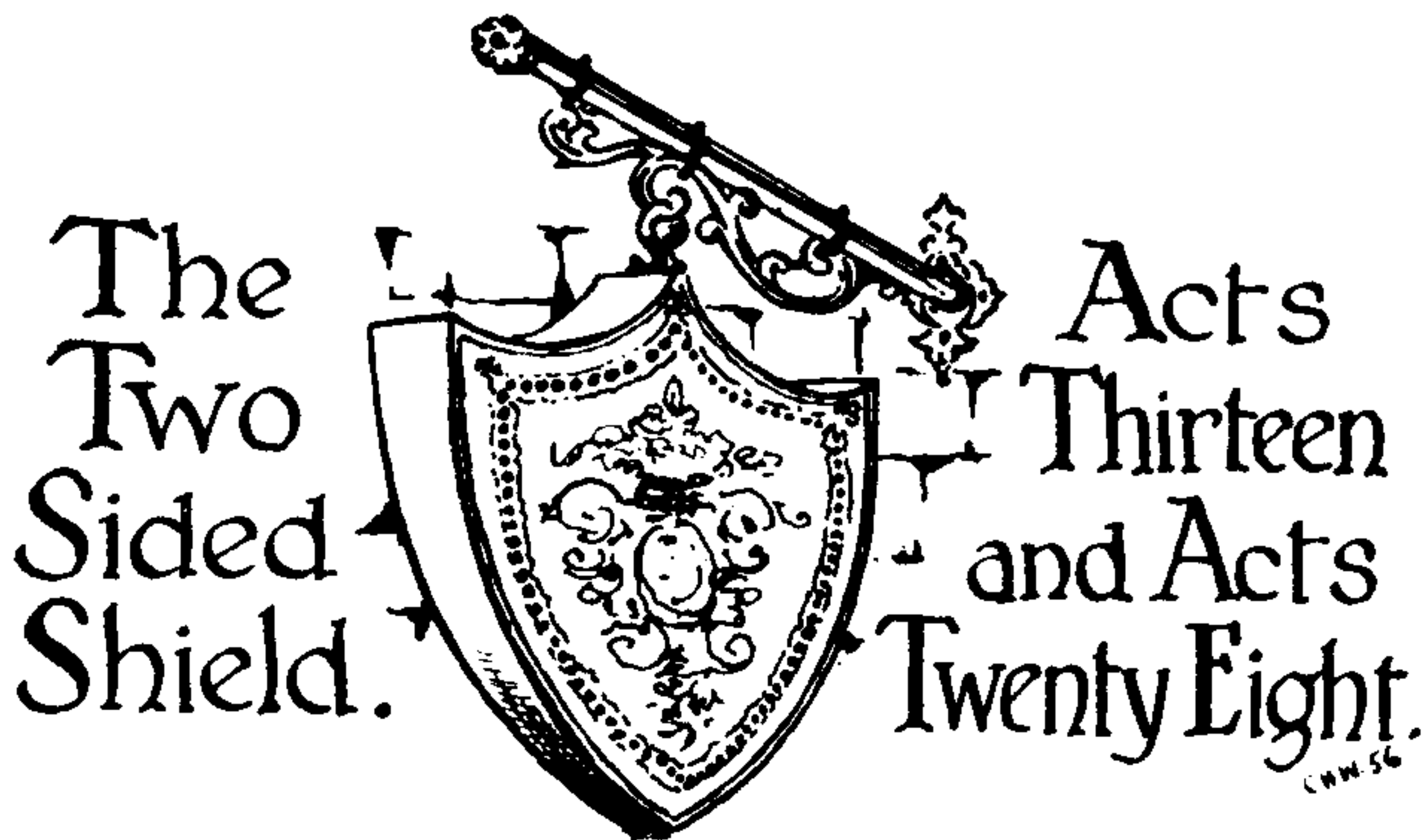


# “Acts 13 or 28?”

by

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## Acts Thirteen or Acts Twenty-eight ?

or

When did the present dispensation of the Mystery begin?

“When does a dispensation begin?” The question is important because of its bearing upon the claims of Acts twenty-eight, or of Acts thirteen, to be the beginning of the dispensation of the Mystery, and of the Church which is the One Body. From one angle we may say that, inasmuch as “known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world” (Acts 15:18), every dispensation and every movement in the great outworking of the purpose of the ages must have begun in the mind of God before time. This however scarcely answers the intention of “when does a dispensation begin?” Again, every dispensation of grace and mercy is founded in the cross of Christ, and inasmuch as the middle wall of partition and the enmity contained in ordinances were abolished at Calvary, one could say that the dispensation of the Mystery, even as the dispensation of the kingdom of Israel, began at one and the same time, namely when Christ was crucified. This again does not meet the intention of the question “when does a dispensation begin?”

There are certain features foretold that must synchronize before a dispensation can begin, and these features are of such a unique character that they cannot be missed or ignored. What these features are in connexion with the dispensation of the Mystery, most readers know. To lift two out of the many:

- (1) Israel will become *lo-ammi*, not My people, and God will cease (temporarily) to be their God (Hos. 1:3). Did this take place at Acts thirteen?
- (2) Paul received the dispensation of the grace of God by revelation when he became the Prisoner of Jesus Christ for us Gentiles (Eph. 3:1-13). Did this take place at Acts thirteen?

There can be but one answer to these questions. They did not take place until the events recorded in Acts twenty-eight became history. A dispensation is a “stewardship” (see “The Key of Knowledge”). A stewardship implies a steward who receives a commission, and a dispensation “begins” when that steward receives the command “Go . . . tell this people” (Isa. 6:9), even as Paul waited until words of the Lord were recorded, “unto whom now I SEND thee” (Acts 26:17).

For the moment it is immaterial whether Paul himself knew wholly or in part, the contents of this new dispensation before the time came for its announcement; what is material is to discover when he and his message were “sent”, and this can be discovered by reading Acts 26:16-18 and Acts 28:28. While we must therefore stress the dispensational importance of Acts twenty-eight, that does not mean that Acts thirteen is of no or of little importance to us, for to ignore Acts thirteen while emphasizing Acts twenty-eight, would be as foolish as being indifferent to the foundations of a sky scraper in New York, simply because one occupied a suite of offices hundreds of feet above ground! What however is obvious, is that there must be all the difference in the world between the foundations of any

building, and the top storey. Without the separate ministry initiated at Acts thirteen Paul would hardly have been prepared for the great ministry associated with his imprisonment. Acts thirteen not only sets the Apostle apart, it provides at least four outstanding features which make its contribution vital:

- (1) The foreshadowing of the blindness of Israel and the sending of the salvation of God to the Gentiles is obvious in the ministry recorded in Acts 13:6-12.
- (2) The foreshadowing of the *lo-ammi* period of uncounted time that characterizes the present parenthetical dispensation of the Mystery (Acts 13:17-22). This must be demonstrated presently.
- (3) The introduction into the record of that fundamental doctrine, namely Justification by faith (Acts 13:38,39).
- (4) The anticipatory turning from Israel to the Gentile (Acts 13:46-48).

