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No. 1216.

THE OLD JERUSALEM GOSPEL RESTORED



LAMONI, IOWA

Published by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

The Old Jerusalem Gospel Restored

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While divers creeds and doctrines of men are being preached throughout the world, honest-hearted men and women everywhere are longing, and their souls yearning, for the truth as Jesus and his disciples taught it; and while they pant for a refreshing drink from the fountain of the "water of life" at which disciples of olden time were so freely filled, their eager hearts are again and again disappointed by the mirage—seemingly so real—which the delusive theories of men present before them.

To such this message is addressed with confidence, nay, with certainty, that if they will step out into the sunlight of God's love by obeying the gospel as taught by those whom he has sent to proclaim it, as found in his word, their hungry souls will be fed, and their drooping spirits refreshed by that heavenly power which the followers of Christ in ancient time enjoyed.

In order to receive the promises of the Savior, it is necessary to observe the things he taught, for Jesus says:

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him.
—John 14: 21.

Those who do not so observe shall finally be judged by them, for Jesus says again in John 12: 48:

He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

With feelings of reverence we examine the sacred word, earnestly praying for divine guidance into that truth of which the Savior said:

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

Isaiah (55: 4) says of the Savior:

I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander.

By this we understand that as a witness, we are to believe that of which he testifies; as a leader, follow where he leads; and as a commander, obey him. And as he said to his disciples, in John 20: 21, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you," it is clearly to be understood that we are to obey and accept their words as from him; especially as he says:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.—John 13: 20.

The first work Jesus did as a witness, leader, and commander, is recorded in Mark 1: 9, 14, wherein we are told he was "baptized of John in Jordan," and "came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God," commanding them to "repent" and "believe the gospel." Afterwards he commands his disciples to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name [by the authority] of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"; and in order to for ever settle the question as to how long his commandments should be taught and observed without changing them, he says:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.—Matthew 28: 19, 20.

This is equivalent to saying that he would not be with those who did not observe "all things whatsoever" he had commanded them; or, as recorded in 2 John 9:

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

By this we see how necessary it is that we observe the teaching or doctrine of Jesus and those whom he authorized to represent him, in order to receive the presence of Christ and the gift of the Holy Ghost, for it is stated in 1 John 5:7 that the "Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost," "are one." Hence we must receive the Word in order to receive that great Unity.

We now examine that important subject which Jesus came to present to the world; namely, "The gospel of the kingdom."

The word *gospel* is from the Greek, *euaggelion* meaning "good news," "tidings," "word," by which we understand it was the tidings of a kingdom Jesus preached to them; hence comes the timely question, Of what does that kingdom consist? Some have supposed it to exist in the hearts of men; but this idea is an erroneous one, as we shall show from the scripture from which such belief is obtained, which is found in Luke 17: 20, 21, as follows:

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Let us first notice that at this time Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees, of whom he said:

Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.—Luke 12: 1.

Surely the "kingdom" could not exist in the hearts of hypocrites. The margin of the common teacher's Bible translates this passage, "among you"; which shows that while the Pharisees were expecting something future from their time, the kingdom was already among them as it existed in the organization known as the kingdom or church of Christ. As proof that this was an organized body into which men could enter, we read in Colossians 1:13, that the Father "hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." And verse 18 says, "He is the head of the body, the church;" and finally the Savior says:

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God.

This should be sufficient to make plain the truth that by obedience the kingdom could be, and was, entered "into," and that Christ is the head; or the "government shall be upon his shoulder."—Isaiah 9: 6. Paul says of this organization in 1 Corinthians 12: 28,

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

If God set these in his church, can those churches which do not have these officers and gifts be his? No! for Paul says (Ephesians 4: 5, 6,) there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." That is, only one true Lord, one true faith, one true baptism, etc., though there may be many false ones. In Matthew 10: 2 we find the names of the first apostles Jesus chose, and we learn that they numbered twelve. Afterwards others were chosen to fill the places made vacant by death or transgression, as in the case of Judas Iscariot. For proof, see Acts 1: 26, which records the selection of Matthias as an apostle; and Acts 13: 2, where Paul and Barnabas were called and ordained to the office of apostle, as Acts 14: 14 plainly says; also Galatians 1: 19, showing James the Lord's brother to have been an apostle.

We now turn our attention to Ephesians 4: 12, wherein we are told what these officers were for; namely, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Can the ministry work, the body be edified, and the saints perfected without these officers in the church to-day? especially as the very object of them is, as Paul says in the fourteenth verse:

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.

Instead of keeping and abiding in this doctrine, the world to-day has substituted the "commandments of men," with the result that every wind of doctrine is preached, instead of

that truth which Christ said would sanctify. It was understood by Paul that this order of things was to be continued after his time:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.—Ephesians 4: 13.

Instead of now having first apostles, secondarily prophets, we have first ministers or pastors, secondarily deacons; with the result of arriving at division, emptiness, and ignorance of Christ, instead of the unity, knowledge, and fullness of him. Stop and consider if this is not too painfully true. As it is true, there is a great necessity for the ministry to work. The church still needs edifying, and the saints perfecting. Why not use the means God has ordained for this end, seeing men have in their own wisdom failed to accomplish it, but are further from it than when they began.

Other officers were also chosen and placed in the church in ancient time, of which were seventies (Luke 10: 1); elders (Acts 14: 23); bishops and deacons (Philippians 1: 1); besides evangelists, pastors, and teachers, named in Ephesians 4: 11; that all, "working in the measure of every part," might make "increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Ephesians 4: 16.)

