

O2 JONES, Thomas. *Traethodau ar y doniau gwyrthiol, a'r mil blynnyddoedd, etc.* (Treatises on the spiritual gifts, and the thousand years, etc.) Llanelli: Published and for sale by Thomas Jones. J. Davis, Printer, Merthyr, 1853.

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This pamphlet is very similar to item O1 in its content and purpose. The first of its four segments bears the same title, *Treatises on the spiritual gifts, and the thousand years*, as the pamphlet as a whole and appeared in the April 1832 *Star of Gomer* (pp. 103–5) as well as in the September 1850 *Zion's Trumpet* (pp. 241–44). Here again the author is “C,” no doubt the same as the “C” in segments of item O1. He argues strongly in favor of the existence of modern-day miracles and uses a line of logic strikingly similar to that used by Mormon missionaries in Wales more than ten years later.

The second segment, entitled “Spiritual gifts,” is again by “C” and is an answer to “Omicron,” who took exception to the observations of “C” in his April article. “C” defends his stance and adds further scriptural evidence to his argument. This defense was published in the August 1832 *Star of Gomer* (pp. 233–35), but did not appear in *Zion's Trumpet*.

The third segment is entitled “Opinion of Azariah Shadrach about the restoration of the Church of Christ” and had appeared in the June 1848 *Prophet of the Jubilee* (pp. 81–82). A Saint by the name of Abednego Williams had submitted these observations of Azariah Shadrach, a well-known minister in early nineteenth-century Wales, because Shadrach's views so nicely paralleled those of the Church. Shadrach declared that the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem by Zerubbabel represented a foreshadowing as to how the Savior would reestablish His church according to the apostolic manner during the Millennium. Williams declared that such a restoration had already taken place, under the name of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The fourth segment is a quote from the writings of John Wesley concerning spiritual gifts. Wesley says that those gifts had been taken from the earth because of wickedness, not because they were no longer needed. Although not specifically stated by Wesley, the implication is that righteousness of the same quality that had existed among the members of the apostolic church would open the way for renewed spiritual gifts—an interpretation that coincided with the Church's position. Wesley's statement was also printed in *Prophet of the Jubilee* (October 1847, pp. 158–59).

TREATISES
ON THE
SPIRITUAL GIFTS,
AND THE
THOUSAND YEARS, &c.

“Think about your elders.”—PAUL.

LLANELLI:
PUBLISHED AND FOR SALE BY THOMAS JONES,
1853.

TREATISES.

THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS, AND THE THOUSAND YEARS.

[From the "Star of Gomer" for April, 1832.]

MR. GOMER, — If I caused so much discomfort to some of your readers, through my announcement of the millennial doctrine, what will be the agitation they feel at that which I declare in my present writing? for I intend to assert, with boldness, the following tenets: — namely, that all the miraculous gifts that were possessed by the primitive church among the followers of the apostles and evangelists, are as much an inheritance to the church in the present day as they were in the first century, and that nothing but lack of faith only prevents the church from performing miracles today with the same measure of power and authority as it did in its earliest age.

Now, I think I see someone looking askance at me, and saying, — "What is this foolishness? Has not the age of miracles gone past?" But I answer these questions with another question, — When did this age end? And when did God take away his license from the church? Let anyone answer this question, and I will bind myself to deny all that I wrote and do penance for it. But rather, the truth is, that the great Leader of the church has given us a license by which it was endowed with miraculous gifts, and he never removed it with any act following, and it is only unbelief that prevents the full restoration of all these glorious gifts. For proof, our Lord Jesus Christ, when leaving his disciples on his ascension into heaven, said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on

the sick, and they shall recover." Mark xvi, 15, &c. Now, where is the separation between the promise of saving through faith and the promise of miraculous gifts? and where is the authority to say that the latter is to end in the church before the former? But to the contrary, when the same circumstance is indicated in Matt. xxviii, 18, &c., the same power is mentioned, and its continuation through the age of the world, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

