

The Dispensational Keystone.

#1. An examination of objections to the teaching that Acts xxviii. is a dispensational boundary of the first importance. pp. 153 - 159

No reader of *The Berean Expositor* needs reminding that the keystone of the truth for which it stands is the last chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. With this contention the first number of the publication opened, and all the light that has subsequently been received on the great dispensational teaching of the New Testament has radiated from this epoch-making chapter of the Acts.

In perfect symmetry on either side of this keystone, are ranged the fourteen epistles of Paul, and across the arch can be written the three statements, "The Jew Prominent", which is true of the early ministry of the Apostle, "The Jew Absent", which is most obviously true of his later ministry, and "The Jew Dismissed", which is the truth of Acts xxviii. itself. These features we have visualized in the following diagram, which also indicates further features of the two ministries associated with the two sets of epistles.

- - - I l l u s t r a t i o n - - - (BE-XXXIII.153).

The primary reason for reopening this question is the necessity which has arisen to deal with an objection that has been made by a reader and fellow-student of the Word. The dispensational importance of Acts xxviii. has been challenged, and the statement has been made, that the dismissal of the Jew in Acts xxviii. is "local" and neither "national nor final".

By a "local" dismissal we understand such a turning from the Jew as is recorded in Acts xiii. 44-48, for in the opening verse of the next chapter we find the same apostle again entering a synagogue, with the result that "a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed" (Acts xiv. 1). Acts xiii. and xiv. have a dispensational importance in that they,

- (1) *Prefigure* the national blindness which has since settled upon all Israel (Acts xiii. 11).
- (2) The related salvation of the Gentile (Acts xiii. 12).
- (3) The warning of impending judgment (Acts xiii. 40, 41).
- (4) The close association of "Paul" with the Gentiles (Acts xiii. 9).
- (5) The opening of the door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts xiv. 27).
- (6) The recognition that the Jew was "first" (Acts xiii. 46).

In Acts xxviii. the prefigured blindness fell (Acts xxviii. 25-27). Consequently, for the first time, the salvation of God was sent to the Gentile without the mediation of the Jew. Here in this chapter the hope of Israel comes to a temporary end; here the impending judgment falls, and from this time, the Jew passes from the scene; his covenants, promises, and hope are suspended, a mystery is made known, and a newly-created "New Man" takes the foremost place.

The history and fortunes of the people of Israel are very closely associated with their city and temple. This can be seen by reference to the structure set out in Volume XXIX, page 208, where every reference to "The house of God" in the O.T. is recorded, together with a most perfect structure of Israel's spiritual history, drawn from the books of Chronicles.

In A.D.70 Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple razed to the ground. Titus ordered his soldiers to dig up the foundations of the temple and the city, and Terentius Rufus, who was left in command, actually ploughed up the site of the temple, thus unwittingly fulfilling the prophecies of Micah and of the Saviour:

"Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps" (Micah iii. 12).

"Your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. xxiii. 38).

"There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matt. xxiv. 2).

It can, we trust, be assumed without further evidence that the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D.70 (forty years after the crucifixion) was not merely a "local" incident, but that it was "national" and "final".

The date of Acts xxviii. is given in the notes of the A.V. as A.D.63. The chronology of the Acts is discussed and exhibited in our work entitled "The Apostle of the Reconciliation", pages 13-20, and is too complicated a theme to be reconsidered here. The question as to the date of Acts xxviii., however, does not arise; we merely indicate that it is very near to the national calamity that has made Israel *lo-ammi*, "not My people", for the past nineteen centuries.

The "dismissal" of Israel pronounced with such solemnity in Acts xxviii., and the dismissal of Israel pronounced with equal gravity in Matt. xiii., xxiii., xxiv. are related to one another as *de jure* is to *de facto*. Often a period intervenes between the sentence as pronounced and the sentence as executed. Moreover, there are occasions when an appeal or an extension of leniency may interpose, which, to the uninstructed, may appear to nullify the original sentence. So in the case in point we hope to show from the Scriptures that the following are the facts:

- (1) The "dismissal" of Israel was the putting into effect the long threatened "divorcement" of that people.
- (2) The dismissal *de jure* took place during the Saviour's public ministry.
- (3) A stay of execution was granted, and a second appeal made at Pentecost.

