

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

THE FOUNDATION.

Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation. Isaiah 28: 16.

In this Scripture we have a prediction concerning the foundation of a new building. God, the great Architect of the Universe, declares to Israel that He will lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, &c.

Zion was the name of the highest hill of Jerusalem, on which the Temple was built. This name became very significant, so that Zion seemed to include not only the Temple and City of Jerusalem, but also all the people of Jerusalem and all their institutions of worship. The foundation of the Temple built by King Solomon had been laid in Zion, or, rather, upon Mount Zion. Now that Temple and the things of that Temple were typical of another Temple and the things of another Temple which God would build in the fulness of time. That Temple which stood on Mount Zion was built of great stones from the mountains, and cedar trees from Lebanon, and overlaid with gold from Ophir, and adorned with the most costly things to be found in all the world. It was repaired and rebuilt from time to time as occasion required. The Temple took the place of the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle service was transferred to the Temple. The Tabernacle and Temple service lasted about fifteen hundred years. This was the term of the commonwealth of Israel. But during this time, God, speaking by His prophets, often foretold a new order of things. There were many things in the prophecies foretelling the advent of a new Lawgiver, a glorious King that should rule in righteousness. The people did not fully comprehend those predictions, and yet they were expecting a great King to be born of the seed of David. But they were looking for an earthly king and an earthly kingdom. Hence, when their long promised Messiah came, they did not know Him. He was not such a one as they were looking for. The great Architect of the skies says: Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, &c. This was something that God would do. He was about to build a Temple far superior to that built by Solomon. It should not be built of dead stones from the quarry, but of living stones. Man was the material of which this new Temple should be built. But the foundation must first be laid. When a great and costly building is to be erected, a situation is selected, and a good substantial foundation is laid. The Lord selected Zion as the place to lay the foundation of His new Temple. The foundation of the Church of the living God should be in Zion. "The 'beginning' must be in Jerusalem." "The Law of the Lord must go forth from Mount Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The apostles apply this prophecy to Jesus of Nazareth, showing that He is this tried stone, this precious corner stone. The Lord Jesus was tried, sorely tried, in all points, yet without sin. He was tried by the world, the flesh, and the devil. He passed through all the fiery trials which the devil and wicked men could inflict, and none of these could prevail against Him. No, not even the gates of death could hold Him. He overcame all His enemies. He was "proved to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead." He is, most certainly, "the tried stone, the precious corner stone, the sure foundation," and "the Rock of ages." All material things must perish. The rocks will crumble to dust, and the mountains shall be removed; the elements will melt with fervent heat; the earth and the works therein shall be burned up; but the Rock of Ages will stand forever a "firm foundation to build our hopes of heaven upon." The Apostle Paul says: "Other founda-

tion can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3: 11. Peter said to the Lord Jesus, on one occasion: Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. In the Lord's answer He said: "Upon this Rock I will build My church." (See Matt. 16: 16, 17, 18.) The Lord used the future tense and said, I will build My church. Now it is very evident that He *had not built* His church in the days of Abraham, nor in the days of John the Baptist, nor at any other time, when He said: I will build My church. No, the foundation must be tried and laid in Zion before He would build His church. Many years passed away while God was preparing for this great and wonderful building. All the work of Moses and the prophets, and the work of kings and priests was preparatory to the erection of the Christian Temple. But the last preparatory work for this great building was done in person by the Lord Jesus himself. During His personal ministry He met all the requirements of the Law, and verified all the prophets had said concerning Him. He closed up the Mosaic Institution of religion, and made all things ready for the inauguration of the new Institution; and for the erection of the new Temple of God. The vail of the old Temple was rent in two from top to bottom at the time of His death; showing that there should be no more use for that former arrangement. But *when* was the foundation laid in Zion? Answer—After Jesus arose from the dead, after He ascended to heaven, and after He had sent the Holy Spirit to His apostles. When the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit they were constituted the able ministers of the Covenant. Then on that ever memorable Pentecost, God, by the Holy Spirit speaking in the apostles, laid in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation. Then God by the Holy Spirit gave unmistakable evidence that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. As soon as the foundation was laid in Zion, the work of building commenced. This is the "foundation of apostles and prophets." God used the testimony of apostles and prophets in establishing the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Paul, an apostle of Jesus the Christ, in his letter to the Ephesian brethren said: Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord. Eph. 2: 19, 20, 21. J. B. WALLACE.

