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THE FIRESIDE VISITOR;

Or, Plain Reasoner.

"HE THAT SPEAKETH TRUTH SHEWETH FORTH RIGHTEOUSNESS."—Prov. xii. 17.

ON THE DEPARTURE FROM THE TRUE ORDER OF THE KINGDOM FORETOLD.

THE subject of this my second visit is to explain to you the departure from the true order of the kingdom of God, and its effect upon the world at large, as well as to show how clearly prophets and apostles have spoken of this departure. Isaiah says the earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant, the result of which is few men are left. Here then, as far distant as the time of the prophet Isaiah, he fore-saw the awful effect of a departure from the order of God, the breaking of his laws and changing of his ordinances. Again, while speaking on the result of this, he compares the people to a man that is drunken, because God hath poured out the spirit of deep sleep and closed the eyes of prophets, rulers, and seers. When we consider the effect of a people being deprived of prophets or seers, we cannot fail to see the aptness of the prophet's comparing the people to an intoxicated man. Hence, then, in the case of Saul, when he failed in doing as he was told by the prophet—to go to battle against a certain king and slay him and his cattle too, but on returning with the king bound, as well as bringing the cattle, which he said he had preserved as a sacrifice to the Lord, the prophet hewed Agag in pieces, and Saul went mourning alone and could not be comforted, because there was no vision, or dream, or answer from the Lord; and Solomon was so fully convinced of the awful effect of a people being without the mouth-piece of the Lord, that he gave utterance to the expression "the people perish." From this remark by Solomon we need not wonder that Isaiah saw the people as drunken, because they had no stay whereon to rest themselves.

The Saviour told the people that man should not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God; hence then the word of God should be revealed to man, for by this means we alone could get the knowledge of God, which is life eternal; for Christ declares no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal him. When Christ asked Peter who he was, he replied, "thou art Jesus, the son of the living God," and Christ blessed him, and said, "upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This then was the rock upon which the church would be built, not upon man, but upon the rock or principle of revelation; and in order that the disciples should not go on in uncertainty, they saw Christ after his resurrection, and waited for the power of the Holy Ghost. Read then the promise of Peter on that day—follow the apostles through—look over

their instructions, and mark them well, then turn to the plain and pointed declarations of St. Paul to Timothy, wherein he gives the characters of men who should arise in the last days, and by what means they should be known. Christ very truly said false prophets would arise, and false Christs, but by their fruits ye shall know them. Paul was determined that the people should be warned, and after enumerating the various things which they would do and teach, said they would have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof—from such turn away. He also said they would creep into houses and lead astray silly women laden with sins; and as one further and more pointed assertion he said they would be ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth; he also further added their folly should be manifest. The same apostle, in writing to his brethren in Thessalonica, tells them of the rise of the man of sin—what he would do, and the effect—that many would have strong delusions sent upon them—that they should believe a lie, &c. Again he strictly charges Timothy before God and Christ to be steadfast and preach the word at all seasons, for the time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine, but would heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they would turn their ears from truth into fables. The apostle Peter also, in speaking of the same things, says, false prophets and false teachers will be among you and bring in damnable heresies, by reason of which the way of truth will be evil spoken of, while many should follow their pernicious ways, and with feigned words would make merchandise of you, so much so that the prophet Micah said the priest should teach for hire, and yet lean upon the Lord and say none evil can come upon us, &c.

I will now return to the apostles. John desires the brethren not to believe every spirit, but try them, because false prophets have gone out into the world; and he further declares that those that bring not the doctrine should not be received into their houses, lest those that receive them be made partakers of their evil deeds. If you ask, what doctrine? I reply, that doctrine which Peter declared on the day of Pentecost (after they had enquired what they should do), when he said, arise and be baptized every one of you for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. The apostle John, in his revelations from the Isle of Patmos, clearly shows how the church was driven from the earth by wickedness, when speaking of the woman clothed with the sun and having a crown of stars upon her head—how she fled—how God helped her, and hid her up for a time, times, and the dividing of a time—how the man child (the priesthood) was caught up to God and his throne—how disappointed the old dragon was, and how he returned to make war with the remnant of her seed (the church) which kept the commandments of God and had the testimony of Jesus, which, in another place, the angel tells John is the spirit of prophecy.

But to return for a short time, to speak of the woman or church being driven into the wilderness and its effect. We have seen clearly from the writings of the apostles, that in their day the mystery of iniquity began to work; hence their frequent exhortations to the church to hold fast that pure doctrine which they had preached. Paul saw the spirit of pride or unbelief creeping in among the Gentiles who were wild by nature, but had been grafted in through the goodness of God—and he told them to be careful lest they be cut off from the kingdom of God as the Jews had been. For what were the Jews cut off? because they counted themselves unworthy