These gifts appeared among the primitive Christians in an abundant manner, so that the Spirit was imparted to each one separately, for the edifying of the church, as is seen in 1 Cor. xii, "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, — to another the word of knowledge, — and to another faith, — the gift of healing, — the working of miracles, — prophecy, — discerning of spirits, — divers kinds of tongues, — the interpretation of tongues." That these gifts were essential in the church in the first century, no one of the Christians attempts to deny. And everyone also is ready to acknowledge their continuance during the second century. There is also historical authority that they were being practiced in the third century, and even in the fourth century; and some believe they can trace them among believers as far down as the seventh century; but then through unbelief, worldliness, and the corruption of Papism, they had diminished and darkened to such an extent, that it is difficult to distinguish them from the false miracles of the church of Rome. But again, I ask, When did the miraculous gifts cease? If they appear only infrequently in the latter days because of corruption of religion and weakness of faith, what of that? Is not the situation consistent with the conduct of God towards his people under the Jewish dispensation? In the time before the call of Samuel, "The word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision." And after that, the Lord did not answer Saul "through dreams, or through the Urim, or through prophets." And it is likely that there was a great scarcity of miraculous works in the Jewish church in the next ages before the birth of Christ. Thus if the Spirit was wearied, and caused his manifestations to become less frequent under the perverse government of the Church of Rome, and in the latter days, because of weakness of faith, and of unbelief, is it any wonder?

But some assert that it had been determined that these gifts would be removed by an act of authority; and for the purpose of proving

this they recite 1 Cor. xiii, 8, 9,—“Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophecy in part;” and then they shout, “Victory.” Now, I am as ready as they to acknowledge that these things will fail,—but when? let the following verse show:—“But when that which is perfect is come [*otan de elthe to teleion*], then that which is in part shall be done away.” There is no one who says that “that which is perfect,” the TO TELEION, has come, for “now we see through a glass darkly;” but when it comes, then we shall see “face to face.” It is doubtless that “that which is perfect” is the personal reign of Christ on the earth, at his second coming, when we shall see face to face; and until this blessed time of the restoration of all things, and of the establishment of the millennial kingdom, the spiritual gifts are to continue as patrimony of the church, as well as all promised works of the Holy Ghost; and then there will no longer be any need for them, because faith will end in seeing, and hope in enjoyment.

If this is so, then, if the church has such a right to these gifts, why does it not possess them? I answer,—Because it does not seek them; yes, among all the congregations that go under the name of churches, which ones pray for miraculous gifts? and if they do not seek them, but rather judge it superstitious to pray for them, is it any wonder that they are destitute of them? But what do the scriptures say? “Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.” 1 Cor. xiv, 1; and also,—“Seek the best gifts.” Now, how can anyone, who calls himself a Christian, disregard the word of God so much as to set aside a commandment as clear as the one above? And, therefore, however my opinion is accepted by your readers, I assert that there is not one church or denomination of religionists that is correct in doctrine, if it does not avow its right to spiritual gifts, or their proper practice, if it does not encourage praying for them, namely the various supernatural gifts that are named in 1 Cor. xii.

Once again I hear the “why?” being uttered. Why do we not see these gifts appearing in some church or another? and particularly in the writer, who is arguing so boldly in favor of their essential nature? I answer, if I had faith so strong as to be able to receive them, and a holiness of life so pure that I could expect to receive them, I would have them; yet, I think that these various gifts are imparted not to satisfy the wish of any one believer, in his own individual request, rather for the

edifying of the church as a body, for thus it is shown in the aforementioned chapters. And as I said before, it is impossible to understand the scriptures, without receiving the millennial doctrine; thus I assert now that a large part of the New Testament is unrelated to the state of the church in the present days, unless the spiritual gifts are promised to it through every age of its militant existence during this dispensation; for these things are referred to not only by the occasional phrase here and there, but there are several substantial parts of the writings of the apostles that refer to the use and fostering of the miraculous gifts, and those parts have also been so completely interwoven with the principle and unchanging doctrines of the gospel, that I do not know how anyone can pretend to differentiate them, or to say that he has authority to refuse one part, while accepting the other.