West Gore, Oct. 28th, 1883.

SUBMISSION TO GOD'S WORD.

"Jesus said unto him: It is written." Matt iv: 7.

We cannot fail to be struck, in the course of the Saviour's public teaching, with His constant appeal to the Word of God. While, at times, He utters in His own name the authoritative behest, "verily, verily, I say unto you," he as often thus introduces some mighty work, or gives intimation of some impending event in his own momentous life, "These things must come to pass, that the Scriptures be fulfilled, which saith." He commands His people to search the Scriptures, but He sets the example by searching and submitting to them Himself. Whether He drives the money-changers from their sacrilegious traffic in the Temple, or foils His great adversary on the Mount of Temptation, He does so with the same powerful weapon, "It is written." When He rises from the grave, the theme of His first discourse is an impressive tribute to the value and authority of the sacred oracles. The two disciples on the road to Emmaus listen to nothing but a Bible lesson. "He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

How momentous the instruction herein conveyed! The necessity of the absolute subjection of the mind to God's written Word—making churches, creeds, ministers, books, religious opinions, all subordinate and subservient to this: "How readest thou?"—rebuking the philosophy, falsely so-called, that would distort the plainest statements of revelation, and bring them to the bar of proud, erring reason.

If an infallible Redeemer—"a law to himself"—was submissive in all respects to the "written law," shall fallible man refuse to sit, with the teachableness of a little child, and listen to the Divine message? There may be—there is—in the Bible what reason staggers at. "We have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." But, "Thus saith the Lord," is enough. Faith does not first ask what the bread is made of, but *eats* it. It does not analyze the components of the living stream, but with joy draws water from "the wells of salvation."

Reader, take that Word as "the lamp to thy feet, and the light to thy path." In these latter days, when so many false lights are hung out, to delude the unwary soul, there is the more need of keeping the eye steadily fixed on the unerring beacon. Make the Word of God the arbiter in all cases—the ultimate court of appeal. Like Mary, "sit at the feet of Jesus," willing only to learn of Him. How many perplexities it will save you—how many fatal steps in life it will prevent—how many tears! It is a great matter when the mind dwells on any passage of Scripture, just to think *how true it is*.

In every dubious question, when your feet are trembling on debatable ground, knowing not whether to advance or recede, make this the final criterion, "What saith the Scripture?" The world may remonstrate, erring friends may disapprove, Satan may tempt, ingenious arguments may explain away, but with your finger on the revealed page, let the words of our Great Example be ever a Divine formula for your guidance. "This commandment have I received of My Father."

Should you unhappily, dear reader, be among the number of those who have never confessed their faith in the Redeemer, or obeyed the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, permit us, earnestly and affectionately, to beseech you to "search the Scriptures," that you may find out for yourself what God requires you to do, in order that you may have your sins remitted, and be made an heir of glory; and having found out the will of God concerning you, let not all the powers of earth and hell be able to prevent you from submitting yourself without delay to the just and reasonable demands of Almighty God. Unlike the Jews of old, you are *not* required to offer up any costly sacrifices; or to engage in any tedious religious ceremonies; but you *are* required to offer up the sacrifice of a contrite heart; you *are* required to take the simple and appropriate steps which the Lord has enjoined you to take, in order that your sins may be blotted from the book of remembrance, and you be made a member of Christ's body, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. In the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, you may find what may appropriately be called "a bird's-eye view" of the plan of salvation, presented to the astonished gaze of the murderers of the Son of God, in the memorable sermon delivered by the Apostle Peter, after listening to which no less than three thousand souls accepted the offered mercy, by repenting of their sins and being buried with Christ in baptism; and by continuing *steadfastly* in the Apostle's doctrine, showing the sincerity of the profession which they had thus publicly made before men and angels. Should a careful reading of this wonderful sermon lead you, dear reader, to "go and do likewise," you will then find in the Epistles which the apostles wrote at different times to the churches, full and plain directions to guide you safely through life, and at the "last great day."