Before examining Acts 13:6-12, let us observe that in Acts three and four Peter's ministry was also foreshadowed by a typical miracle. Perhaps it is not quite right to single out the healing of the lame man and call it a "dispensational miracle" for the miracles performed by the Lord and His apostles in almost every case foreshadow spiritual truths. The miracle of the death of Ananias and Sapphira, for instance, was a dispensational anticipation; and also the judgment of blindness that fell upon Elymas. Nevertheless, while all miracles are called "the powers of the age to come" (Heb. 6:5), this initial miracle of the Acts in a special way follows on the day of Pentecost and illuminates its prophetic character.

PETER'S MIRACLE OF HEALING (Acts 3:1-4:22).

*The Miracle of Restoration.*

A 3:1-11. The miracle. Its performance.

B a 3:12-16. Explanation. "The Name".

b 3:17-24. Prophetic application.

B a 3:25-4:10. Explanation. "The Name".

b 4:11,12. Prophetic application.

A 4:13-22. The miracle. Its acknowledgment.

Two corresponding passages in this record indicate the way in which the healing of the lame man foreshadowed Peter's ministry to Israel:

A Acts 3:17-24 a 17,18. Fulfilment. Mouth of prophets.

Suffering.

b 19-21. Repent. Refreshing.

Restoration.

a 21. Fulfilment. Mouth of prophets.

Glory.

b 22-24. Hear . . . if not . . . destroyed.

\* \* \* \*

A Acts 4:11,12 a 11. Rejected Stone becomes Head

b 12. Neither is there THE HEALING in any other.

a None other name under heaven.

b Whereby saved (healing of nation).

We must first discover the general disposition of subject-matter, so that we may realize what are the salient features of the narrative, and not omit any step that is essential to the carrying forward of the theme.

Peter's words in Acts 3:19-26 are a direct prophetic exposition of the meaning of this miracle. He urges repentance with a view to the time of refreshing and restoration that will be brought in by the return of the Lord from heaven. This coming of Christ, and the blessings that will flow from it, are in perfect harmony with the testimony of Moses and all the prophets (Acts 3:22-24), and with the covenant made with Abraham and his seed (Acts 3:25,26). It is impossible to read "the Church", meaning the Church of the Mystery, into this passage, especially when we read the concluding words:

"YE are the children of the prophets . . . Unto YOU first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless YOU, in turning away every one of YOU from his iniquities."

The point of Peter's explanation lies in the word translated "salvation" (Acts 4:12). We read that the lame man had been more than forty years a cripple, which makes us think at once of Israel in their unbelief. The words "perfect soundness" (Acts 3:16) refer back to Israel's condition as described in Isaiah 1:6 where the LXX uses the same word with the negative, "no *soundness*". The word "whole" in Acts 4:9, "by what means he is made *whole*", is *sesostai*, from *sozo*, "to save". The word "salvation" in Acts 4:12 is *he soteria*, literally "the healing". "Neither is there *salvation* in any other".

This then, is Peter's explanation. The lame man who had been healed, and who was seen walking and leaping and praising God (Acts 3:8), was a picture of the day when "the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing" (Isa. 35:6). Bringing the healed man forward, Peter says in effect:

"Look at this man. He has been healed by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, and stands before you as a prophetic anticipation of Israel's restoration; neither is there THE HEALING (that is, the healing and restoration of Israel) in any other. None but this despised and rejected Messiah can ever avail."

Alas, Israel did not repent. The next outstanding typical miracle is that of a Jew *stricken with blindness*, while a Gentile believes (Acts thirteen). That type is fulfilled in Acts twenty-eight, when blindness falls upon the whole nation and "the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles" (Acts 28:28).

The gist of the typical miracle of Acts 13:6-12 can be expressed as follows:

#### I. *A Jew withstands the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentile.*

This was the climax sin of Israel, and brought about their dispersion and present blindness, as may be gathered from the following passage:

"Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost"  
(1 Thess. 2:16).

This is the charge laid against those in Judæa. It may sound incredible but something of the same antagonism must be perceived in Peter's attitude to Cornelius, for he himself uses the same word "forbid" in Acts 10:47 and in Acts 11:17 "withstand". True, Peter altered his attitude, but the attitude must have been there for him to alter. This word "forbid" awaits us in the last verse of the Acts. With Israel dismissed and no longer a factor, Paul's preaching to the Gentiles was at last "unforbidden" (Acts 28:31).

## II. *A Gentile is saved who bears the same name as the Apostle.*

Recently a coin was dug up in Cyprus bearing the inscription "In the Pro-consulship of Paullus". The inscriptions spell *Paullus* with a double "l". The Acts spell it with one "l". There was a freedom in the spelling of names in early days (Shakespeare is spelled about seven or more ways) and the Holy Ghost has adopted the present spelling evidently to make the link with the Apostle complete. It was, and still is, the custom for a Jew to have a Hebrew and a Gentile name. In our own Whitechapel it would be easy to find someone known familiarly in the street as "Bill" or "Tom", who within the family circle would be "Isaac" or "Moses". The custom has indeed provided a joke in an illustrated Yiddish paper. Moreover, the names adopted by the Jew are contemporaneous with his times. In *Persian* and *Babylonian* times we have "Nehemiah" and "Belteshazzar": under *Greek* influence we have such a name as "Philip". In *Roman* times we have "Justus", "Niger" and "Priscilla". In the *Middle Ages* we find the Jews bearing the name "Basil" or "Leo". (For a fuller treatment of the subject see Zunz' *Namen der Juden*). Jerome refers to the Roman custom of adopting the name of a country that had been conquered, as did Scipio, who, having conquered Africa, took the name Africanus. Certainly there is intentional emphasis upon the Gentile convert's name here. There is every likelihood, that, as Paul was a freeman, his family took the name of some Roman family immediately associated with this freedom. So, from this time onward, the Apostle is known as Paul; never again is he called by the old Hebrew name, which, with his old self and past, was dead and buried. There can be no doubt that the introduction of Saul's Gentile name at this particular juncture is intentional. Paul is here definitely linked with (1) The salvation of a Gentile; (2) The blinding of a Jew, a clear foreshadowing of the close of the Acts.