- (4) The dismissal, however, became *de facto* at Acts xxviii. where the Jew of the dispersion is seen to manifest the same unbelief and unrepentance as was manifested by the Jew in the land.
- (5) That the immediate consequence of Israel's failure, both in Matt. xi.-xiii., and in Acts xxviii., was to give prominence to the Gentile, to introduce a "mystery" and fulfil Isa. vi. 9, 10.
- (6) That the dismissal of Israel received its seal at the destruction of the Temple in A.D.70, and
- (7) That the prison ministry of the apostle Paul was a ministry intended to bridge the gulf between the dispensation that closed with Israel's rejection and opened with the dispensation of the mystery.

If we can justify these seven assertions from Scripture, we can settle at once the question as to whether the dismissal of the Jew in Acts xxviii. was "local" or "national".

(1) *The "dismissal" of Israel was the "divorcement" of that people.*—It is common knowledge with students of prophecy that the figure of divorce is used of Israel's *lo-ammi* condition, even as the receiving back of an erring wife is the figure used of Israel's restoration to divine favour (Isa. i. 1; Jer. iii. 1-8; Ezek. xvi.; Isa. lxii.). The word translated "dismissed" (departed) in Acts xxviii. 15 is *apoluo*, which, while meaning to release, or to let go generally, is used specifically for "divorcement" fifteen times in the N.T.

"He was minded to put her away privately" (Matt. i. 19).

"Whosoever shall put away his wife" (Matt. v. 31, 32).

"Shall marry her that is divorced" (Matt. v. 32).

These are the first four occurrences of *apoluo* in the N.T. In view of this common usage of the word the significance of its choice for use in the passage in question is unmistakable.

(2) *The dismissal de jure took place during the Lord's public ministry.*—The rejection of Israel hinged upon Israel's rejection of Christ: "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers" (Matt. xxiii. 32).

The righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, "shall come upon this generation", said the Lord (Matt. xxiii. 34-36).

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. xxiii. 37-39).

"Fill ye up"; "This generation"; "Ye would not"; "Your house"; "Not henceforth".

No prophetic utterance in Scripture could be more explicit. The temple is no longer "My Father's house"; it had become "Your house". It was left "desolate", a word used of Judas Iscariot (Acts i. 20), and in another form of Babylon (Rev. xviii. 19), and of the

abomination of desolation (Matt. xxiv. 15). Luke records that the Saviour said, "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the *desolation* thereof is nigh", and that "the times of the Gentiles" were commensurate with the treading down of Jerusalem (Luke xxi. 20-24).

Israel is never considered as under divine favour at the same time as "the days of vengeance" are upon them (Luke xxi. 22), and these days are associated with the destruction of Jerusalem and with the destruction of the temple (Matt. xxiv. 1, 2).

(3) *At Pentecost a stay of execution was granted, and a second appeal made.*—The prayer from the cross, "Father, forgive them", was heard. The Apostles were bidden to tarry at Jerusalem until endued with power from on high, and then to preach once again to this same people. The answer of the Lord to the Apostles' question, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts i. 6) showed that He knew that the extended period of mercy would not bring about Israel's repentance, and with the stoning of Stephen and the call and commission of Paul, preparation began to be made for a new dispensation, on new conditions, that would be consequent upon Israel's rejection, and which would demand a further revelation and a different ministry.

(4) *The dismissal de facto.*—The sentence pronounced in Matt. xxiii., and postponed during the years covered by the Acts during which the Lord said, "All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Rom. x. 21), became *de facto* after the Apostle had held his all day conference with the leaders of the Jews in Rome. The period of leniency covered by the Acts, simply revealed that these Jews of the dispersion manifested the same hardness of heart that had characterized the Jews in Palestine.

". . . . the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" (I Thess. ii. 14-16).

Why does Luke end the record of the Acts with the words "No man forbidding him"? Because the Jew had now been removed from the scene and, under the persecution against them that was about to commence, their hindrance of the evangelization of the Gentiles would no longer be possible.

