

all time to come, unless taught better by grace.

The Church of God or the kingdom of the stone is similarly situated with the Church in the Land of Canaan. She is small and contemptible in the estimation of the world. She is but little known, and men of the world go of their own accord anywhere else than to her sons and daughters to find out wisdom.—Alas, for a "chance!" what doth it avail? A "chance" God, and a "chance" world, a "chance" Christ and a "chance" heaven have never done and will never do poor mortals any good. If it does for other worlds it will not do for this one of which we are denizens.

According to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, the Prince of Peace was crucified and slain, and his gospel kingdom set up in the world. His Ministers went everywhere preaching the word. His Spirit quickened dead sinners into life by the implantation of the principle of a blessed immortality within them. He opened their hearts for the reception of the word as he did Lydia's. Believers were multiplied both men and women. Jews and Gentiles were banded together against the Lord and against his anointed. The great red Dragon, (heathen Rome) drew up all his vast resources to destroy and utterly wipe out the Churches of Christ. The Church resisted to the death of the bodies of many of her members. She made war on the Dragon. Hundreds of thousands of her children perished by the sword, the flame, the prison and the torture. The blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church. As one of her number fell two or ten would spring up in his stead.

"There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the Dragon; and the Dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death."

For 300 years, the Church made war with the Dragon, during which period she suffered untold miseries and the lives of hundreds of thousands of her subjects for their profession in Christ. "They were publicly whipped, drawn by the heels through the streets of cities, racked till every bone in their body was disjointed, had their teeth beat out, their noses, hands and ears cut off, sharp pointed spears run under their nails, were tortured with melted lead thrown on their naked bodies, had their eyes dug out, their limbs cut off, were condemned to the mines, ground between stones, stoned to death, burnt alive, thrown headlong from the high buildings, beheaded, smothered in burning limekilns, run through the body with sharp spears, destroyed with hunger, thirst and cold; thrown to the wild beasts, broiled on grid-irons with

slow fires, cast by heaps into the sea, crucified, scraped to death with sharp shells, torn in pieces by boughs of trees; and, in a word destroyed by the various methods that the most diabolical subtlety and malice could devise."

Still the numbers of Christians increased so that their persecutors were afraid of them and began to court their favor. When Constantine (afterward called the Great) in his war with Maxentius, adopted the sign of the cross for his banner—vanquished his adversary, planted the cross upon the throne of the Cesars, and became sole monarch of the Roman empire, he completely changed the laws and customs of the country, making all favorable to Christianity as understood by him, and against pagan idolatry. Thus heathen Rome fell early in the Fourth Century, and fell to rise no more. There has not been since and never will be again a universal heathen monarchy on earth to rule over with despotic sway, the true Israel of God, and (without any possibility of their escape,) to crush them as did the former great empires, typified by Nebuchadnezzar's image.

When the feet were crushed by the peltings of the "stone," then the whole image fell and crumbled to pieces.—"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass and the silver and the gold broken to pieces," &c., &c.

The kingdom of the stone showed its strength and universality over all the earth or Roman empire, and though opposed and persecuted afterward by the kingdoms indicated by the ten toes, that subsequently the empire was divided into, yet, it was from professed Christian authorities under the teachings and leadings of the "little horn" or popery, and similar to the annoyance of the Canaanite in the promised land, after that land was fairly conquered by the Hebrews.

The kingdom of the stone is still increasing and will eventually fill the world with the glory of God. This image, is the image of a man, it represents man and is typical also of what is in man.

The four kingdoms or parts of the image, are typified of the four states of man's experience. In the young, who are brought to the Saviour, it is in embryo or miniature, but in the old it is pretty fairly developed.

Say there is a sinner before us who is a chosen vessel of mercy, but now in nature's night. When very young he experienced the golden age. All that glittered was gold to him.—Bright anticipations loomed up in the future, and he considered himself a very good young man. Everybody else around him was good and he rejoiced to think *in what a good world he lived*. Yet he felt no work of the Spirit.

Years rolled on, experience ripened his intellect, knowledge increased. His suspicions aroused to the goodness of others, but had none as to his own. He became more hardened in

sin, his actions enlarged, crimes were committed—yet he covered them over by a bright exterior, made pretensions to morality and perhaps a profession of religion. This was the silvery state, age or kingdom, which had overcome that of gold. Yet no work of the Holy Spirit was there.