Having shown what kind of officers were set in the church of Christ, we next examine that faith or doctrine of which Paul commanded:

Continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.—1 Timothy 4: 16.

These are called by Paul the "principles of the doctrine of Christ," and the "foundation," and are named:

Repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.—Hebrews 6: 1, 2.

And after obeying and receiving these, Paul tells us to "go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation"; but "add to your faith virtue," etc. (2 Peter 1: 5.)

Of faith it would seem to be unnecessary to write, were it not that we believe that which passes as such in the world is not faith; for Paul says, "Faith is the substance [assurance] of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11: 1); while the world believes many things of which there is no evidence, and rejects many of which there is proof. Paul also says (Romans 10: 17), "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," while the world believes much that is not in accordance with the word of God, and consequently can not be true faith; for faith being a gift of God, it follows that he bestows it only inasmuch as we exercise it toward the truth; and Jesus said to God, "Thy word is truth."

There is also a means ordained of God for hearing in harmony with his word, as expressed in 1 Corinthians 1: 21, that as "the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe"; and in Romans 10: 15 Paul says, "How shall they preach except they be sent?" making it evident that Paul did not believe that man should attempt to represent God unless God had sent him, and as expressed in Hebrews 5: 4, "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron"; although he evidently knew that in the last days some would take "this honor" in a far different manner, for he says:

The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.—2 Timothy 4: 3, 4.

As "without faith it is impossible to please" God, so also, "faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." (James 2: 17.) Or in other words, we must manifest our faith in God by obeying his commands.

What shall we do? was the question asked and answered more than eighteen hundred years ago at Pentecost, when Peter said:

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.—Acts 2: 38.

What is it to repent? is answered again by Peter in the command to “be converted, that your sins may be blotted out,” and is further explained by Isaiah 55: 7:

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

After which we are ready to obey the words of Ananias:

And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.—Acts 22: 16. (See 1 Peter 3: 21; Luke 7: 30; Romans 6: 4; Colossians 2: 12.)

But, you ask, What is the nature of this “gift of the Holy Ghost,” which is promised to those who obey? How was it given in ancient time?

This is explained by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12: 7-10, where he says the manifestation of the Spirit is for every man, and is given in the gifts of healing, working miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues, and Mark (16: 17) says:

These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

And in Acts 8: 17, 18, and 19: 6 we are told that by “laying on of hands” the Holy Spirit was given, and they “spake in tongues and prophesied.” What a rich endowment of Christ to his church is shown, and how strangely it contrasts with those of to-day, when men here and there are exclaiming, “We do not believe they are for us!” But Paul says:

What if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid.—Romans 3: 3, 4.

The next “foundation principle” is the resurrection of both “just and unjust,” as taught in John 5: 28, 29 and Acts 24: 15.

(See 1 Corinthians 15: 22, 41; Ezekiel 37: 5; Job 19: 26.)
Of the just we read:

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.—Revelation 20: 6.

Where shall they reign? Revelation 5: 10 answers:

We shall reign on the earth.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.—Matthew 5: 5.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.—Matthew 6: 10.

The unjust, however, will not be permitted to enjoy this reign with heaven's own Teacher in the midst:

But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were ended.—Revelation 20: 5.

Of this time we read:

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; . . . and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.—Revelation 20: 12, 13.

And Jesus says those who reject him shall be judged by his word, "in the last day." How necessary, then, that we believe and obey the gospel of Christ, "in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins," by which means our sins, "going before to judgment" (1 Timothy 5: 24), and we in him, becoming "new creatures," shall be like him when he appears, and reign with him. On, through endless ages of eternity, when the first heaven and earth having passed away, shall be replaced by the new, with "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor pain," in that holy city, lightened with the glory of God, the Saints shall dwell eternally with him. (Revelation 21.)

This is the gospel which Paul said "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and which Jesus said "shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24: 14), and which was to be restored in the last days, or hour of

God's judgment, by an angel, as described by John in Revelation 14: 6, 7, and by Isaiah as a "marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid" (29: 14); in a day when prophets should be done away among the people, and they draw near with lip service, but not with their hearts, and their fear of God be taught by the precepts of men (29: 10-13); and only a "very little while" before Lebanon (Palestine) should be restored to its fruitfulness (verse 17). In 1830 the church of Christ was organized, and the gospel was restored with apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and the other officers named in the Scriptures; also the principles of the gospel before mentioned were again taught, and the believers received the gift of the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands by men called of God by revelation as in ancient time. Palestine had been a barren land since the Jews were dispersed after the crucifixion of Christ; but very few, possibly less than a thousand Jews, were there in 1820 and scarcely more in 1830 when the gospel was restored; since then they have been gathering back and tilling the soil until there are now reported over two hundred thousand there, and the land has again begun to yield its fruits, thus fulfilling the promise to restore its fertility in a "little while" after the "marvelous work" should be brought forth. Isaiah foretold the scattering of the Jews, the barrenness of the land, and the time when the Spirit would again be given to men just before that land should be restored to a fruitful field. In chapter 32: 13-15, he says: "Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; . . . because the places shall be forsaken; . . . until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest."

Peter foretold the time when the refreshing of the Spirit should again be given in the last days, and the restitution of the gospel should come before the second coming of Christ. Acts 3: 19-21 says:

The times of refreshing shall come from the presence of

the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

How can there be a "restitution of all things" if the officers, doctrine, and gifts of the gospel, be not restored? This gospel was to be the one preached at the end of the world as a witness of the coming of Christ (Matthew 24: 14), who said: "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."—John 7: 16, 17.