## III. *The foreshadowing of a lo-ammi period.*

In Acts 13:16-41 Paul bases his teaching upon *selected* incidents in Israel's history, and in this he was but adopting the same method that was employed by Stephen. In Acts seven, Stephen's resumé of Israel's history impinges upon two most characteristic events:

- (1) The rejection of Joseph by his brethren, and the making of himself known "the second time" (Acts 7:9-13).
- (2) The rejection of Moses, and the acceptance of him after his rejection and forty years absence in Midian (Acts 7:20-35).

In his application of these historic facts Stephen accused his

people saying "ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: *as your fathers did, so do ye*" (Acts 7:51).

Paul's employment of Israel's history does not yield its peculiar purpose without some close consideration. This, however, we hope to demonstrate. In Acts 13:17-22 Paul starting from the Exodus traverses Israel's history up to the time of David. And the following will be clear to all:

Wilderness wandering about	40 years
Period of Judges until Samuel about	450 „
Reign of Saul	40 „
Reign of David (2 Sam. 5:4)	40 „
	—
	570 years
	—

The total length covered by Paul's computation being 570 years. So far all is clear, but if we compare this computation with that of 1 Kings 6:1 we come against a difficulty. From the Exodus to the third year of Solomon, according to this computation is 480 years. We must add the 3 years of Solomon's reign to the 570 given above, to bring both totals level, and this reveals a discrepancy of 93 years (480 from 573 = 93). How is this to be accounted for? It is accounted for by the application of a principle, that whenever Israel become *Lo-ammi* "not My people" the prophetic clock stops and time is unrecorded. In the time of the Judges, Israel, for their sins were "sold" to outside nations, and the number of years thus "lost" is exactly 93—thus:

Judges 3:8 — 8 years. 3:14 — 18 years. 4:3 — 20 years.  
6:1 — 7 years. 13:1 — 40 years = 93 years lost.

Whether wittingly or unwittingly, Paul introduced into this great typical chapter of Acts thirteen the need to recognize that a tremendous dispensational change involving even the computation of time, hinged upon Israel's *lo-ammi* state. That state was entered in Acts twenty-eight and since that day, from about the years A.D. 63-70, prophetic time has ceased to run, we live in a parenthesis, and a period of about 2,000 years, not merely of 93, drops out of the Divine calendar.

#### IV. *The basic doctrine of Justification by faith.*

It is the testimony of the Prophets, that the redeemed must be covered with a robe of righteousness (Isa. 61:10), and that Israel's natural righteousness, or their attempt at justification under the law, was an absolute failure (Isa. 64:6). "The Lord our Righteousness" of Jeremiah 23:6 and 33:16 is a clear anticipation of Justification by grace. The work of Christ and the exposition of that work, but revealed what was incipient in the law and the prophets (Rom. 3:21,22), and was the only ground for the forgiveness of sins committed before Christ came and for all time subsequently (Rom. 3:25).

Fundamental to the ministry of Paul, whether during the Acts and while free, or after Acts twenty-eight, as "the Prisoner of Jesus

Christ” for us Gentiles is this glorious doctrine. This he enunciated for the first time in this great anticipatory chapter, Acts thirteen.

“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts 13:38,39).

Philippians 3:9 sums up Paul’s teaching on Justification, even as Ephesians 2:8-10 sums up his teaching on Salvation, or Colossians 2:11-17 sums up his teaching concerning ceremonies, rites and observances. In the Prison epistles where the great theme is the “Mystery”, Paul had no need to repeat the terms which constituted the foundation upon which *all callings*, whether Kingdom or Church whether Earthly, Heavenly or Far above all, must ultimately rest.

#### V. *The anticipatory turning from Israel to the Gentile.*

The Jews at Antioch maintained their antagonistic attitude against the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, and this led to a *local* turning from the Jew, a foreshadowing of its universal aspect which awaited Acts twenty-eight.

“Lo we turn to the Gentiles” (Acts 13:46).

Three reasons are provided by the Scripture which should prevent anyone from misinterpreting this action of the Apostle.

(a) It was according to the prophetic utterance of Isaiah 49:6 and had been quoted by Simeon as recorded in Luke 2:32. If Acts 13:47 proves that the dispensation of the Mystery had then begun, it proves too much, for it also proves that it began when old Simeon blessed the infant Christ in the temple! Does anyone teach that?

(b) We are assured that the dispensation of the Mystery was not a subject of Old Testament prophecy, but had been hid in God, only to be revealed when Paul became the Prisoner of Jesus Christ for us Gentiles (Eph. 3:1-13; Col. 1:24-27), and this being so, the reference in Acts 13:46-47 to the prophecy of Isaiah can have no reference to the Mystery. Neither faith nor reason can believe a contradiction of terms.

(c) That this turning to the Gentile was *local*, the opening verse of Acts fourteen makes sufficiently clear, as also the references to his ministry in the synagogues in Acts 17:1,10-17; 18:4,19,26 and 19:8. An illustration at this juncture may prove of service.

In days of old, two armoured knights approached each other along a road that led by a castle, from which hung a large shield. The first knight exclaimed “what a splendid GOLDEN shield!” The second knight countered with “what a splendid SILVER shield!” and as these were gentlemen of brawn rather than of brain, they immediately battered one another with sword and mace, until they both sank exhausted on the opposite bank, to draw breath. From this position they saw what they might have seen earlier, that the shield was golden on one side and silver on the other. Acts thirteen is the silver shield of *doctrinal preparation*, Acts twenty-eight the golden shield of *dispensational realization*. Both passages are necessary, but it is a mistake to transfer the offices of the one passage



to the other. Some of the people of God who maintain that Acts thirteen not Acts twenty-eight is the dispensational boundary, appear by their "proofs" to confuse similarities with identity. As this is the stone of stumbling here, let us attempt to clear the ground.

### SIMILARITIES DO NOT CONSTITUTE IDENTITY

(An important principle of interpretation considered and commended to all true "Bereans").

