



REFORMED

— P A V I L I O N —

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 48

MARCH 7, 2026

*For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion:
in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me;
he shall set me up upon a rock.*

—Psalm 27:5

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Editor: Rev. Andrew Lanning
From the Ramparts Editor: Dewey Engelsma

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Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even: and with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil; and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering. And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD. This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee.

—Exodus 29:38–42

The Morning and Evening Sacrifices

The children of Israel woke up every morning to the sights and sounds and smells of the morning sacrifice being offered. What sights—a spotless lamb of a year old being slain. What sounds—the sizzle of the flesh over the coals of the altar. What smells—the roasting meat, the baking bread, and the sweet wine. It was a lovely scene for God’s people to wake up to morning by morning.

What made the morning sacrifice so lovely was not the homey and pleasing routine. Rather, the morning sacrifice was lovely because of its message to sinners. For the children of Israel were sinners. They carried their sinful flesh with them into their beds. They wandered far from God in their dreams, their sleepless fears, their multitudes of thoughts. Then came the morning. What would become of such sinners as the children of Israel? Would their God have departed from them during the night, as they had departed from him? What a relief to hear the voices of the priests preparing the morning lamb, to smell the sweet savor of the wholesome meal, to see the lamb upon the altar. For the morning sacrifice was God’s testimony to his sinful people that all their sins of the night were covered in the blood of the lamb. Their God had not forsaken them but had saved them and forgiven them and blessed them.

The children of Israel went to bed every night to the sights and sounds and smells of the evening sacrifice being offered. What sights—a spotless lamb of a year old being slain. What sounds—the sizzle of the flesh over the coals of the altar. What smells—the roasting meat, the baking bread, and the sweet wine. It was a lovely scene for God’s people to go to bed to evening by evening.

What made the evening sacrifice so lovely was its message to sinners. For the children of Israel had carried their sinful flesh into all the activities of their day. They had prayed in sin. They had worked in sin. They had eaten and drunk in sin. They had lived in their tents in the wilderness in sin. They had spoken to their neighbors in sin. Even their righteousnesses were filthy rags. Then came the night. What would become of such sinners as the children of Israel? Would their God break them in their sleep, as they had broken his law during the day? What a relief to hear the voices of the priests preparing the evening lamb, to smell the sweet savor of the wholesome meal, to see the lamb upon the altar. For the evening sacrifice was God’s testimony to his sinful people that all their sins of the day were covered in the blood of the lamb. Their God would not break them but had saved them and forgiven them and blessed them.

By faith can you see in the morning and evening sacrifices the Lord Jesus Christ? For his suffering and death are the fulfillment of the morning and evening sacrifices.

And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. (Heb. 10:11–12)

Because of Jesus' one sacrifice, morning by morning we awake to the truth of the gospel that our sins of the night are covered in the lamb's blood. And evening by evening we lie down to the truth of the gospel that our sins of the day are covered in the lamb's blood. What a sight is the lamb of God for sinners! And what a sound is his gospel for us!

—AL

HERMAN HOEKSEMA'S *BANNER* ARTICLES

The Banner

March 30, 1922

(pp. 197–198)

Our Doctrine by Rev. H. Hoeksema

Article CLII: The New King and His Kingdom: Prophecy and Israel's Restoration (continued)

“But ye have come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem****.”—Heb. 12:22

The testimony of the New Testament, then, as we have seen, is plainly contrary to the expectation of those interpreters of Holy Writ who look forward to a literal reestablishment of the kingdom of the Jews with their old institutions and forms of worship in the land of Canaan. He does, however, teach the very opposite, especially in many of his parables. And he emphasizes that the kingdom he came to establish is not of this world, but from above. The same is true of the teachings of the apostles. They speak of Israel, indeed, but not as if a special future were in store for them, in distinction from that of the Church. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, one salvation is prepared for them both, and through this one salvation all Israel, from Jew and Gentile both, shall be saved. And lastly, we found that also the much discussed passage in Rev. 7 does not refer to a literal restoration of the Jewish nation. For the sealed ones mentioned in that passage do not signify Israel as a nation, but the spiritual Israel; who must pass through tribulation in this world,

are in the midst of tribulation safeguarded by the seal of the living God on their foreheads and thus pass on to glory everlasting, where they shall constitute an innumerable multitude, praising God for the salvation prepared for them from before the foundation of the world. No, it cannot be asserted, in the face of candid exegesis, that the New Testament speaks at all of a literal restoration of the Jewish people.

And it is for this reason mainly, that we do not believe that the prophecies of the Old Testament can contain anything at all that would compel us to believe in such a literal restoration. It is impossible for us to enter into an explanation of all the prophecies that have been quoted as referring to a literal reestablishment of the old economy. Neither is this necessary. The great principle on which we differ essentially from those who hold to such a literal reading of the prophecies of the Old Testament must be clearly discerned, and this will prove sufficient for our purpose. This great principle is that these literal interpreters have no eye for the gradual, ever advancing, organic development of the kingdom and covenant in the world, and, for that reason, cannot

admit that the prophecies of the Old Testament must be read in the light of the interpretation of the New Testament. These two stand and fall together. If we understand that the cause of God's Kingdom, always essentially the same, develops organically in the world, we will have no difficulty to see that the New Testament uses the very same terms frequently that are employed in the Old Testament, yet always with the new meaning they have gained in the new dispensation. But if we deny the former, we must naturally deny also the latter.