(5) *The immediate consequence of Israel's failure, both in Matt. xi.-xiii. and in Acts xxviii. was to give prominence to the Gentile, introduce a "mystery" and fulfil Isa. vi. 9, 10.*—The miracles wrought by Christ should have led Israel to repentance (Matt. xi. 20-24), but instead, though greater than prophet, priest and king (Matt. xii. 6, 41, 42), the Lord stood rejected by them. In Matt. xii., for the first time in that Gospel, the Gentile comes into prominence and favour, introduced by a quotation from Isa. xlii. 1-4. In Matt. xiii. (even as in parallel circumstances—in Acts xiii.—the Apostle quoted the same passage) the kingdom of heaven enters what can be called its "mystery" phase (Matt. xiii. 11). This mystery is associated with a period called "from the foundation of the world" (Matt. xiii. 35). Many prophets and righteous men had

desired to see these things, but had not (Matt. xiii. 17), and in Israel, at that time and in these circumstances, was fulfilled the saying of Isa. vi. 9, 10 (Matt. xiii. 13-15).

Reference to the fulfillment of prophecy in Matthew's Gospel is usually introduced by the phrase, "That it might be fulfilled", using the Greek word *pleroo*. This is so in Matt. xiii. 35, but in verse 14 of the same chapter, where Christ said, "In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah", He departs from this custom and uses the intenser form *anapleroo*, the only occurrence of the word in the four Gospels. It is this word that is used by Paul in the passage which we have already quoted, namely, "To fill up their sins away" (I Thess. ii. 16).

No word could more definitely indicate that this prophecy was at that time completely, nationally, and finally fulfilled. When we come to Acts xxviii. 1-9, again we find miracles that included the taking up of serpents and the laying on of the hands on the sick, as in Mark xvi. 18, the turning to the Gentile (Acts xxviii. 28), a ministry of the mystery (Eph. iii. 13; Col. i. 23-27), which mystery went back to a period known as "*before* the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 4), a subject which in other ages had not been made known as it had now been revealed (Eph. iii. 5), and all this confirmed by the selfsame quotation from Isa. vi. 9, 10.

There are two points concerning the quotation that must be considered, and their importance recognized.

- (a) The quotation made both by our Lord and by Paul in Matt. xiii. and in Acts xxviii., differs in certain, but the same, respects, from the LXX version, i.e., Paul *repeats* word for word the quotation as it is found in Matt. xiii. Paul was indeed repeating, verbally, the doom pronounced by the Lord before His crucifixion on this same generation.
- (b) The use of the word *anapleroo*, in Matt. xiii. indicated that, then and there, the terrible condition prophesied by Isaiah had come to pass. In repeating this passage Paul does not say that it was "fulfilled", but only, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers", and it is noteworthy that in John xii., where Isa. vi. 9, 10 is once more quoted, the word "fulfilled" is again omitted, the blindness exhibited by Israel being the result of a foretold blindness already finding its fulfillment in them: "Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes", etc. (John xii. 39, 40). Isa. vi. 9, 10, while repeated in Acts xxviii., was really fulfilled in Matt. xiii.

(6) *The dismissal of Israel received its seal at the destruction of the Temple in A.D.70.*—The desolation, both of the temple and the city, had been foretold by Christ, and in it was summed up Israel's rejection. Within a few years of the last chapter of the Acts this judgment fell, and the days of Israel's opportunity and hope closed until the future awakening comes, when "All Israel shall be saved".

(7) *The prison ministry of the apostle Paul bridges the gulf between the dispensation closing with Israel's rejection and the opening with the dispensation of the mystery.*—The "prison ministry" of the Apostle, which covers the "two whole years" of Acts xxviii. 30, 31, is contained in those epistles where he is found to be "The prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles", namely, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon

and II Timothy. The ministry there in exercise was given “for the perfecting” (the re-adjusting [*katartismos*], see Matt. iv. 21, “mending”; Gal. vi. 1, “restore”) “of the saint”, until all should arrive at the unity of the faith, the perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. iv. 12, 13), words utterly foreign to any promise made before Acts xxviii.