On pages 173 to 177 of Volume 33, we attempted to answer an objection that had been made to our teaching, based upon the incidence in Hebrews of words or expressions similar to others found in Ephesians. This objection was expressed in a letter, from which we gave an unedited extract. If this extract does not accord with a booklet since published by the writer of the letter, it will be understood that such variation, while within his rights, cannot reflect upon our integrity.

The reasoning that underlies this method of examination is fallacious in that it *discovers* similarities but *interprets* them as identicals. Whether they are concerned with the problem put forward in the article referred to or not, we believe it would be a "word in season" to all our readers if this fallacious argument was exposed, because principles of interpretation are fundamental to all understanding, and should occupy a prominent place in the Christian worker's equipment.

*The principle stated: Similarities, however many, cannot constitute identity in the presence of one proved contrary.* This may sound rather involved, but the following illustration may convince of its essential truth.

*The principle illustrated.* Here is a supposed description, circulated by the police, of a wanted man:

"A man, past middle age, height 5 ft. 7½ in., dark hair, slightly grey at temples, eyes grey, complexion pale, aquiline features, tendency to stoop, interested in art and music, editor of a religious paper; last known place of residence, London, S.W."

The reader who is personally acquainted with the editor of *The Berean Expositor*, will recognize the foregoing as a fairly good description of him. Now, let us further suppose that the police, acting upon information, take the editor into custody. He is examined, point by point, and found to tally with the description. Surely some would say, "This is the man!" *If a list of similarities proves identity*, then the prospects before the editor look rather bleak.

As we have seen, the believer may put into parallel columns words found in Hebrews or passages from 1 Corinthians and Ephesians, and say, in effect, "these prove identity", "This is the same calling", but happily, the police do not mistake similarities for identity. One clear statement of fact that introduces a contrary, sets aside columns of similarities in the matter of identity. The editor of *The Berean Expositor* would have had not the slightest qualm in going up for

examination, for he was in possession of one essential fact which disproved his identity with the criminal concerned: the wanted man was *born in New York*, whereas the editor was *born in London*. We cannot conceive that any official would interpose and say, "we are not concerned with where this man was born, we are more concerned with the many items of similarity. *He must be the man!*" Yet that is the attitude of mind of those who claim Acts thirteen, as the dispensational frontier.

Alas, the children of this generation are often wiser than the children of light, and would at once admit that one established contrary destroys assumed identity based on many similarities. "Similar" is not the "Same".

In Ephesians we discover a revelation never before made known; a choice from "before the foundation of the world"; a calling "far above all"; a unique position, "seated together in heavenly places". Any one of these is a "contrary" to the revelation, the choice, the calling, or the position revealed in Paul's earlier epistles or indicated in Acts thirteen.

We will not occupy valuable space with further illustrations of this principle, for we believe it is obvious. The reader can work out other illustrations, for example, by noting that the "ransom" occurs in Matthew and in 1 Timothy, and disprove the conclusion that the callings of Matthew and 1 Timothy must therefore be identical. In this case the emphasis on the *Gentile* in the epistle, and the emphasis on *Israel* in the gospel provide the "contraries".

Parallel passages abound in Scripture, but, instead of impinging on the domain of other callings, they, like parallels in Euclidean geometry, never meet. Let us "try the things that differ"; let us "rightly *divide* the word of truth". We shall then "approve the things that are more excellent", and be workmen who need not be ashamed.

This short article, reprinted from Vol. 34 of *The Berean Expositor*, was written to meet the argument brought forward by a correspondent, that because certain terms found in Ephesians were also found in Hebrews, that Hebrews presents what he called "Ephesian Truth". We do not believe that those who insist on Acts thirteen as the dispensational boundary, would fall for *that* specious argument so far as Hebrews is concerned, but they appear to have done so in their attempt to prove their case concerning this chapter.

The terms found in Hebrews, were Hebrews 6:17 "heirs"; Hebrews 13:3 "body"; Hebrews 3:1 "partakers" and these were supposed to be all sufficient proof that Hebrews taught the same truth as Ephesians.

Those who believe the thirteenth chapter of Acts constitutes the dispensational dividing line instead of Acts twenty-eight, draw attention to:

- (1) A mystery before the world (1 Cor. 2:7).
- (2) "One Body" (1 Cor. 12:12,27).
- (3) The seal and earnest (2 Cor. 1:22), and these are supposed to establish their claim.

They are similarities, but do not establish identity. Let us “open the book”. When we adopt this salutary principle of never conducting an argument with a closed Bible, we observe that while we have “seal” and “earnest” before and after Acts twenty-eight, 2 Corinthians 1:21 is a four-fold not a two-fold confirmation. “Establishing” and “anointing” are there also. This establishing was, said the Apostle of “us with you”, the Greek word establish being *bebaio*. This same word is found in 1 Corinthians 1:6 “even as the testimony was confirmed in you” and adds “so that you come behind in no gift”. With this we should read Hebrews 2:3,4 “confirmed unto us by them that heard Him, God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.” This word “anointing” (*chrrio*) is to be read in the light of 1 John 2:27:

“But the anointing (*chrisma*) which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing (*chrisma*) teacheth you of all things . . .”

Here we have confirmation or establishing together with anointing, which things are absent from Ephesians, even as all such “spiritual gifts” are absent from the dispensation of the Mystery.

We turn next to 1 Corinthians twelve. This chapter is concerned with “spiritual gifts” as verse one informs us, their variety yet their unity, and these gifts include miracles and supernatural knowledge, gifts not in the possession of the Church of the Mystery. 1 Corinthians twelve first of all distinguishes between spiritual gifts that emanate from evil sources and those spiritual gifts which come from the Lord. Looking at the second part we observe that it is subdivided into three groups:

1. There are diversities of gifts, but the same SPIRIT.
2. There are differences of administrations, but the same LORD.
3. There are diversities of operations, but the same GOD (12:4-6).

Here we notice that while there are differences, there is also an all-pervading unity. In verses 7-11 the diversity of gifts (No. 1 above) is considered at length. First the manifestation of the Spirit is given to profit withal. Secondly, this manifestation is a “diversity in unity”:

“To one . . . . is given . . . the word of wisdom . . . . by the Spirit.  
 To another . . . is given . . . the word of knowledge . . . by the same  
Spirit.  
 To another . . . is given . . . faith . . . by the same Spirit.  
 To another . . . is given . . . the gifts of healing . . . by the one Spirit  
(Vaticanus)  
 To another . . . is given . . . the working of miracles.  
 To another . . . is given . . . prophecy.  
 To another . . . is given . . . the discerning of spirits.  
 To another . . . is given . . . divers kind of tongues.  
 To another . . . is given . . . the interpretation of tongues.

but ALL these worketh that ONE and the SELF SAME SPIRIT, dividing to every man severally as He will” (12:8-11).