Now, it is very plain from the New Testament itself that it means to give new significance, a significance that is entirely in harmony with the higher development of the new dispensation, to Old Testament terms. It is by no means an arbitrary method of interpretation, imposed by spiritualistic interpreters upon the prophecies of the Old Testament when they refuse to take them literally. The New Testament is their teacher and example here. This is plain if we consider the following.

The New Testament speaks repeatedly in terms derived from the old dispensation. It is not thus, that in the New Testament we never read of Israel, Jerusalem, Mount Zion, the temple, circumcision, the children of Abraham, the throne and tabernacle of David, Babylon, etc. If such were the case we might find some basis for the belief that in the new dispensation something entirely new is started, a new people, a new body, a new kingdom; and that the Lord, after this new people has been gathered, and this new body has been completed, will turn again to his people of old, and restore the old economy of the Jews. But this is not the case. The New Testament speaks repeatedly of all these things. Jerusalem is not gone. Essentially Jerusalem is not destroyed. On the contrary, it is still in existence. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews tells us: "But ye are come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." The meaning is that the people of the new dispensation enjoy greater privileges than those of the old. They are privileged to be born and to live under

a brighter, further advanced, more highly developed dispensation of God's grace than the people of Israel in the old dispensation. The latter had not come to Mount Zion—only to a shadow of it; they had not come to the city of the living God and the heavenly Jerusalem. But in the new dispensation we have come to real Jerusalem. At any rate, Jerusalem is still there. It is not gone. It has not been destroyed. It is indestructible. The same is true of the Israelites, of the children of Abraham. For: "He is not a Jew, who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God" (Rom. 2:28, 29). And who are these Jews, which are Jews inwardly and, therefore, in reality? "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are children of Abraham" (Gal. 3:7). It is not thus, therefore, that the Jews are no more. No, they are still in the world. They are everywhere. Scripture plainly teaches that there are children of Abraham in the new dispensation. They have not been destroyed. The true Israel still exists and cannot be exterminated. They are eternal. And thus it is with circumcision. Also circumcision is still present with us. The people of Israel, the seed of Abraham in the new dispensation, that have come to the city of the living God, to Mount Zion, these are also circumcised. For the apostle writes: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Col. 2:11, 12). The same is true of many other things. The tabernacle of David is being rebuilt in the new dispensation. For we read (Acts 15:13–17): "And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written. After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen

down, and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up, that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.” The meaning is plain. The tabernacle of David is set up in the new dispensation. It was set up at the time James spoke the words quoted. And with a clear vision into the meaning of prophecy James perceives this. And now the Gentiles come to the tabernacle of David and seek after the Lord. Hence, the tabernacle of David is still in existence. Thus it is with the power of opposition. Also Babylon still exists. It is not as yet destroyed. It will not be destroyed till the very end of this world. It is the book of Revelation that in its very last part speaks of its final destruction. And, therefore, the New Testament surely speaks of Jerusalem and Babylon, of temple and tabernacle, of the reign of David and the raging of the nations against him, of passover and circumcision, of Israel and the seed of Abraham. Neither does it present the matter as if all these are to be restored in some future time, but as being present with us, all through the new dispensation.

But the question arises: How must this be explained? Surely, the city of Jerusalem is no more. It was laid in ruins. The old power of Babylon is no more in existence. It was superseded by the Persian world-power. Babylon as a city is a heap of ruins. Temple and altar in the literal sense are of the past, circumcision belongs distinctly to the old dispensation, and the children of Abraham are dispersed all over the world and of no significance as a nation. How is it possible that while these have had their day and are no more that the New Testament can speak of them as being present with us, and of being with us in a more real sense than they existed in the old dispensation?

That is the question that must be answered.

There is but one answer possible.

All these existed in some form in the old dispensation. Jerusalem existed as a city made with hands in the days of the Old Testament. Israel existed as a nation in the old dispensation. Babylon once was a literal city, a literal world-power opposing the Kingdom of God. The temple was once a building of wood and stone. The throne of David was once an earthly throne. But these outward forms were but shadows of the reality. The essence of Jerusalem is not the city of brick and stone, the earthly city. The essence of the throne of David is not its earthly form. The essence of the temple is not its visible manifestation in tangible form in Jerusalem. The essence of Israel is not its national existence or its being born as children of Abraham according to the flesh. All these belonged to the outward forms of the old dispensation. It was in these forms that the Kingdom of God then appeared in the world. These outward forms crumbled into ruins, were destroyed. But only to give place to a higher development and manifestation of the reality of things. Jerusalem still is, but it is the spiritual church of the New Testament. Babylon still exists, but, like Jerusalem, it has become universal and international. It is no more a city, though it is still the power of opposition that antagonizes the Kingdom of God. The reality of the temple, of the throne of David, of circumcision, of the children of Abraham, of all these still exists, but the outward forms of the old dispensation have been replaced by new and better forms. We have now reached a higher and better stage of development of the Kingdom of God. And, it is for this reason that the New Testament can speak of all these things as really existing, even though all the forms that belonged to the old dispensation have disappeared.

—Grand Rapids, Mich.