Years rolled on and he became more hardened in sin. He gave up his religion as a humbug, declared there was no truth in religion for he had tried it, said there was no use in moral restraints, laughed at his former credulity, enlarged the field of his operations, and became rampant with brazen infidelity. Thus the age or kingdom of brass was brought to view. It had overcome that of silver—there was more of it yet there was no Christ or Holy Spirit in all this.

Years rolled on and the kingdom of brass was overcome by iron, which was harder than the brass and more abundant. The man became a propagandist of infidelity. He made war against Christianity and denied the truth of the scriptures. He would now, as Saul of Tarsus did of old, hail all to prison and to death, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.—He declared that the doctrine of Christ came from hell and would return to hell, that no man should be allowed to preach it under pain of death and that all those who believed it ought to be slain and denied a decent burial. Here is the kingdom of iron, or even of iron and clay, reducing its predecessor to dust and burning it in the earth. Here is the fourth stage of experience, so strong as to have overcome all the others; yet there is no Christ or Holy Spirit there.

Now in the days of these Kings, (the iron and clay) shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed. God is above the devil as will be seen in the sequel.—He restrained the wrath of man and caused the remainder thereof to praise him. For during the very height and mad career of this bold, iron-hearted persecutor, the power of God will come down upon him and fell him to the earth; a light will shine round about him above the brightness of the Sun, and he will hear a voice as of old "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Divine light and life will be implanted within him. The kingdom of Christ, the stone cut out without hands, strikes the feet of the image which were of iron and clay and breaks them to pieces. When they are broken, all are broken, for then the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold are broken to pieces together.

The Spiritual kingdom of Christ fills the chambers of the soul, grows and thrives, increases in strength and excellency until the earth (the earthly man) seems full of the glory of God. *Christ and the Holy Spirit are there.*

The kingdom then set up within the man shall never be destroyed, neither shall it be given to other people. Christ rules and reigns in

this kingdom alone. He is King in Zion; he delivers his laws, as a general rule, through his apostles, who sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel: And so far from asking help from Popes or Priests, Emperors, Kings, or Potentates of earth, he bids defiance to them all, hurls the principalities and powers of apolyon to the earth and establishes his kingdom upon the ruins of them.

When the children of Israel were delivered from Egyptian bondage, they felt entirely relieved of that power. The dead carcasses of Pharaoh and his host were floating on the waters of the Red Sea, and they feared them not, neither did they return to that state of captivity any more.—But they met with terrible enemies in the wilderness, and were at no time entirely rid of them.

Also when they drove out the seven nations of Canaan and entered the promised land in triumph, they were outwitted by the Jebusites, and never could say they were entirely rid of their enemies, though those enemies were in a subdued state. So that down to the latest period of their nationality, they had to confess that "The Canaanite was still in the land."

And when the great image was destroyed by the overthrow of the great red dragon, the heathen empire; the Saints feared that power no more, it was destroyed forever. But popery arose upon the extinction of paganism, the beast rose up out of the sea and so influenced the ten kingdoms that they more or less persecuted the Saints of God in divers ways and manners for over a thousand years and even down to the present time, all under the color or pretence of Christianity. So the Church had no exemption from trouble day or night, though she had rest in Christ.

Even so there are remains of sin in the child of God, after the kingdom of Christ or the miraculous "stone" has been set up within him. He is entirely released from his old bondage—death and the grave are destroyed, he fears them no more. Yet he carries the "old man" about him, and this old man wars against the new.

The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh: and these two are contrary, the one to the other, so that he cannot do the things that he would. The tall Anakims are yet to fight—the Canaanite is still in the land. The kingdom of the "toes" is still pinching him, and the foes in his own house being the worst, are ever wide awake to his discomfort, so that there is no final release until mortality is swallowed up of life, and the poor brand plucked from the fire, reaches eternal bliss.

C. B. HASSELL.

MARRIED:—Sept. 9, 1873, at the residence of the bride's mother, by Elder P. D. Gold, Mr. Wm. H. Hardee and Miss Ida Croon, both of Lenoir County, N. C.