This expansion of the subject is followed by the reference to the body, being introduced by the words *kathaper gar* ("for just as"); the references to the body, therefore, are logically connected with the teaching of the chapter "concerning spiritual gifts". This is taught by the word "for". The references to the body are given and must be taken as an illustration of the diversity in unity of these spiritual gifts. This is taught by the words "just as". "For just as the body is ONE, and hath MANY members, yet all the members of that body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ" (*Ho Christos*). This is the title of the Lord pre-eminently, yet not exclusively. Any who were *anointed* by God come under that title.

Here we have the "diversities" of 1 Corinthians twelve. The confirmation and the anointing by means of these supernatural gifts have been withdrawn, but the seal and the earnest remain and belong to the present dispensation. "The anointed" therefore of 1 Corinthians twelve or of 2 Corinthians 1:21 is NOT THE CHURCH OF THE ONE BODY (which is characterized by *the absence* of all signs and evidential miracles), but that church which was composed of supernaturally-gifted believers. The argument of the Apostle is therefore, that the gifts are to be looked upon as so many different members of one body, and that each gift is necessary to the perfect functioning of the whole, the more ostentatious gifts, such as speaking with tongues, being no more important than the less obtrusive ones. Whatever gift had been given to any individual was to be held and used for the edifying of the whole company.

This unity is brought about by the baptism of the one Spirit, Who baptized all these believers into one body (1 Cor. 12:13), and the remaining verses take up the thought of the diversity of gifts and the unity of their origin by a more detailed reference to a human body. Following on therefore from the teaching of verse twelve the Apostle says:

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Greeks, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many" (1 Cor. 12:13,14).

Many seize upon these words as though they were a revelation of the Mystery of the One Body, which had been hidden since the ages. Such have only to read chapter 10:1-4 which precedes this section of the epistle to see the reference back to Exodus:

"All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink."

This being so, the only logical thing to do, by any who claim 1 Corinthians twelve for "The Mystery" is to abandon the whole matter, for if Exodus and Isaiah teach us our calling, the exclusive character of the Mystery is nullified.

Returning to 1 Corinthians twelve, let us notice the "one body" as the Apostle details it. "If the *foot* shall say, because I am not the *hand*, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?" Here is clearly a resumption of the argument of verses 7-12, "if the *ear* shall say, because I am not the *eye*, I am not of the body; is it not

therefore of the body?" Here, members of the head are introduced which cannot possibly be true of the Church of the One Body, for the Head of that Body is Christ Himself. The next verse is directed against the spiritual pride of those who possessed some more apparent gift than others, "if the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing?" "but now God hath set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him." With this verse read verses 27,28:

"Now ye are a body of Christ, and members in part, and God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers (these are the members like the eye or the ear), after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversity of tongues."

Coming back to verse nineteen we observe the continuation of the argument, "and if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet one body." The argument is pursued even to speaking of "uncomely parts", which certainly can find no place in "the Church which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Chapter thirteen is the more excellent way, and chapter fourteen resumes the theme of the gifts. Here the Apostle dwells upon the useful gifts, and "edifying" is a key word, "forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church" (verse twelve).

The endeavour to read into 1 Corinthians twelve that which is declared to be a mystery unrevealed until *the imprisonment* of Paul robs both sets of teaching of their point and purpose. In Corinthians the Church in connexion with the supernatural gifts is likened to a body, the Church of the Mystery is spoken of as being dispensationally THE body. Let us try the things that differ.

Finally, with reference to the presence of a mystery in 1 Corinthians 2:7 we find that both Paul and his fellow labourers were to be accounted "stewards of the *mysterics* (plural) of God" (1 Cor. 4:1) yet one has only to read Ephesians 3:1-13 or Colossians 1:24-26 to realize that here we have a mystery and a dispensation that differs essentially from all that has gone before. Why these good folk do not go back to Matthew thirteen and make the dispensation of the Mystery start there as some do, we do not know, for "mystery" is the key word to that chapter of parables.

We find therefore, that:

- (1) The dispensation of the Mystery (Eph. 3:9 R.V.) was entrusted to one, and to one only, namely the Apostle Paul.
- (2) That this dispensation is intimately associated with Paul as "the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles" a condition that Acts thirteen cannot fulfil.
- (3) That this dispensation was a matter of revelation, and unsearchable, and had been "hid in God" since the ages.
- (4) That this dispensation was made known at a point of time, which when Ephesians was written could be called "now".

These features make this dispensation of the Mystery unique. No one has any warrant to say that other mysteries were not in the mind

of God "since the ages" or if they were that this must all refer to the same event, even as Acts 15:18 suggests.

One other most important item must be referred to in connexion with the claim that Acts thirteen is the commencement of the dispensation of the Mystery, and that is the position of *the people of Israel* at the time. When the ministry of this chapter was initiated, Israel was still a people recognized by God. Both in the record of the Acts, and in the epistles of the period the hope of Israel runs through the record from end to end (cf. Acts 26:6,7; Acts 28:20; Rom. 15:12,13), and while the hope of Israel remained, the Mystery could not obtain. We must find some place in the history of the times where Israel become *lo-ammi* "not My people" (Hos. 1:9; 3:3,4) and that cannot be found anywhere in the New Testament record except at Acts 28:28,29.

For a fuller analysis of this feature, see the booklet *Acts twenty-eight the Dispensational Frontier*.

While much can be learned by comparing the circumstances that produced the thirteenth or twenty-eighth chapter of the Acts, we shall miss the most important lessons unless we consider Acts thirteen positively, and see for ourselves what it is designed to teach.

The Acts of the Apostles is mainly the record of two ministries:

(1) THE MINISTRY OF PETER Acts 1:15-12:23.

(2) THE MINISTRY OF PAUL Acts 12:24-28:31.

When we compare what happened at Antioch (Acts thirteen) and at Rome (Acts twenty-eight) we perceive that the one was a forecast of the other thus:

At Antioch. A Jew withstands the gospel. Stricken with blindness.

At Rome. The Jews believe not and blindness falls on the nation.

At Antioch. A Gentile (*Paulus*) believes.

At Rome. The Gentiles the chief care of the Apostle.

At Antioch. *A warning*. "Beware lest that come upon you."

At Rome. *A fulfilment*. "Lest they should see with their eyes, etc."