C.

MIRACULOUS GIFTS.

[From the "Star of Gomer" for August, 1832.]

MR. GOMER,—When I sent you my observations on the Miraculous Gifts, I did not expect that they would be received by everyone immediately, because I have some idea as to how great are the numbers of those who either disregard such gifts completely, or who, like your correspondent Omicron, deny their existence in the present day. But since the refutation of your friend requires some kind of answer from me, I shall hasten to the task.

In the first place, then, I do not think that anyone can deny completely the existence of miraculous works in the present day, without at the same time accusing every denomination of Christians on the face of the earth of superstitious practices; and it is impossible for anyone to conform to the Christian practices in general, without also acknowledging the existence of a miraculous means. To prove this, I ask, Is there one group of Christians who does not accept and practice the obligation of praying for the healing of the sick? Yes, whenever the illness has reached to such an extent, and every practice of health is something beyond all human hope, according to anything that can be expected from any medical means, do we not frequently see the Christian friends of the sick person praying for him, and sincerely asking God to stay his hand, and restore such to his normal health? If such a prayer was ever answered, what do we call that if not a miraculous work? If one believes that an answer is possible, what is that if not an acceptance of a miraculous work? But if one does not believe in such effects, why is God mocked by praying so unceasingly for the sick person in so many congregations and families? Also when circumstances require, are not prayers set up for rain, for fair weather, and for deliverance from hunger, pestilence, war, &c.? These practices testify that there is still among Christians some remembrance of a miraculous answer to their prayers, that has been kept from disappearing completely, although the other gifts in the same record are completely denied.

Omicron says that there is no further reason for Miraculous Gifts, since the Christian faith is now "established in the world." But I ask him, In what corner of the world is this blessed condition to be seen?

Take a map, and demonstrate. I can imagine him casting his eyes over the islands and continents, and at last placing the tip of his finger on Great Britain, and some small corners of it in the western regions. But, if the gospel has been established so firmly in Britain, and other places, so that there is no longer any need for miraculous signs, what is the meaning of its preachers maintaining such lamentation about unbelief and immorality? But, let us permit this to rest where it is, and let us go to the other parts of the broad map, and let us look at the establishment of the gospel in the world; first let us take the African continent. Where is the establishment of the gospel there? Does not the missionary preacher have as much need for miraculous signs as did the original missionaries in the early age? Also let us look at Eastern India, and the empire of China, and the islands of the south sea. If all the map were blackened, except for those places where Christianity is sprouting, I think that the white spots would appear very small. And this is called the "establishment of the gospel in the world!" But this is not the only mistake that springs from not calling things by their proper names.

O. says further that the miraculous gifts were given only for proofs, for the conversion of the unbeliever. I acknowledge that this is among their purposes in some circumstances, but not always or without exception, as your friend O. indicates; rather the opposite; they were most often practiced in the church, when there was no one but believers present. And when O. considers the practice of the gifts as they are related in the scriptures, I think he will change his opinion of their purposes, for St. Paul says, 1 Cor. xiv, 22, "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe." And there is no mention made of the presence of the unbelievers, rather it is more like a happening unrelated to the practice of the gift of prophesying. If men considered this chapter in greater detail, and the two previous ones, there would not be so much misunderstanding with respect to the miraculous gifts; for one could see that they were given for the edifying of the church, and not only to convert unbelievers; and also it can be proved that they were practiced only by believers, without the presence of anyone else, as is perceived in the commandment for anyone who spoke in unknown tongues, where it says, "But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to

God.”

