

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

ADDRESS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

TO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, IN ALL THE LANDS
OF THEIR DISPERSION, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
SENDETH PEACE.

Men and Brethren, beloved for the Father's sake,—The God of glory appeared to Abraham, when he dwelt in Ur of the Chaldees, and promised to make of him a great nation, and that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed. This promise, which was again and again renewed to him, was confirmed to Isaac and to Jacob. As it is also said in the 105th Psalm, He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word he commanded to a thousand generations; which he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, to Israel for an everlasting covenant. Within the ample bosom of this covenant, the glorious charter of all the blessings which, as a nation, you have ever possessed, or yet hope to receive, we, sinners of the Gentiles, as well as you, the men of Israel, find ourselves embraced: for so it is written, In thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Of this promise, we, in this distant island of the sea, and after the lapse of almost 4000 years, can attest the truth. In Abraham and his seed we have been blessed. In Him who was to be the desire of all nations, our souls have found a secure refuge. Through Him have we been brought to the knowledge of that God whom your fathers worshipped. In Him have we found peace to our consciences, hope and joy to our hearts: even in the Man who, as the prophet foretold, would be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Men and brethren, having thus obtained mercy ourselves, how can we but be deeply moved by the unhappy condition of those from whose stock has sprung that Branch of the Lord, beautiful and glorious! under whose wide-spreading shadow we have been made to sit with great delight. How can we but desire that they might come and find rest from their weary wanderings under the shelter of that wonderful name, Jehovah our righteousness! How can we but seek the good of that people, by whose means, at first, our fathers were turned from dumb idols to serve the living and true God, and from whom we have received those oracles of truth which everywhere testify of his Anointed!

Moved by these considerations, our Church, as many of you know, sent forth, two years ago, four of its ministers to seek the welfare of the children of Israel. These brethren, full of love to your nation, traversed many lands, and brought us word again. They have been at Jerusalem, and have seen the Jew at his mournful devotions beside its ruined wall. They have been through the land once flowing with milk and honey, and have seen the thorns and the briars which now cover it. They have seen your holy cities a wilderness, Zion a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. They have been in your synagogues; they have visited your families; they have observed your religious services; they have conversed with your people; and, grateful as they have felt for the kindness received, they have been pained, though not surprised, to witness your wide departure from the ordinances of God, and the ignorance which prevails of his life-giving Word.

Knowing, as we do, that the Lord, in his sovereign grace, has persuaded us, the sons of Japhet, and caused us to dwell in the tents of Shem; enjoying, as we do, the fulness of the provision of our Father's house,—we would seek, in our turn, to persuade you, saying to you, as Moses to his father-in-law, Come with us, and we will do you good. We cannot think of possessing alone the privileges and honours of adopted children, while you, the natural heirs, are outcast and destitute. We feel it to be a reproach to us that it should be written, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after. We would rather desire to be employed, under the Shepherd of Israel, in seeking out his sheep, and delivering them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. We have, therefore, thought of sending

you this letter. May the Lord incline your hearts to receive it from our hands, and lead many among you soon to call to mind the blessing and the curse among the nations whither the Lord your God hath driven you.

And now, men and brethren, permit us to inquire whether every visible mark which the Scripture gives of the advent of Messiah, may not be seen in connection with Jesus of Nazareth? Your father Jacob foretold, The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. The sceptre did depart when Jesus appeared, and to him the Gentiles have come. You have, therefore, here a double mark that Jesus is the Christ. Again, the Prophet Haggai, when the second temple was a building, foretold, in Jehovah's name, I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory. All nations were shaken: the Persians gave place to the Greeks, and the Greeks to the Romans. The second temple is no more, having been destroyed not long after Jesus came to it. You have, therefore, a double mark again that Jesus is the Christ. Isaiah foretold that Messiah would be rejected by the Jews, but believed on by the Gentiles, as may be seen from his book of prophecy. This has been largely fulfilled in reference to Jesus of Nazareth, and furnishes another proof again that he is the Christ. Daniel, one of the greatest benefactors of your race, who, like another Jacob, had power with God and with man to procure their release from Babylonish and Persian thralldom, foretold, that, in a given time, Messiah the Prince would appear, and be cut off, though not for himself; and that afterwards the city and the sanctuary would be destroyed by war: the sacrifice and oblation would cease; and a flood of desolations would continue till an appointed period. All this has been accomplished in connection with Jesus of Nazareth. Seventy prophetic weeks, or 490 years, elapsed from the time when Ezra restored the law, to the time when your fathers put Jesus to death. Not long after, as you know, Jerusalem was destroyed, and you have remained ever since, as another prophet declares, without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice; your land left desolate, yourselves aliens in a strange land, and everywhere pursued by the manifest tokens of the Divine displeasure. You have, therefore, here manifest proofs that Jesus is the Christ.

