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Zion's Landmark.

DEVOTED TO THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CAUSE.

"TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY."

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Zion's Landmark.

By the help of the Lord, this paper will contend for the ancient landmark, guided by its stakes of truth, and strengthened by its cords of love.

It hopes to reject all TRADITIONS AND INSTITUTIONS OF MEN, and regard only the BIBLE AS THE STANDARD OF TRUTH.

It urges people to search the scriptures and obey Jesus as the only King in the holy hill of Zion, keeping themselves unspotted from the world.

It aims to contend for the mystery of the faith in God and the Father, Jesus the Mediator, and the Holy Spirit, the Blessed Comforter.

All lovers of gospel truth are invited to write for it—if so impressed.

May grace, mercy and peace, be multiplied to all lovers of Jesus.

FRAGMENTS.

THE TREE IS PRESERVED.

(Rom. 11 : 22-27.)

Paul magnified his office as a minister to the Gentiles. Most people seem to think the office magnifies them—honors them—but a true servant of God honors his office by filling it well, and satisfying its holy purposes. How safe is an office in the hands of the true servant of God, but how prostituted when in the hands of a corrupt man who seeks to serve self?

Paul had a wonderful office. He was an ambassador—not of a president or king of earth—but of Jesus Christ, the Lord of lords and King of kings. It was, too, an office for the benefit of Gentiles. Grace and apostleship was given him for obedience to the faith among all nations. Great grace rested upon him so that he should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles (not offerings made by the Gentiles; but they were offered) might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

Yet he was not an extremeist. He did not forget his own people, the Jews, but had sorrow of heart for them, and was comforted in the truth that God had not cast away his people whom he foreknew. His faithfulness is ever of old, and his mercies are everlasting. And so there is at this present time a remnant, according to the election of grace.

The election hath obtained the blessing and the rest were blinded.—But have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid. But rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy. It is not a fall involving the loss of all; but God overrules it by sending salvation through their fall to the Gentiles to provoke them to jealousy in seeing the God of their fathers calling the Gentiles. Their fall is the riches of the world. The casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, and the receiving

of them will be life from the dead.—For the first fruit is holy, such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Then Jesus was of the Jews; and if the root be holy so are the branches.—They are the good olive tree, and some of their branches were broken off that the Gentiles, a wild olive tree, might be grafted in among them, and partake of the fatness of the true olive tree. This is contrary to nature; for by nature men take good branches and graft them in a wild stock: but God takes wild branches and grafts them in a good olive stock that the good root may give them its fatness. So he makes the Gentiles one with the Jews, but he will not forever cast off Israel whom he foreknew to do this. Hence election takes in Gentiles and makes them one with Jews. But shall Gentiles boast over Jews? Are they any better than Jews? Not a whit. The good olive tree bears the Gentiles.—Because of unbelief they (the Jews) were broken off, and the Gentiles stand by faith. There is no room for boasting. We are not to be high-minded but fear. Behold the goodness and severity, but his goodness is bordered by severity, and his severity is fringed and lined with goodness. Oh, what reason for humility and fear, thankfulness and watchfulness. Faith excludes all boasting; but it would not if it were the work of the creature. Here is a solemn caution that we continue in his goodness. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee.

There is good seed in the stock yet, and some precious berries in the topmost boughs. Every tree bearing fruit has its seed in itself, and brings forth according to its kind. Not that by nature there is anything good in either Jew or Gentile; for all are corrupt: but in the purpose of God and covenant of grace there is a beloved people yet among the Jews—beloved for the fathers' sakes. By overruling grace Jews are made subservient to Gentiles, and Gentiles are made subservient to Jews. Blindness in part has happened to Jews that the gospel might leap over to the Gentiles, and then it will also react from them to the Jews yet, and in the rear they shall be brought in; though in such a manner that no glory can be taken or claimed either by Jew or Gentile, but the greater glory given to God. The unbelief of the Jews, at present and since the gospel era, in the main, is proof that blindness has happened unto them. Their preservation though, for more than eighteen hundred years, without a national government, king, priest, temple, city, ruler, or corporation, scattered and peeled as they are among all nations, often oppressed, while they endure and retain their

ancestral characteristics, is without a parallel among the nations of the world. What other people would not, long since, have been absorbed and lost in other peoples? This is not of chance; for his miraculous power will yet open their hearts to receive Jesus, the true son of God and their brother in the flesh. I mean the elect among them shall receive and worship him.