O. says further still that if miracles pertain to the church in this age, is it not strange that God deprived himself of them over a number of ages? I answer this with another question. Is it not strange that over a number of ages God has allowed one part of the Christian world to be deceived by Papism, another part by the superstitious Greek church, and the third part by Muhammadanism? Let O. look at the condition of the world in the ages before the appearance of Luther, and let him indicate in which corner of it the Church of Christ existed, and what was its condition there; and if the truths of the gospel had been persecuted into the wilderness over a number of centuries, what wonder is it that the miraculous gifts had also fled from sight.

He asks also, Why were they not restored to the church with the reformation? I answer, because the church as a body did not seek them. “Seek, and ye shall find,” is the promise; and despite what a godly man Doddridge was, and others whom he mentions, it does not appear that they or their congregations sought the spiritual gifts, or were even aware of their right to them; but, I sincerely believe, if they had sought them, as a body of believers, that they would have received them; and I believe also that the same privilege is promised to every Christian congregation to the present day; not having this privilege, a large part of the scriptures is not relevant to us in the present ages.

O. asserts that there is not one proof that the miraculous gifts existed in the second century. If he were to undertake the task of researching this for himself, instead of repeating the assertions of other men, I think he would reflect a bit before giving space for such an assertion in his writing, and as an example, I shall give here a few proofs from among several of the same kind, to show his error.

Justin the Martyr, who died in A.D. 165, says the following:—*Paragar emin cai mechri nun prophetica charismata estin*, &c. “The prophetic gifts continue with us until now, from which you, [the Jews,] should understand that they are the ones which were earlier in your nation, transferred to us;” and also, “seen in our midst are women and men who have gifts from the Spirit of God.” Also,

Irenius, who died A.D. 206, mentions casting out devils, and says, “Others have a foreknowledge of things to come, and visions and prophetic utterances. Others, by the laying on of hands, heal the sick,

and restore them to health; also, the dead have been raised, and they tarried with us for several years." He also mentions some who spoke in unknown tongues. Furthermore,

Tertullian, [around A.D. 208,] mentions the miraculous authority of the Christians, saying, "A number of responsible men, without mentioning the common people, were freed from devils and illnesses." And he says that even the emperor Severus received a miraculous healing through the hand of a Christian. These works were quite obvious in the world.

And as for Origen, the only old author O. mentions, and on whose authority he tries to cast doubt, his testimony is in several places, in favor of the existence of the miraculous gifts, so strong and determined, that I can but wonder upon seeing such an assertion in the writing of your friend.

Origen, [died A.D. 254,] says the following, *Emeis gar*, &c. "And we can show the inexpressible number of Greeks and Barbarians acknowledging Jesus, some of which show in those they healed, that they have received through their faith remarkable power, calling only for the sick, the Almighty God, and the name of Jesus, together with his story. For by these things we saw many freed from wretched illnesses, and insanity and madness, and myriads of other illnesses which neither men nor devils were able to cure."

The same kind of witness is given by Cyprian, [A.D. 258,] Lactantius, [around A.D. 316,] and Arnobius, [A.D. 327,] and many others who are strongly in favor of the existence of miracles; among these Socrates deserves mention, since he bore such a clear witness to the authority and practice of the Christians to work miracles, by healing the sick, and by casting out devils, &c.

Perhaps there are some so unlearned as to declare their contempt for the books of the foregoing authors and their kind, maligning them as works of no value; but, we are confident of better things with respect to your correspondent O., believing that he is more accustomed to historical merit. But lest any of your readers fall into such a misconception, I shall request them to reflect a little before deciding to reject their witness; for, if you reject the historical authority of the foregoing men, and their kind, where are their proofs for the undefiled inspiration and tradition of the Holy Scriptures? If we acknowledge that the above fathers

were truthful, and deserving of credence in their witness of the inspiration of the Scriptures, I think that we cannot withhold our belief in them about the other circumstances they tell us about. There are more that depend on the truthfulness of the fathers than half the Christian world realizes; and there are hosts who profess strongly the inspiration of the Scriptures, while knowing but little of the historical degrees through which knowledge and proof of them are sustained.

