



WHEN Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. ² As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images. ³ I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them. ⁴ I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them. ⁵ He shall not return into the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to return. ⁶ And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour them, because of their own counsels. ⁷ And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him. ⁸ How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. ⁹ I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city. ¹⁰ They shall walk after the LORD: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west. ¹¹ They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria: and I will place them in their houses, saith the LORD. ¹² Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints. (Hosea 11:1-12)

Just as Jacob, son of Isaac, has done, all who have received, and believed, the promise given to Abraham of a Seed of Redemption in Christ, are named Israel. That includes all of the Elect of God. We are born, not of the flesh, but of the Spirit of the Living God. For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many

more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. (Galatians 4:22-31)

In the days of innocence and obedience, God found it easy to love and cherish His child, Israel, as did Abraham Isaac – both Old and New. But with maturing age, Israel has always become rebellious much like the modern Church that has become gloated with wealth and bloated with easy living. It is less convenient to love a glutton swollen with the excess fluids of inaction and rebellion. But God will never forget His people even for rebellious disposition. He loves them as a Father who chastises out of love and not hate. He dotes on His cherished people and considers them as a strong man loves the wife of his youth. *Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. (Isaiah 54:4-5)*

¹ *When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.* ² *As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.* ³ *I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them.* It was God's redeeming love that sent Israel into Egypt in the first instant, and it was the Almighty Power of His outstretched arm that drew them forth from that bondage with many miracles and providential blessings. But even after they had witnessed His power in the Pillar of Cloud by day and Fire by night, and His parting of the mighty Sea, they still fell back to murmuring and questioning His will and purpose in in the Wilderness for setting them free from Egypt. In the early days of our national struggle for freedom and independence, the yoke was heavy to be born by patriots who sacrificed all in the purchase of freedom and liberty for themselves and their posterity; yet, they never looked back to the burdens of the oppressor. That is the example God is disposed to favor – and He did favor our land with a mighty benevolence and blessings untold.

Now, it seems we have become bored with righteous living and commitment to our Sovereign and Benefactor. We have turned to other gods and sacrificed our children to Baalim. We have forgotten the mercies of our God and sought out gods of gold, perversions and the unjust balance.

There are dire prophecies against nations whom the Lord has claimed as His own and who turn away from Him in outrageous prodigality. *I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them. He shall not return into the land of Egypt, **but the Assyrian shall be his king**, because they refused to return (to the Lord, their Maker). And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour them, because of their own counsels.* He removed our unbecoming yoke in the days of Washington and Jefferson – Patrick Henry and Lafayette! We shall not return to the bondage of Egypt but to a more horrible bondage of Assyria. We shall lose our national identity as did old Israel unless we promptly recognize our hopeless estate and return to the Husband of our national founding. The proud land of our fathers shall become a bounty to those who knew not, nor remember, Joseph; and they shall occupy our cities wielding the sword where no man can stand against them. We are forging the very chains which shall enslave us by

way of our false and corrupt political counsels. *And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they (the prophets) called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him.*

The Lord has set His heart upon our beautiful land, but we have spoiled His love and rejected His affection. How can a strong man surrender the love of His youth in whom His has invested His heart and treasure? *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.* How mixed are the emotions of man whose strong love for His wife are betrayed in adulterous infidelity on her part? I remind the reader that Admah and Zeboim were two of the five cities of the plain destroyed for perversions unmentionable. *And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah,and Zeboim,which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:* (Deuteronomy 29:23) It should be a chilling realization to know that God does not change in His dealings with the wicked transgressor: *And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts. For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.* (Malachi 3:5-6)

The chastisement of the Lord is tempered by love for His elect. Those who are reprobate, as was true with Sodom and the cities of the plane, will receive no mercy; but God knows His elect and will call them forth from their degradation with mighty winds and quakes. *I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city.* Even an estranged wife may be so loved by the husband of her youth that he will receive her back after many days of sensual sins and pleasures. Love is stronger than sin, and love will cover a multitude of sins: *Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.* (Proverbs 10:12) But there must be a turning from those sins for love to be effectual; and the same is true of our national character. We must turn away from the murder of innocent babies, the perversion of marriage and sexual sins, and restore the Divine Sovereign to our National Escutcheon. Then will our marriage apparel be made clean and ready for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. *They shall walk after the LORD: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west. They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria: and I will place them in their houses, saith the LORD. Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints.* Like ancient Israel, America has forgotten her national identity. But God has His elect mingled among the reprobate, and though they forget whose they are, He will not forget.