If these things (Nos.1-7 above) are so (and chapter and verse have been given for each point discussed), then we must reach the conclusion that the dismissal of the Jew at Acts xxviii. is *national* and *final*, that the present dispensation intervenes as a foreknown parenthesis in the purpose of the ages; that Israel and Israel’s hope are in abeyance; that a calling, constitution and sphere related to a “mystery” is here made known for the first time; that neither the covenants nor the promises nor the miracles belonging to Israel are functioning to-day, and that they are superseded by an entirely new set of conditions opened to the far-off Gentiles; a salvation and a calling of such amazing grace that it would be unbelievable were it not written in these epistles of Paul the prisoner, given by inspiration of God.

If Acts xxviii. is the dispensational boundary, if it is national and final, then we have no need to go into all the side issues that have been or can be raised. But if Acts xxviii. be, after all, “local”; if the hope of Israel extended beyond this chapter; if the ploughing of the site of the Temple be not the judgment threatened in Matt. xxiii. and xxiv.; if the olive tree of Israel still stands; if Gentiles believers are still grafted in as wild olive branches; then all that has been brought out of the epistles of the mystery in these pages becomes an empty dream; we are found false witnesses of God; our preaching is vain; the words “far above all” and “seated together” are emptied of significance; the mystery, instead of being a secret hid in God, has been known as far back as the call of Abraham; the “one new man” instead of being so “created” (*ktizo*) (Eph. ii. 15), is but an evolution from the conditions of the Acts; the unique reference to a period “before the foundation of the world” has no special significance; the equally unique phrase, “in heavenly places”, is nothing more than a reference to Israel’s “heavenly calling”; the unique equality indicated by the word *sussoma*, “the same body”, or a “joint body”—the outcome of that gospel whereof Paul was made a minister—means nothing more than we could have learned by reading Gal. iii. 28, 29; the three distinct “adoptions” (Rom. ix. 1-5; Gal. iv. 5 and Rom. viii. 23 and Eph. i. 4, 5) are merged and spoiled, and there is nothing left for us but to repent, to confess to colossal failure, and to stand discredited.

From time to time we have in these pages acknowledged the pioneer’s liability to mistake and have retraced our steps; and this we will do again, should truth so demand, but the theme, “Acts xxviii. the Dispensational Boundary”, which opened our ministry in The Berean Expositor in 1909; has been before the reader for these thirty-seven years; has been examined and re-examined, and challenged but never refuted. We have again re-considered its claims, and return to our ministry with strengthened conviction that in this matter we have the truth of God. This being so, questions as to the relationship of Ephesians with Hebrews and similar arguments, do not arise. They can

only be admitted by those who do not perceive Acts xxviii. as the great boundary for this dispensation.

We are exceedingly sorry to forfeit the fellowship or regard of any believer in Christ, but we must not allow these things “to move us” but, with or without such fellowship, we must pursue the course before us, remain true to the good deposit entrusted, and leave the final arbitrament to the Lord in “that day”.

**#2. An examination of the suggestion
that the epistle to the Hebrews contains
what has been called “Ephesian truth”.
pp. 173 - 177**

In the course of correspondence with one reader of this magazine, he put forward the following parallels between Hebrews and Ephesians, with the appended comment.

| <i>Hebrews.</i> | <i>Ephesians.</i> |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| vi. 17. Heirs. | iii. 6. Joint Heirs. |
| xiii. 3. Body. | iii. 6. Joint Body. |
| iii. 1. Partakers. | iii. 6. Joint Partakers. |

“The mystery then appeared to me in quite a new understanding. Acts xxviii. would not then necessarily mean a new sphere of blessing in locality, but in jointness with Israel. After all Heb. iii. 1 ‘heavenly calling’ is I understand the same word as is used in Eph. i. 3. In going through Hebrews these points seemed to stand out. Heb. iii. 1 ‘The calling’; iv. 14 ‘passed through (R.V.) the heavens’; ix. 12 ‘entered into the holy place’; x. 12 ‘sat down on the right hand of God’. It was just like reading Ephesians to me, but one thing more was wanted, and x. 19 seemed to seal the whole question, ‘boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus’. I felt at once, This is Ephesian truth.”

