book was originally published by Pastor William Wilemen as a series of 10 booklets. It has proved to be very popular in

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encouraging study of the Bible. Mr Wileman was himself a diligent student of the Scriptures and he wrote these verses to interest others in such study.

All these books would prove profitable for the edification of believers and we highly recommend them to our readers. Apart from purchasing them for personal use, they would make very suitable gifts to friends. They are £5 each but the four can be obtained for £15.

**Subscription Forms:** When sending the last issue of the year, we usually include a subscription form with the magazine. We know that many of our readers have busy lives and do not find it easy to write letters, and the form is accordingly included for the use of such. Some friends have already sent, but if this is the case, the form can be used at a later date. We would again express our thanks to the many friends who give so generously to the Lord’s work through the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony.

**Bible Spreading Union:** The 127<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Bible Spreading Union will be held, God willing, on Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 at ‘Bethlehem’ Chapel, Church Terrace, Richmond, Surrey, TW10 6SE. The preacher engaged is Mr Challen Hetherington (Hemel Hempstead). Please support this meeting.

**S.G.A.T. Meetings:** Arrangements have been made, God willing, for meetings of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony to be held in 2022, and the theme for the year to be ‘Where are we in God’s Calendar?.’ We trust that friends will be interested in this theme, and we would like to see others come to our meetings, which we expect to hold on the fourth Friday of each month except August and December. The Spring Conference is in April and the Autumn Conference in September, when we have afternoon meetings at 4.pm. in addition to the usual evening meetings. All evening meetings are at 7.pm. So that you can insert the details in your diary and arrange to be present, we give below details of arrangements made, subject to the will of the Lord:

January 28.....How are we to watch for the Lord’s Coming? . . . . . *Ivan Foster*  
February 25.....Can the Lord Jesus Come at Any Moment? . . . . . *David Park*  
March 25.....What is meant by ‘The Times of the Gentiles’? . . . *Philip Knowles*  
April 22 (Aft).....What are God’s Future Plans for Israel? . . . . . *Ian Shaw*  
(Even).....Will the Temple be Rebuilt in Jerusalem?. . . . . *Ian Shaw*  
May 27.....Is the to be a Revival of the Roman Empire? . . . . . *John Douglas*  
June 24.....When will the Antichrist Arise? . . . . . *Paul Toms*  
July 22.....Will the Church go through the Great Tribulation? . . . . . *TBA*  
September 23 (Aft)..When will the Seven Plagues be poured upon the Earth?. . . *TBA*  
(Even)..When will the City of Babylon be Rebuilt? . . *Martin Humphrey*  
October 28.....Will there be a Battle of Armageddon? . . . . . *David McMillan*  
November 25.....When will there be Peace in Jerusalem?. . . . . *Richard Momteith*