At Antioch. The door of faith opened to the Gentiles.

At Rome. The salvation of God sent unto the Gentiles.

At Antioch occurs the separation of Barnabas and Paul, and several features of this opening ministry fore-shadow the close of the Acts. For example: Paul's first miracle contrasts with Peter's first miracle. Peter *heals* a Jew; Paul *blinds* a Jew. This Jew withstands the truth, and a Gentile, who bears the same name as the Apostle, believes. Resulting from the opposition of the Jews at Antioch, there is a local turning from the Jew to the Gentile and Paul utters that word of warning which anticipates the dreadful quotation of Isaiah six, with which the Jew was set aside in the last chapter of the Acts. At the close of chapter thirteen we read:

"And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region"

(Acts 13:49).

and at the close of chapter fourteen we read:

“And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles” (Acts 14:27).

There is a very remarkable contrast found in Acts thirteen and Acts twenty-eight.

“But the Jews stirred up the *devout* and *honourable* women, and the *chief men* of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts” (Acts 13:50).

In contrast with this action of the devout, the honourable, and the chief men, we have:

“And the *barbarous* people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold . . . In the same quarters were possessions of the *chief man* of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously” (Acts 28:2 and 7).

It is encouraging to observe the record of the Holy Spirit in these matters; the names of the “devout”, the “honourable” and the “chief”, who expelled Paul, have gone down into oblivion, but wherever the Scriptures are read, the name of Publius is recorded with gratitude.

The thirteenth chapter of the Acts, while most important, is necessarily a part only of a larger context, and this is clearly indicated by the structure of the whole section which we now set before the reader.

#### ACTS 12:24-16:5.

##### JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

- A 12:24. “But the word of God grew and multiplied.”  
 B 12:25. a Barnabas and Saul.  
       b John Mark taken with them.  
 C 13:1-3. Barnabas and Saul “separated” by the Holy Ghost.  
 D 13:4-14:28. c Departure from Antioch.  
       d *Justification by faith apart from law of Moses.*  
       c Return to Antioch.  
 D 15:1-35. c Men from Judæa raise the question.  
       d *Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.*  
       c Men that had hazarded their lives for the Lord Jesus bring the answer.  
 B 15:36-39. a Barnabas and Paul.  
       b John Mark taken to Cyprus.  
 C 15:40-16:4. Silas and Timothy approved by the brethren (15:26,27 and 16:2).  
 A 16:5. “And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.”

At its opening, Paul’s ministry circled round a statement of truth and a conflict for that truth. The statement was the glorious doctrine of justification by faith (13:39): the conflict was the fight against the Judaism which imposed law and circumcision as necessary to salvation. We therefore become witnesses of one of the most important

controversies that the world has known; a controversy ever fresh in its applications; a fight for the faith in which we are called upon to engage to this day.

Two acts of separation in the Acts mark two steps toward a goal. First, the separation of Barnabas and Saul, Acts 13:1-3. Secondly, the separation of the disciples and the end of Paul's synagogue witness (Acts 19:9), which leads on to the close of one ministry (Acts 20:17-21) and the prospect of another, and future a ministry associated with "bonds" (Acts 20:22-25). This "prison ministry" was entered when Israel were dismissed and occupied the "two whole years" of Acts 28:30, balancing as it does "the space of two years" which followed the separation of Acts 19:9,10. The significance of these "two years" may be seen by reading Hosea 6:1,2 "Come, and let us return unto the Lord". This is the fulfilment of Hosea 3:5 "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God" and which brings an end to the *lo-ammi* period, during which Israel were not to be called "My people" (Hos. 2:23; 3:3,4). "He hath torn and He will heal us"; in Acts 28:27 the words occur "lest . . . I should heal them".

If the words of Hosea 6:2 "after two days will He revive us" refer to two literal days of twenty-four hours, a Monday or a Tuesday for example, one wonders why such a detail should be recorded, but if they are used prophetically, they, together with the two years of Acts twenty-eight, may foreshadow the length of time during which Israel's blindness will last, and the length of time during which the dispensation of the Mystery will fill the gap. Israel's blindness has lasted nineteen hundred years, and there is every reason from Scripture and from history to believe that the two days of Hosea six indicate two days of 1,000 years each, harmonizing with the Day that must come, the Millennium which Revelation twenty affirms will last 1,000 years.

It is a healthy sign when men of God submit all teaching and all theories to the touchstone of all Scripture, but with human nature as it is, we must be prepared to submit their objections to the same test.

We have considered the question "Acts thirteen or Acts twenty-eight", and now briefly consider two other propositions that infringed upon the teaching of the epistle to the Ephesians.

#### WAS PAUL A PRISONER, IN ACTS 28:30,31?

A serious and reverent examination of the teaching that Acts 28:28 is the Dispensational Boundary, has included in its objections, two terms used in Acts 28:30 and 31, which it is incumbent upon us to examine. This objection has been expressed as follows:

"The direct evidence of Scripture indicates that Paul was neither in prison nor in bonds during the time covered by Acts 28:30,31."

The first objection is based upon the words "his own hired house", the second on the words "no man forbidding him". There is "direct evidence" that Paul was a prisoner when he reached Rome. Scripture



says so: "I was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans . . . I appeal (ed) unto Caesar . . . for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain" (Acts 28:17-20). While Paul was in this condition, he received a deputation of Jews to his "lodging". It has been put forward that there is a difference intended between a "lodging" and a "hired house" which should lead us to deny that Paul was a prisoner.

What essential difference we may well ask is there between a "lodging" and "an hired house"? Is it outside the realm of possibility that Acts 28:23 and 30 are two ways of speaking of the same place? How is it possible to argue that Paul could be a prisoner and bound with a chain in his "lodging", but that he must, of necessity be conceived of as being free, if he receives visitors in his own "hired house"? The lodging *xenia*, means a place for the accommodation of strangers, and *xenizo* is used in Acts 28:7 where we read that Paul was "lodged" for three days courteously. It seems that if an "hired house" makes prison impossible then most certainly Paul was never a prisoner in Rome at all. But if a Roman prisoner could have a "lodging" then he could also have a "hired house", the two passages stand or fall together. It will be observed in Acts 28:16 that:

"Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him",

"which" Lewin comments "indicates a private residence; and accordingly *after this* mention is made of the *xenia* (v. 23), and again of *idion misthoma*, which express only what had before been less precisely expressed". Further there is no "house" mentioned, but merely a suite of apartments; see *Wetstein* on Acts 28:30.