It must first be remembered that much turns on what we mean by “Ephesian truth”. For instance, the glorious fact that Christ ascended and sat down at the right hand of God, is not “Ephesian truth”. It is a fact, but a fact which would remain had the mystery never been made known. Boldness of access into the holiest by the blood of Jesus is not “Ephesian truth”, but a truth foreshadowed in type and symbol by the Holy Ghost, until the times of reformation, and is consequent upon the finished work and one sacrifice of Christ, not upon any revelation of the mystery. By “Ephesian truth”, if we mean anything, we must mean some peculiar revelation of truth found in Ephesians and nowhere else.

Now, upon reading through Hebrews, our brother was struck by certain expressions in it similar to others in Ephesians, and says, “I felt at once, This is Ephesian truth”. Let us give this matter our attention, for the hope of our calling is involved.

Heb. vi. 17 is said to be “Ephesian truth”. Let us see if this can be substantiated.

“For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, he swore by Himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee, and so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise” (Heb. vi. 13-15).

These are the words that introduce the first similarity named, the “heirs” of Heb. vi. 17. The reference in Heb. vi. is to Gen. xxii., where, after Abraham had manifested the reality of his faith in the offering of Isaac, the Lord intervened saying, “By Myself have I sworn”. The Apostle did not quote the whole of Gen. xxii. 16-18 for he was writing to Hebrews, who were thoroughly familiar with the context of the passage and the inheritance that was in view. To-day, however, it seems that it is necessary to quote the remainder of the passage. It is as follows:

“I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Gen. xxii. 16-18).

Now “Ephesian truth” is directly connected with an election that took place “before the foundation of the world”, and with the revelation of a “mystery” which had been hid in God and not made known until the defection of Israel at Acts xxviii. These things being so, the attempt to link the “heirs” of Heb. vi. 17 with those of Eph. iii. 6 is a palpable error.

Let us take the next similarity, “The Body” (Heb. xiii. 3).

“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.”

The way in which this verse is written is reminiscent of the correspondence and expansion so characteristic of Hebrew poetry. It can be set out thus:--

A | Those that are in bonds.
B | As bound with them.
A | Those which suffer adversity.
B | As being yourselves in the body.

That there is no reference here to “the church which is His body” is evident from the Syriac version which renders the passage, “As men who are clothed with the flesh”. Dr. Weymouth’s translation is, “For yourselves are still in the body”. Paul uses the phrase, “in the body”, to indicate the present life in the flesh, in II Chron. iv. 10; v. 10 and xii. 2, and we might just as well see “Ephesian truth” in these references to “the body” as in Heb. xiii. 3, “which”, as Euclid would say, “is absurd”.

The third similarity is Heb. iii. 1, where the word “partakers” is linked with Eph. iii. 6. If there is one thing that is distinctive of Ephesian truth, it is the overwhelming grace that makes the calling there revealed absolutely sure; completely

removed from “ifs” and “buts”. The word “partakers” in Eph. iii. 6 is specifically related to “His promise in Christ by the gospel, whereof I (Paul) was made a minister”, whereas the partaking of Heb. iii. is placed in a context that takes us back to the wilderness experiences of Israel, where it is definitely recorded that God was grieved with most of those who wandered the forty years in the wilderness. It is in this connection that the word “partaker” applies as we can see by the contingent statement, “For we are made partakers of Christ, *if* we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end” (Heb. iii. 14). Is *that* “Ephesian truth”?

Again, this same people are reminded that this failure to “go on unto perfection”, typified in the wilderness, is a truth for them to consider; the words are:

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made *partakers* of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, *if* they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance” (Heb. vi. 4-6).

Is *that* “Ephesian truth”?

It is abundantly evident that the mere occurrence of similar words in any two epistles does not necessarily make those two epistles teach the same calling, hope, or sphere of blessing. Let us therefore leave this very unsatisfactory method of arriving at truth, and let us compare the two epistles to discover where they are at one and where they diverge.