The guilt of killing the Son of God was not at all abated by the fact that it was foreordained that he should die. God's purpose is so infinitely above natural men's aim, in all his transactions, that there is no affinity whatever between them. Nor does his purpose, which is for good, at all shield men's motive which is for evil. The greatest of all the sins of that wicked people was the killing of Jesus. Unbelief is the parent of all wickedness. Their unbelief is the most flagrant of all unbelief: hence their house is left to them desolate and stands so long desolate. As cast out of their original promise land and house, they wander farther and longer than any other nation; yet they are the stock of Abraham, still kept as no other people ever have been; for the olive tree is yet good, the seed is yet in it, in the purpose of God.

What an illustration of the wrath of heaven against the betrayers of innocent blood—and such blood; yet what an enduring by Almighty God who still remembers them for mercy? What a faithful God to his ancient covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? What severity hedged by goodness! O the depths of the riches! O the holiness of his judgments! His goodness and holiness equally should humble us and excite hope in us toward God.

23rd verse. "And they also (the Jews), if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again." Unbelief is the sure evidence that one is already condemned. As long as one abides in unbelief he is condemned. It seems to me that but few realize the guilt of unbelief. He that believeth not hath made God a liar.—Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. The Jews were cast off because of unbelief. Even they, the natural branches, beloved for the fathers' sakes (such fathers as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, of whom, as concerning the flesh Christ came), were cast off because of unbelief.—Unless ye believe (says Jesus) that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.—He that believeth not shall be damned. Have you ever, my friend, felt the guilt and awful vileness of an unbelieving heart, and seen that by nat-

ure you had not a particle—not a grain—of faith? Have you ever mourned over an evil heart of unbelief? If God cast off the Jews, the natural branches, because of unbelief, where shall we appear if we have not faith? It is an easy matter for a deceived heart, or a Pharisee, to think it has faith. But the pangs of sorrow that are felt in one sensible that he has no true faith, by nature, they have never felt. I am sure that one who has true faith will ascribe it and his salvation to the Lord.

God is able to graft in the Jews again. (Verse 24.) For if the Gentiles who were cut out of a wild olive tree by nature, and were grafted into a good olive tree contrary to nature, (don't we know it is contrary to nature?) how much more shall the Jews, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? Don't be wise in your own conceit. This blindness has happened unto the Jews until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in (25th verse). They are enemies for your sakes as concerning the gospel; but as touching the election they are beloved, &c. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For God who promises salvation aforehand, and gives us grace in Christ before the world began, never repents or changes his mind and fails to give eternal salvation to these heirs of promise; but will be faithful to himself and to his covenant. He cannot deny himself. 20th verse. Then again his gifts and calling are without repentance, in the sense that he does not wait to foresee good works, repentance, or merit in his people before he calls them and has mercy on them. The deliverer, Jesus, shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

It is mercy, depths unfathomable of mercy, that brings salvation alike to Jews and Gentiles; and both are one. For in times past Gentiles have not believed God, yet now have obtained mercy through the unbelief of the Jews: even so now have the Jews not believed, that, through the mercy God showed to Gentiles, the Jews also might obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all his people, both Jews and Gentiles. So none have whereof to glory, neither Jew nor Gentile, in themselves. But "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.

God has a people among the Jews which, in the fulness of the time, I know not when, I believe he will bring into the visible gospel fold, and such shall dwell with his Gentile people, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. Yet it will all come to pass so different from man's conceptions that the saying of the apostle will be verified, "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen." —ED.