With respect to the observations of Jortin, which are repeated by O., they are not a whit better than those of Gibbon, and other unbelievers. The only difference I see is that Gibbon is an avowed enemy, and that Jortin, &c., under the guise of serving Christianity, betrays the cause, in so doing, to the hands of the unbelievers. If Christians in general were to take courage in defending their right to the spiritual gifts, instead of being ashamed because of them and disowning them, the poisonous blows of Gibbon, and others, would fall to the floor without effect; but instead of that, they assist their efforts, and add strength and ardor to that which was already too effective. But, I am confident that if anyone considers the debate carefully and without prejudice, he will come to the same decision that the license of the spiritual gifts has not been rescinded, but that nowadays, as well as ever, they are in accordance with obedience to the commandment, "Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy."

Yours,

C.

THE OPINION OF AZARIAH SHADRACH ABOUT THE RESTORATION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

ZERUBBABEL was a shadow of Christ, Zech. iv, 9. In that

1. Zerubbabel was chosen and appointed by God to lead Israel from Babylon to Canaan: thus was Christ appointed to lead the Saints back from all

their wanderings, to save them from all captivity, and to lead them to heavenly Canaan.

2. Zerubbabel built the second temple in Jerusalem; his two hands began it, and his two hands finished it: thus did Christ build his church, and he will be certain to complete the entire building, despite working through poor means, with much opposition. The second temple also was a special portrait of the restoration of religion and the church in the thousand years according to the apostolic plan.

1. The first temple was tarnished, and also pulled down by the Babylonians: thus was the apostolic plan of religion tarnished by the Papists.

2. The second temple was built in times of tribulation: thus, in times of tribulation, will the church be restored to the apostolic plan.

3. The second temple was built by those who spent long years in captivity: thus will the church be restored according to the apostolic plan by those who have long been in the captivity of human imaginings, and human traditions.

4. Those who were building the second temple had much rubble to move out of the way: similarly, it will be necessary to move many superstitions and remains of Catholicism, and human imaginings, out of the way, before the church is restored to the plan of the apostolic church.

5. Poor and contemptuous men in the sight of many other men were those who built the second temple: thus will it be with the restoration of religion to the apostolic plan.

6. Many men were very haughty and apathetic concerning the building of the second temple, saying, "The time has not yet come:" thus are many still concerning the building of the church, and restoring it to the apostolic plan.

7. There was much mocking directed at those who were building the second temple: similarly, there is much mocking directed at those who are restoring the church to the apostolic plan.

8. Although many wished to prevent Israel at that time from building the second temple: yet the work went forward, although it was obstructed for a time.

9. It was not through the foundation or power of men that the second temple went forward; rather it was through the Spirit of the living God: similarly, in the same manner will the church be restored to the apostolic plan. May God hasten the morning when Zion will receive the foremost praise on the earth. And let all people say, Amen.

THE OPINION OF JOHN WESLEY ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

It does not appear that supernatural gifts have continued generally in the church, except as late as the second or the third century. Rarely do we hear of them after that destructive period, when the emperor

Constantine called himself a Christian, and through his selfish whim he intended to spread Christianity by piling wealth, honor, and power on the Christians in general. From that time they disappeared almost completely; at least, it was most unusual to hear of them after that time. The reason why they stopped was not as the common folk say, that they were not needed any longer, because all the world had embraced Christianity. This is an unfortunate misconception! There was not the twentieth part of the world who were Christians at that time, even in name. The real reason [why the miraculous gifts did not continue] is because of the cooling of the love of many—the Christians had not more of the spirit of Christ than did the other pagans! The Son of God, when he visited his church, could hardly find faith on the earth. This is the original cause for supernatural gifts of the Holy Ghost not being found any longer in the Christian church, because the Christians turned into pagans after that, with nothing but the dead letter remaining.

[ENTERED AT STATIONER'S HALL.]

J. DAVIS, PRINTER, MERTHYR.
