

*Diag.*) These are not limited to the Israelites, but are of all nations. This proves that the "great multitude" or "great crowd" is not made up of those who were once anointed as members of the body of Christ and then lost their anointing. There is no Scriptural authority for saying that any one can lose his anointing of the holy spirit and then fall back into the great multitude class. All of that great company were begotten of the holy spirit and were called, but did not respond to the call and hence were not chosen. However, they tenaciously hold to the truth that there is one God, and that the blood of Jesus Christ is the ransom price for man, and for this the Lord loves them.

This scripture does not warrant the conclusion that the great multitude is developed after the glorification of the church, but seems clearly to mean that after the 144,000 are sealed the Lord turns his attention to the "great crowd" that has not prior thereto taken a positive stand on the side of Jehovah. "Therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord God, and they shall bear their iniquity." (Ezek. 44:12) They were never brought into the covenant for the kingdom and anointed for the kingdom; therefore they stand "before the throne" and before Christ. They are made the servants of the great High Priest, just as the Levites were given over to Aaron to serve. (Num. 3:6, 9) Their "white robes" bespeak their approval only for the position to which they are now assigned as servants of the great High Priest.

The palm branches could not denote martyrdom, because those who make up this great crowd fail to respond to the invitation to become the zealous wit-

nesses for the Lord. Only when forced to take a position on the Lord's side do they so do. They have been chiefly in the prison houses, paying their respects and homage to the prison keepers, the clergy, and their allies, "the principal of the flock." But when the time comes for them to take their stand for Satan or for God they stand on the side of Jehovah, and they must pass through much tribulation. They have not been willing to bear the reproaches that come from being faithful and zealous representatives of the Lord. (Rom. 15:3) The palm branches in their hands therefore denote that now the time has come when they do acknowledge and hail Christ as Jehovah's King and the rightful Ruler of the world; as it was when Jesus was in the flesh, "much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." (John 12:12, 13) The palm branches are therefore a symbol of their joining themselves as the servants to the Lord's organization.

The identification of the great multitude has caused much comment by the Lord's people. From the language of verses thirteen and fourteen it would appear that some of God's people see in the faces of others of their brethren the question: "What about the great company?" And then they propounded that same question to their brethren merely that the matter might be discussed or considered. This is shown by the fact that one of the elders propounds the question to John. Many Berean classes have discussed at length the meaning of the scriptures concerning the great multitude and have asked many questions con-