of eternal life, and would not bring forth the fruits of the kingdom of God. Lo! we turn to the Gentiles. Here then the Gentiles who were wild by nature, were grafted in, but take care, says Paul, lest you fall after the same example of unbelief, and it is not a difficult matter to see that they have fallen—that is the Gentiles—for they, too, like the Jews, ceased to bring forth the fruits, and it is by this means, says Christ, ye shall know true or false prophets, by their fruits. We have clearly seen, if John the Revelator's testimony is correct, that the church went into the wilderness, and the man child (the priesthood) was caught up to God and his throne. This then would leave mankind without the power to execute the ordinances of the kingdom, hence men have sought many inventions, and have, as Isaiah has declared, transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant. They have run too and fro with what has been termed the gospel; and who sent them, did God? They say he does not speak now as he used to do, therefore if he has not given them a direct revelation, or called them as Moses called Aaron, what right have they to preach, for Paul tells us, no man taketh the honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron, and he was called by the express command of God to Moses, to make Aaron his spokesman; but then you say did not Christ say, go out into all the world and preach the gospel? he did, but who did he tell? did he tell me or you? No; but his disciples that had been eye witnesses of his resurrection. I might just as well, because my father was captain in the army, and received his sealed appointments, papers, &c., when he died, say I will take these papers and be captain too; would I have any right? you say, no; just so then the Bible contains the commission given to the apostles. But that does not qualify me, neither does it give me any license to administer in the ordinances of God; and here is the grand secret why we see so many ways of serving God, for if he had sent them he would have sent them all with one message—not messages conflicting, and offering salvation upon hundreds of different terms. This causes distraction and confusion, until the thinking man calmly sits down and begins to enquire whom shall I believe, which is right? I say to such—to the law and the testimony—if they speak not according to this, it is because their is no light in them, at least, so says Isaiah. Then is it apparent that no man has a right to touch the ordinances or administer in holy things except he be called of God. And how did God call men in old times—how did Christ call his disciples? they did not run because they felt they ought to preach, or thought they should do so. No, no. Christ called them from their nets and businesses and told them to go and preach the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and that too without purse or scrip, and take no thought for the morrow, what to eat, drink, or wear; but to pray, "Our Father, who are in heaven; give us this our daily bread." Now if they had thousands they need never say give us this our daily bread, because they could go and buy it of those that sold; but here was a need, for they journeyed without purse and scrip, but it is not so now. Paul said the people should heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, that should teach for hire and divine for gain. You ask then what must we do? to whom shall we look for the words of eternal life? I would say, wait awhile, and I will shew in my future visit that there is a work commenced which will meet your wishes if you seek truth at all hazards; but know most assuredly, as the prophet Amos declared, there should be a famine—not for bread, nor yet for water—but for hearing the word of the

Lord ; and men should run too and fro to seek it and could not find it. This has truly been fulfilled, but the Lord has commenced a work in these days that the honest in heart may be gathered up and their hearts made glad in the things he has declared for our salvation.

Thus I have very briefly laid before you the apostacy or falling away from the order of the church of God, and the consequence ; instead of one Lord, one faith, one baptism—instead of one gate, which leads to life eternal, many ways are sought, if possible to climb by other roads, but I fear some will be counted as thieves and robbers. Hence then the world being left without the power of God or the priesthood, we are tossed too and fro with every wind and tide of doctrine, because darkness has covered the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people. There is now no stay, no prophet to tell the people of the danger, or reveal to them the hidden things of God. We are like a ship dismasted, a prey to every wind that blows. By this time perhaps some of you feel inclined to say we have no need of these things now ; did not Christ say, that as it was in the day of Noah so it should be in the days of the coming of the son of man—thus alluding to his second coming. If then a prophet was sent to warn the people of the baptism of the earth or deluge, for the remission of its sins, for it has partaken of the fall of man, so he will send a prophet to tell us of the baptism of the earth by fire, and as few believed Noah's testimony, so few, Isaiah says, will be left when the earth is burned up. And the prophet Amos says, surely the Lord God doeth nothing, but he revealeth his secrets unto his servants the prophets. You are ready to ask what shall I do ? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ—repent of your sins and be baptized for the remission of the same, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. This is the language of scripture, the word of God which is ever unchangeable.

I will point out to you in my next visit what God has begun in these latter days, in the meantime ponder over what I have written, search your Bible daily to see if these things are not so, search for the pearl of great price, and when you have found it sell it not. May the spirit of truth rest upon you while you read, when you sit down, and when you rise up, and may you say like Paul, scales have fallen from my eyes. Even so. Amen.

As an ambassador for the kingdom of God,

I subscribe myself your servant for the gospel's sake,

DAVID C. KIMBALL.

REFERENCES TO PASSAGES QUOTED IN THE PRECEDING PAGES.

Isaiah xxiv. 1st 5th and 6th verses. Isaiah xxix. 9th and 10th verses. 1st Samuel xxviii. 15th verse. Proverbs xxix. 18th verse. Matthew xi. 27th verse. John xvii. 3rd verse. Matthew xvi. 15th to 18th verses. Acts ii. 37th, 38th and 39th verses. 1st Timothy iv. 1st to 3rd verses. Matthew vii. 15th to the end. 2nd Timothy iii. 1st to 9th verses. 2nd Thessalonians ii. 1st to 12th verses. 2nd Timothy iv. 1st to 4th verses. 2nd Peter ii. 1st to the end of the chapter. Micah iii. 11th verse. 1st John iv. 1st to 4th verses. 2nd John ix. 10th and 11th verses. Revelations xii. Revelations xix. 10th verse. Ephesians iv. 1st to 19th verses. Matthew xvii. 26th verse. Romans xi. 22nd verse. Acts xiii. 46th verse. Matthew vii. 13th to the end. Exodus iv. 10th to the 16th verses. Hebrews v. 4th verse. Mark xvi. 15th to the end. Isaiah viii. 20th verse. Matthew x. 7th to the 14th verses. Amos viii. 11th and 12th verses. Amos iii. 7th verse. Revelations xiii., xvii. and xviii. For a correct description of Mystic Babylon or confusion of doctrines, read the three last chapters quoted.

PRICE ONE HALFPENNY, OR FOUR SHILLINGS PER HUNDRED.