

return home and look after the interests of the Church, directing the means for the building of Temples and other public works. This was certainly very unexpected to me; but the General Conference saw proper to confer this duty upon me, and as soon as I got the Conference minutes at Berlin, I started for home.

While I was passing through Palestine, I had some very serious reflections as to the causes which had operated to reduce the country to its present barren condition, and why the descendants of Jacob were so oppressed, and, as an independent nation, blotted out. In an interview with the venerable Chief Rabbi, Abram Askenasi, I enquired for the ten tribes. Said he, "We have no idea where they are, but we believe they will be found, and will return and inherit their land." While traveling in Palestine I reflected a good deal on the fate of Israel. I asked myself, why they were persecuted, scattered, peeled and hidden from the face of men, and why were the tribes of Judah and Benjamin still scattered? Some of them can go to Jerusalem occasionally and visit, but only a very few thousand live, in a scattered condition, in the land of their fathers, and they are in bondage, under tutors, governors, and rulers, and have in reality no power of themselves. Rabbi Askenasi said they had more liberty than heretofore. The Christian Powers have recently taken a course which has modified the action of the Turks toward them. They were now permitted to buy land, but they were poor and could buy but little, and he wished the Jews of all nations to contribute to enable the Jews of Jerusalem to extend the area of their possessions. They had purchased a piece of land

in Jerusalem, and were building on it a home for widows and orphans.

Now I saw this degradation with which Israel are visited. Where did it begin? It was simply because the children of Israel failed to obey the law of God. If we search the Bible, we shall find many references by the Prophets to this subject, which are very plain and clear. In the third chapter of Malachi, and eighth verse, the Prophet, speaking of the condition of Israel in his day, uses this singular language, or rather the Lord, speaking through the Prophet, says—"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation."

Now, God required of Israel Tithes and offerings. He blessed them with land and with abundant rains. He made their land exceedingly fertile; he blessed them with flocks, with herds, and with everything on the face of the earth seemingly that they could desire. He gave them wealth in every direction; he gave them power over their neighbors—they were the head and not the tail. In return for all this, what did he require of them? He required them to pay Tithes and make offerings. Tithes meant one-tenth of all their increase. One-tenth of all this the Lord required them to place in the hands of the Levites and those whom he had selected to look after the general welfare. In addition to this tenth he also required certain offerings. You may trace the history of the Jewish nation through and you will find that when the people paid their Tithes and offerings, and thereby acknowledged their dependence upon and allegiance to the God of heaven, they were prospered