It will be seen that the attempt to "prove" from the words "in his own hired house" that Paul was no longer a prisoner is invalid, dwelling by himself (Acts 28:16,23) as well.

The second ground of objection is the word translated "no man forbidding him", the Greek *akolutos*. It is amazing that a writer, who in the examination of the Greek terms used, shows such acumen and industry, should have *passed over in silence*, the way in which this term "unhindered" is used. We do not imply by this remark that this silence was wilful. Alas we are only too conscious that we all have our "blind spots".

The following extract from *The Alphabetical Analysis* page 35/36 will show that "unhindered" has no bearing upon whether Paul was or was not a prisoner at the time, but that it indicates that with the dismissal of Israel, the hindrance offered by that people to the preaching to the Gentiles had ceased.

"Acts twenty-eight ends with the Apostle dwelling for two years in his own hired house preaching and teaching, no man forbidding him."

During Paul's early ministry, the Jew had consistently opposed the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, and this, said the Apostle, was their climax sin.

They "killed the Lord Jesus" but forgiveness was given and a new opportunity to believe and repent was granted. They had earlier "killed their own prophets" and had more recently "persecuted" the

Apostle and his helpers “forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved”, reaching however a climax “TO FILL UP their sins alway; for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost” (1 Thess. 2:15,16).

“To the bitter end,” reads Moffatt. “In its severest form,” reads Weymouth. The same word “forbidding” found in 1 Thessalonians 2:16 is the word used of Paul, “no man forbidding him”—Israel the opposer had gone. They had filled up their measure of sin to the brim, and the very Gentiles that they had “forbidden” now entered into blessings hitherto unrevealed (*See THREE SPHERES OF BLESSING*).

Peter’s ministry in the Acts concluded with the words “forbidding” and “withstand”, both translations of the Greek word *koluo*. Paul’s ministry concludes with the words “no man forbidding” (Acts 28:31) where the Greek word is *akolutos*. Peter maintained this attitude up to the tenth chapter of the Acts, he would have “forbidden” both Cornelius and God, for the word “withstand” in Acts 11:17 is *koluo*.

The upshot of this work at Caesarea was that even Peter was called upon to give an account of himself.

“The apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and *didst eat with them*”  
(Acts 11:1-3).

We find no remonstrance from Peter to the effect that seeing that the Church began at Pentecost, the conversion of Cornelius should have been anticipated and be a matter for rejoicing. No, Peter patiently, and humbly, and apologetically, rehearsed the matter, even to the pathetic conclusion: “what was I, that I could withstand *God?*” or literally “forbid *God?*” Why should Peter ever think of withstanding God or “forbidding” God if he knew that the Church began at Pentecost? It is abundantly evident that neither Peter, the other Apostles, nor the brethren at Jerusalem had the remotest idea of any such thing.

“When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, *THEN HATH GOD ALSO* to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18).

As the testimony stands, much clearer and completed evidence must be brought before we can feel justified in believing that there is any ground whatever to indicate that “Paul was neither in prison nor in bonds during the time covered by Acts 28:30,31.”

#### HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND THE WORD “GENTILE”?

It has been suggested that the word *ethnos*, translated Gentile, refers in many instances to the dispersed of Israel, who had so long lived among the heathen as to have become in the eyes of their more orthodox fellows “uncircumcision” and “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel”, terms that we have generally accepted as a description of the Gentiles before their conversion. As this new interpretation impinges upon the teaching of Ephesians and does not

allow the normal meaning of the word Gentile to appear until Ephesians three, no one can object if this interpretation be suspect; or that it should be subjected to criticism, so long as the enquiry be conducted in the interests of Truth and with Christian courtesy.

The treatise we have in mind provides a concordance of all the references to *ethnos* in the New Testament from which we extract the following from the Acts of the Apostles. Acts 2:5; 4:25; 7:7,45; 11:1,18; 13:19,46,47. Acts 2:5 speaks of the nations among which the "Jews" who came to Pentecost lived. Some of them, namely Parthians, Medes and Elamites (Acts 2:9-11) are undoubtedly Gentiles in the accepted sense. Acts 4:25 quotes from Psalm two, "why did the heathen rage?" and in verse twenty-seven these "heathen" or "Gentiles" are differentiated from Israel, and linked with Herod and Pontius Pilate. Act 7:7 uses the word *ethnos* to indicate the Egyptians and 7:45 like 13:19 refer to the "Canaanites" as indicated in Genesis 15:19-21. Acts 10:1 and 18 refers to Cornelius who was a centurion of the Italian band, and called by Peter "one of another nation" (Acts 10:28).

The word Peter employed is *allophulos*, and is found in the Septuagint of Isaiah 2:6; and 61:5 as well as six times in Judges as the equivalent of Philistine. It is impossible, therefore, to believe that the acknowledgement of Acts 11:18 "then hath God also to *the Gentiles* granted repentance until life" can refer to Gentiles as such, but that a similar testimony in Acts 14:27 may not. Acts 13:42,46 and 47 are associated with Isaiah 49:6 which can only mean Gentiles as such.

While we must encourage every believer to exercise the Berean spirit (Acts 17:11) we must not close our eyes to the disposition equally mentioned in Acts seventeen, namely of the Athenian spirit of ever telling or hearing "something newer" (*kainoteron*) (Acts 17:21). Let us ever observe the Berean attitude, let us ever be on our guard against the Athenian attitude. The one is a key, the other a snare.

If we surveyed the Acts of the Apostles, with Acts thirteen as a possible dispensational boundary in mind, we should find that if the Church of the Mystery really came into existence when Acts thirteen is reached, a change would be introduced into the record which would include a change of the Lord's dealing with Israel. Quite naturally, Peter immediately after Pentecost could say to his hearers:

"The God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus" (Acts 3:13).

It is most obvious that Israel had not become *lo-ammi* at Pentecost, God had not ceased to be called their God at that point of time, and Peter gives Him His full title. No change can have taken place at Acts 5:30,31 for God is still the God of "our fathers", and "repentance to Israel" is still believed to be within the realm of possibility.

Passing from Peter, we find Stephen adopting the same attitude:

“Men, brethren and fathers”; “Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness”; “As your fathers did so do ye” (Acts 7:2,44,51).

Paul, in Acts thirteen, said:

“Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers” (Acts 13:16,17),

words which do not conform to the condition foreseen by Hosea. Even after his apprehension by the Romans, Paul still spoke of Israel as existing as a nation before God, saying:

“And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers, unto which promise our twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night hope to come” (Acts 26:7).