The epistle to the Hebrews opens with a reference to “The fathers” to whom God had spoken by the prophets (Heb. i. 1). These selfsame “fathers” “tempted” God in the wilderness (Heb. iii. 9). Is this “Ephesian truth”? It must not be objected that only selected portions of Hebrews are “Ephesian truth”; the whole comprises all its parts. We read of these “fathers” in Rom. ix. 5 where they are exclusive to “Israel according to the flesh”. No such reference is found in Ephesians; there “the fathers” are entirely out of place.

In Heb. i. there is great insistence upon “angels”. Do angels figure in Ephesian truth? They are found in I Corinthians and in II Thessalonians, where they are in entire harmony with the dispensational place of these epistles, but they are never mentioned in Ephesians. There, we read of “principalities and powers” being beneath the feet of Christ, but Peter, who was a minister of the circumcision, includes “angels” when he speaks of “principalities and powers” being beneath the Lord’s feet. This links Hebrews with the circumcision, but severs it from Ephesians. Angels are intimately associated with Israel, their hope, and their calling, consequently they have a prominent place in Hebrews. They are closely connected with the inheritance of this epistle, where, associated with the heavenly Jerusalem, we have an “innumerable company of angels” (Heb. xii. 22). Clearly this is not Ephesian truth.

Again, when the Apostle would stress the fact that the Saviour became man, he said, “For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him *the seed of Abraham*” (Heb. ii. 16). Inasmuch as Abraham is never mentioned in Ephesians, and that

it is to the Gentiles, as such, as aliens, that “Ephesian truth” is addressed, this limitation to the seed of Abraham in the epistle to the Hebrews cannot but indicate that that epistle does not contain or comprehend the distinctive calling of Ephesians: it would rather exclude the far-off Gentiles.

The zenith of Hebrews is in chapter x., where, in direct contrast with every other priest, Christ is said to have “*sat down*” (Heb. x. 12), but He sat down ALONE, and it is here, *where Hebrews ends, that Ephesian truth begins*, for in Eph. ii. the astounding revelation is made that the Gentile believer, under the terms of this new dispensation, is not only “raised up together, but made to *sit together* in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. ii. 6). THIS is Ephesian truth, a truth entirely foreign to the epistle to the Hebrews.

A great deal that it will not bear has been made of the word translated “the same body” in Eph. iii. 6. This passage is not the only one in Ephesians that uses the prefix “*sun*”, translated in that verse “fellow” heirs, and “same” body. Fourteen such combinations occur in that epistle, and it is impossible to attain to a true rendering of the three found in chapter iii. 6 if we ignore the remaining occurrences and their bearing upon the meaning intended by the Apostle.

Here are the passages, each one being consonant with the word that is sometimes translated “joint body” and which our correspondent would make to mean “joint body together with the members of the heavenly calling”.

- Eph. ii. 5 . . . *Suzoopoieo*, “quickened together” (“jointly quickened”).
- Eph. ii. 6 . . . *Sunegairo*, “raised together” (“jointly raised”).
- Eph. ii. 6 . . . *Sugkathizo*, “sit together” (“jointly seated”).
- Eph. ii. 19 . . . *Sumpolites*, “fellow citizens” (“joint citizens”).
- Eph. ii. 21 . . . *Sunarmologeomai*, “fitly framed together” (“jointly framed”).
- Eph. iv. 16 . . . - same - “fitly joined together” (“jointly framed”).
- Eph. ii. 22 . . . *Sunoikodomeomai*, “builded together” (“jointly builded”).
- Eph. iii. 6 . . . *Sugkleronomos*, “fellow heirs” (“joint heirs”).
- Eph. iii. 6 . . . *Sussoma*, “the same body” (“joint body”).
- Eph. iii. 6 . . . *Summetochos*, “partakers” (“joint partakers”).
- Eph. iii. 18 . . . *Sun katalambano*, “comprehend with” (“jointly comprehend”).
- Eph. iv. 3 . . . *Sundesmos*, “the bond” (“joint bond”).
- Eph. iv. 16 . . . *Sumbibazo*, “compactd” (“jointly knit”).
- Eph. v. 11 . . . *Sugkoinoneo*, “fellowship” (“joint holding”).