Surely you will allow, that everything in your circumstances as a people calls for consideration. Is it not the case, that ever since the time when your fathers crucified Him who declared himself to be the Messiah, sent of God, and rejected the salvation preached by his apostles, your nation has been under the perpetual rebuke of a frowning Providence? Your civil and sacred institutions have been entirely broken up. The holy and beautiful house where Jehovah was praised, has been burnt up with fire, and all your pleasant things laid waste. Your cities have been wasted without inhabitant, and your houses without man, and the land made utterly desolate. And the Lord has removed you far away, and there has been a great forsaking in the midst of the land. The Lord has scattered you among the heathen, and dispersed you through the countries. And among those nations you have found no ease, neither has the sole of your foot had rest; but the Lord has given you there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and your life has hanged in doubt before you, and you have had fear day and night, and have had none assurance of your life.

We write not these things to add to your affliction, but from love to your souls. Surely you, as well as we, may put the question, What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Why is it that the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud, and cast down from heaven to earth the beauty of Israel? It is not enough to say that you have sinned. Your fathers oftentimes sinned, and were led into captivity by their enemies. But where, in all their history, will you find a captivity like this? Even when carried to Babylon, the desolations of Jerusalem lasted only seventy years. But now, for eighteen hundred years, the holy city has been trodden under foot, and you banished from the land of your fathers.

Come, then, O house of Jacob, and let us walk together in the light of the Lord. Why should

you remain any longer in darkness and in sorrow? Century after century have you been looking for Messiah, but have looked in vain. The time of his coming has often been fixed by your learned men, and every time their calculations have failed. Meanwhile, successive generations of your race have passed into eternity without knowing the answer to that all-important question, How can man be justified with God, or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Why would you be stricken any more? Will it not suffice you, that for 1800 years you have followed the traditions of your fathers, and have found them like the friends of Job in his affliction—miserable comforters? What avail your Talleth or Tsitsith—to what purpose your Tephillin or Mezuzoth? May it not truly be said of them, the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it. Would that you would listen to Jehovah's words: Behold the days come that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. Would that you heard the voice of your redeeming God, saying, Behold me, behold me. Look unto me and be saved all the ends of the earth. Would that the Lord himself might be pleased to pour out upon you the spirit of grace and supplications promised; and then would you be made to look on him whom you have pierced, and to mourn for him. Then would your eyes be opened to see the fountain which has been opened for sin and uncleanness, and which flows from the pierced heart of him on whom the Lord laid the iniquity of us all.

Blessed will be the day when Jews and Gentiles together shall submit to him who is to have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. Then shall be fulfilled to their utmost extent the words of prophecy: The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the sucking-child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Then shall Jerusalem be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. To her light the Gentiles shall come, and kings to the brightness of her rising. Then shall that song be sung in the land of Judah, and re-echoed from the ends of the earth, We have a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid; for Jehovah, Jehovah, is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

May the Lord hasten it in his time.

In name and by appointment of the General Assembly.
ROBERT GORDON, Moderator.

WESLEYAN METHODISTS IN GREAT
BRITAIN.

At the late Wesleyan Conference in Manchester, there were present upwards of five hundred regular ministers, including eleven Missionaries from different parts of the world.

The number of preachers who died during the year was, in England, fifteen; in Ireland, two; on foreign stations, eleven.

Thirty-three young men who had completed their four years probation, were, after public examination, duly ordained to the ministry.

The present number in Church fellowship with the Conference is 440,204—being an increase during the year of 11,555. There were also 16,825 on trial for membership.

The Report of the Committee on education, states the completion of a general plan of education for the whole body; also a tabular view of the Sunday, week-day, and infant schools in connection with the Wesleyan Methodists; and of the education of several efficient "Teaching Masters" at the Normal Seminary at Glasgow.

There are in the various Wesleyan schools of Great Britain, 590,627 children, 64,146 teachers, and 991 School Libraries.—*Hal. Guardian.*