Here the persistence of Israel is insisted on by the Apostle, otherwise he would not have used the word translated “instantly”, for such a term cannot be used to describe the service and expectations of a non-existent people. Right to the last chapter of the Acts, the people of Israel, or their hope, are in evidence. Had Israel become *lo-ammi* earlier than Acts twenty-eight, Paul would not have said “For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain” (Acts 28:20). That “chain” is still in evidence in the “Prison Epistles” (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon and 2 Timothy), but would anyone have the temerity to teach that in those epistles, where the Mystery is revealed, Paul was still bound “for the hope of Israel”? Can we import the hope of Israel into Ephesians 1:18 and 4:4? Is the hope of Israel entertained by the “twelve tribes”, the hope of the Church of the Mystery?

Again, Pentecostal conditions as defined in Mark 16:17,18, including both healing and the taking up of serpents, find a place in Acts 28:1-8, and the issue cannot be evaded, that if Acts thirteen saw the beginning of the Church of the Mystery, these Pentecostal evidences that one is “saved” should apply today. Which one of those who advocate Acts thirteen as the inception of the Church of the Mystery, has ever put into practice either Mark 16:17,18 or emulated Paul in Acts 28:1-8?

When we come to Paul’s epistles written after Acts thirteen, Israel still occupy their appointed place. The Apostle must have had an Israelitish audience for him to have written:

“All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea”  
(1 Cor. 10:1,2).

If we find the reference to “spiritual drink” in 1 Corinthians 10:3 introduced into the subsequent chapter on spiritual gifts, as we do in 1 Corinthians 12:13, how is it possible to deal honestly with the Apostle’s letter if we admit that Israel is present in the one passage but excluded from the other? When we see such items as healing, miracles, prophecy, tongues, etc., as the normal experience and possession of the Church of the Mystery, or even of those who believe they are that company, it will be time to consider with any seriousness the claim of Acts thirteen. We could, however, leave all these evidences and concentrate upon one epistle written by Paul, namely, Romans, to show that long after his separation at Acts

thirteen, the people of Israel held an important place in the out-working of the purposes of God.

First, it is accepted by all recognized commentators, that the epistle to the Romans was the last epistle written by Paul before his imprisonment, which started in Jerusalem and ended at Rome. Consequently, as this is the last word, and the farthest point from the supposed boundary of Acts thirteen, we shall expect to find that Israel have indeed passed into their *lo-ammi* condition, and that God has ceased, temporarily, to be called their God. If the dispensation of the Mystery had really commenced, could Paul have written concerning the gospel:

“It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to THE JEW FIRST, and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16).

If the Church of the Mystery already existed, could Paul have said:

“Is He the God of the JEWS only, is He not also of the Gentiles?”  
(Rom. 3:29).

If the Church of the Mystery began at Acts thirteen, what sense or point could there be in such a question? The Jew must have had a very dominating influence in the church for such a question to be reasonable. In Romans 9:15 Israel's prerogatives are expressed and admitted, but Israel today enjoy none of those things which are there credited to them.

“My kinsmen according to the flesh: 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” (Rom. 9:3-5).

The Apostle could still pray that Israel might be saved, and spoke of the attitude of the Lord towards them throughout the period covered by the Acts of the Apostles, as:

“To Israel, He saith, All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people” (Rom. 10:21).

The time for their rejection was drawing near, “blindness in part” had already happened unto Israel (Rom. 11:25), and into the place forfeited by the unbelieving of Israel, the Gentile believer was engrafted, like a wild olive contrary to nature, with the intention that Israel may be provoked to jealousy, if that were possible. For the moment our only comment on this passage is, how could the Apostle use such an illustration, if at the self-same time, the Gentiles were:

“Fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel” (Eph. 3:6).

One cannot be, at the same time, a wild olive graft contrary to nature into an olive tree, and also a fellow member of One Body on absolutely equal terms with every other fellow member. Not only must Romans eleven be circumvented if Acts thirteen is to be held as the beginning of the Mystery, the hope of the church as defined by the Apostle in Romans 15:12,13 must also be ignored. Let it be observed that the word “trust” in Romans 15:12 is the Greek

*elpizo*, and the word "hope" of verse thirteen is the word *elpis*. Is *this* the "one hope of our calling"?

"There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles HOPE. Now the God of THAT HOPE (*tes elpidos*) fill you with all joy and peace in believing."

This Millennial hope is indeed blessed, but is it the hope of the Church of the Mystery? If Acts thirteen be the inception of that Church, then Paul's last word here in Romans must comprise the hope of that Church, but this is not believed even by those who advocate the position of Acts thirteen which we reject. The Apostle makes it clear that the dispensation of the Mystery was revealed and entrusted to him when he became the prisoner of the Lord. This, coinciding with the dismissal of Israel at Acts twenty-eight, and followed in a few years by the destruction of Jerusalem, shows that nowhere else in the New Testament can be found a moment that so fully fulfils all the Scriptural conditions as Acts twenty-eight as the dispensational boundary.

#### THE DOCTRINAL FOUNDATION AND THE DISPENSATIONAL SUPER-STRUCTURE.

In conclusion, we draw attention to the need to distinguish between Doctrine, which is the Foundation and does not change with the advent of Dispensational alterations. The words "For all have sinned" are as true after Acts twenty-eight as before, but the calling and sphere of blessing has changed.

This difference is clearly observed in Romans three and a consideration of this will be a fit conclusion to this study.

#### ROMANS 3:1-9.

##### (1) DISPENSATIONAL ADVANTAGE

"What *advantage* then hath the Jew?"

"What *profit* is there of circumcision?"

MUCH EVERY WAY.

Remember this question and answer was written by Paul a long time after Acts thirteen.

##### (2) DOCTRINAL EQUALITY.

"What then, are we *better* than they?"

NO, IN NO WISE.

To oppose the distinctive dispensational teaching of Ephesians by calling attention to the similarity of basic doctrine is just muddled thinking. We have repeatedly declared that the doctrine of the epistle to the Romans underlies the calling of Ephesians. It is the superstructure erected since the defection of Israel that contains the revelation of things entirely new. We need BOTH Acts thirteen, the silver side of the shield to give us our initial standing as sinners saved by grace, and the golden side of the shield, Acts twenty-eight, to show us the unique calling made known by the Lord's prisoner under the terms of the dispensation of the Mystery.

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