In the brackets we have retained the word “joint” or “jointly”, but we do not intend this as a serious interpretation. While it makes good sense in some passages, in others it is cumbersome. The great objection to using the term “a joint body” is that it tends to create in the mind the necessity of the presence of some other company of believers, in this case, for example, the heavenly calling of Heb. iii. 1, with which the members of the Body of Christ can be “joined”. Seeing, however, that the emphasis on the prefix *sun*, “together”, in the words listed from Ephesians, is not so much a union with some outside body, as a deep seated equality *within*, such an interpretation is an error. The words “fitly joined together” of Eph. iv. 16 can refer only to members within, not to any relationship without.

If there are very few actual parallels between Hebrews and Ephesians, the reverse is true when we compare Hebrews with Philippians. They are too numerous to set out here, and a review of them would occupy a whole article, but a selection will suffice.

The Parallels between and Philippians.

- (1) The same key words. “Perfection” or “Perdition”
(Heb. vi. 1; x. 39; Phil. iii. 12-19).
- (2) The same figure. “The Race”, “The Prize” (Heb. xii. 1; Phil. iii. 14).
- (3) The “better”, or the “out” resurrection (Heb. xi. 35; Phil. iii. 11).
- (4) Cross related to crown—example (Heb. xii. 1, 2; Phil. ii. 5, 9).
- (5) Not certainty, but contingency—IF (Heb. iii. 14; iv. 1; Phil. iii. 11).
- (6) The danger, “one morsel of meat” (Heb. xii. 16; Phil. iii. 19).
- (7) City and citizenship (Heb. xi. 10; xii. 22; Phil. iii. 20).

Here are seven parallels selected from dozens of others. Now a parallel truth is not an identical truth. The parallels between Hebrews and Philippians reveal that in both callings God works along similar lines, but this parallel working does not make the race, the prize, and the city *identical*, otherwise they could not be spoken of as being *parallel*. Hebrews is to Romans as Philippians is to Ephesians. Romans is basic and concerned with standing in grace. Its great text is “The JUST shall live by faith” (Rom. i. 17). Hebrews assumes the standing in grace, and urges the believer to endure, to run, to hold fast, to work out, to show, “the things that *accompany* salvation” and emphasizes “reward”. Its great text is “The just shall LIVE by faith” (Heb. x. 38).

Again, there are parallels between Hebrews, Philippians and the sermon on the mount which can be worked out. This however does not make Hebrews or the sermon on the mount identical with the revelation of the later epistles. The sermon on the mount is to the gospel of the kingdom what Hebrews is to the heavenly calling, and what Philippians is to the calling that is “Far above all”. There is a “city” in each sphere (Matt. v. 35; Heb. xi. 10; Eph. ii. 19), but this fact no more reduces the heavenly Jerusalem to the level of the earthly, than it reduces the citizenship of Ephesians and Philippians to the level of the New Jerusalem.

It has been suggested that Eph. ii. contains more spiritual teaching than Eph. i. 3-14, and in this very suggestion is revealed the false system of exegesis we are here combating. True, there may be a fascination in delving into the possible meaning of the “twain” and the “both”, but it is unforgivable so to interpret them as virtually to deny the basic teaching of Eph. i. 3-14. This passage we have called, we believe rightly, *The Charter of the Church*. It reveals a choice made before the foundation of the world. This is unique, and colours every subsequent expression found in Ephesians. It reveals a sphere of blessing “far above all where Christ sits in heavenly places”, which again is unique and colours all subsequent statements. It reveals an adoption that must differ both from Israel’s, which is according to the flesh, and from the other adoption, which is linked with Abraham and the heavenly Jerusalem.

We are thankful for anything that sends us back to the Word to re-examine the foundations upon which we build. We are thankful to state that our re-examination in the present case has but the more confirmed that the dispensation, fellowship, sphere, and constitution of the Ephesian company is unique, is in no way related to the heavenly calling of Hebrews, and that Hebrews itself is more concerned with urging the believer to “go on unto perfection” than with the calling and standing of the believer in grace.

Faith must stand the test; doctrines must be proof against attack; we are enjoined to “prove all things”, and to “hold fast that which is good”. This we believe we have done, and in its results we rejoice.