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## THE WEDDING GARMENT

What qualification is represented by the garment? This is an important question, and one which is receiving much attention at present from all who have been interested in the "Harvest" message, and who believe that in the Spring of 1878, a point was reached in the history of the gospel church, parallel to that of the Jewish church at the death of Christ. Though the faith of some has been severely tried, and some have perhaps been led to doubt the correctness of the position referred to above, we believe no good reason can be shown why the space of time covered by the "Two Dispensations,"—Jewish and Gospel, as represented by the Cherubim, did not end in the Spring of 1878. However much we differ from some of our brethren in regard to the present position or the *light* that was due; at the end of the Jewish double, we still believe that future events will vindicate that the movement based on such an application of the prophetic periods and parallels was and is of the Lord. Our faith in the *movement* is deeper than our faith in *men*. Men may stand or fall, papers may or may not be published,—may or may not be a success; men may give or withhold their money; still the cause of the Lord will not fail, the angels will do their work for the heirs of salvation, prophecy will be fulfilled, and "all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Moses was called of God to lead his people from Egypt, through the wilderness, but Moses fell within sight of the promised land. The man fell, but the *movement* went on. Canaan was reached and on that line of march according to the Lord's arrangement. The reason for Moses' fall is most striking, he took the honor to *himself*, instead of giving God the glory. "Hear now ye *rebels*; must WE fetch you water out of this rock? Num. 20:10. And the Lord said: "Because ye believed me not, to sanctify ME in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land." (Ver. 12.) May the Lord save all who in any sense are leaders in thought from self conceit, and a similar fall. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." 2 Cor. 4:7.

That translation was not due in the Spring of 1878 is certain, and yet too many were inclined to treat others as not "in the light" for not *expecting* it then. Being positive or dogmatic does not make anything true, even if it does make an impression. Shall we not learn wisdom by our mistakes? We felt sure once that the gathering of the wheat into the barn by the angels, was translation, but now we are convinced that Omnipotence alone, in His hands who is higher than the angels, can give immortality, and therefore the angels can only gather into a condition of *readiness* for the great change. Some are just as positive yet that going in to the marriage is translation, but we are inclined to consider being "*in*" to the marriage the same as being "*in*" the barn, and we believe that some—perhaps a very small number—represented by *one* without the

wedding garment—will be cast *out* after being *in*. The “going forth” to meet the bridegroom, before the slumbering was not a movement from one place to another, but an *act of faith*, on account of prophetic light. The slumbering was a lack of the exercise of faith; and the “going out” to meet him under the midnight cry was also a movement of faith. If the going *out* to meet him was of faith, it seems consistent at least that the going *in* with him should also be of faith. We are quite sure that there is no reference whatever to *translation* in the parable of the ten virgins. That the *expectation* of translation is the proper attitude of those who are gathered in may be true, but it seems that even the angels are not *infinite* in knowledge. Some things “the angels *desire* to look into.” 1 Pet. 1:12. And the Lord answered them indefinitely. (Dan. 12:7.) I am not sure that the angels are in *all respects* above *mistake*. They are *sinless*, but there is a great difference between *purity* and *infallibility in knowledge*. God and Christ can “discern the thoughts and intents of the heart;” but can the *angels*? We think not. And here seems a key: The angels gather in (let me suggest) those who have the light in *theory*, but the Lord causes to be put out into “outer darkness” (even what they *have* is taken from them) those who are not right in *spirit*. The “outer darkness” seems to be the condition of the world. And the sorrow expressed may be in consequence of the terrible things coming on the earth, from which those who are counted worthy escape, while the left, must pass through it, whatever their after condition may be. It seems that the subject of the wedding garment is that which is receiving special attention, and the inquiry as to what it is, is doubtless a legitimate one, and we have not the least doubt that the word of God is able to give us all needed light on the subject. We believe that this is not so *much* a doctrinal as a practical test, and also that a *sifting out* rather than a *gathering in* is accomplished by it.

We think it probable that this should receive special attention. Oh, that we may stand the test.

J. H. P.

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— October, 1879 —



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