

ZECHARIAH AND THE MYSTERY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Prophecy Spiritually Understood

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ABRAHAM HAD TWO SONS. The prophetic nature of Holy Scripture even in its personal and natural histories is exemplified in the inspired use which the apostle Paul makes of the great domestic dilemma in the life of Abraham. In his remarkable allegory in Galatians 4, Paul presents the two sons of Abraham, the one by the bondmaid Hagar and the other by the true wife, Sarah, as the two covenants of the Law and the Gospel. It is clear that in a natural sense the son of the Egyptian bondwoman became the progenitor of the Arabian tribes, but Paul says that in the allegorical (that is, the spiritual) sense, Ishmael was the father of the Israelitish tribes under the Law. The true seed of Abraham was the Gospel seed of Jew and Gentile and these, according to the allegory were the children of Abraham.

Our friends who cleave to a literal interpretation of prophecy have never yet done justice to this Pauline allegory. Their refusal to face up to the implications of the epistle to the Galatians lies at the root of their fallacy in regarding earthly Israel as the inheritor of the promises made to Abraham. “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” (Gal. 4:25-26). Yet those who follow the Scofield dispensationalism (probably the majority of evangelical Christians in the world today) accept the dispensational dictum that the CHURCH is not the subject of Old Testament prophecy, but is a mystery not introduced or disclosed until the days of Paul. But it is Paul who introduces the CHURCH as the true subject of Old Testament prophecy, and embellishes his allegory on the two sons of Abraham with a quotation from Isaiah 54:1 to show that the New Testament Church is very much a part of Old Testament prophecy. Is it not significant that Dr. Scofield passes by the allegory of Gal. 4 with stony silence?

The Church is not only very much a part of Old Testament prophecy, but we intend to show that it is the ultimate subject of all Old Testament prophecy of the Kingdom of God which Christ came to establish. We intend to go further and show that this being the case, there remains no longer any prophecy exclusive to the earthly Israel, and that those prophecies cited by the literalists as indicating a special future for the Jew, do in fact describe the Gospel glory of the New Testament Church in which the identity of Jew and Gentile is obliterated and can in no manner be restored. “So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free,” concludes Paul — and mark this, all ye would be prophetic interpreters, that he is writing to the most Gentile of all the Churches, a people so thoroughly Gentile that as their name indicates (Gaul) were part of that great Gaulish-Celtic race whose blood runs freely to this day in the veins of the British peoples. To these thoroughly Gentile tribes does Paul write to tell us that the Jew is an Arab and the believing Gentile is a Jew, a child of Abraham! Brethren, many of us have

not even begun yet to understand the special nature of prophecy and the prophetic nature of all the Scripture.

THE MYSTERY NOT THE CHURCH. Here is the great error of our dispensational brethren. It is a corner stone of their system that the Church is the mystery of Ephesians 3, something not before heard of, a feature of God's providence which came into the world like a bolt from the blue, unheralded and unforeseen. Now, brethren, in the providence of God the epistle to Ephesus follows that to Galatia. The first proves the Scriptural origin of the Church to be deeply imbedded in the Old Testament writings. To say that the second — that to Ephesus — by the same hand declares that the Church has no part nor place in the Old Testament prophecies, is to announce a mystery of such an order that sensible men will call it a mirage.

Paul clearly tells us in Ephesians 3 what the mystery is: it is not the Church but **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH**. The mystery hid from the ages and from generations and not hitherto made plain was not that there was to be a Church, but that the Church which always was from the beginning of the history of man, should in the New Testament stand revealed in its full splendor as the eternal purpose of God, the mystic seed of Abraham, Jew and Gentile combined in one body, reconciled to God by Christ on the Cross. Paul declares that God never had any other purpose but this New Testament Church. The Church is the exhibition of the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 3:10), displayed for the admiration of all the heavenly powers. The Church is the eternal purpose of God in Christ. Therefore this Gospel age, brethren, is the fulfillment of all God set out to do, and the denouement of the great drama of redemption will be the completion of that Church with the effectual calling of the last one of the election of grace given to Christ before the foundation of the world. And if the Church is the eternal purpose of God (Eph. 3:11) then there can be nothing after the Church and nothing other than the Church for which eternal wisdom is planning. The Church is the last phase of the Divine planning, as John the apostle declares, "Little children, it is the last time . . ." Paul describes the Gospel age of the full revealing of the counsel of God as "these last days" (Heb. 1:2). There is no age beyond this age, and nothing further to be revealed.

There can therefore be no separate future for Israel to disturb that full revealing of the counsel of God that "the gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph. 3:6). The Old Testament phase of the Church's history was filled largely with the theocratic kingdom of Israel, as the preparatory phase to the full revelation that was kept in store. That the Church is one and the same in the Old Testament and New Testament is clearly taught by Paul in our great Epistle to the Galatians where he teaches us that the Old Testament phase was the law-time of the Church's minority (the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ — Gal. 3:24). The Jewish dispensation therefore was preparatory to Christ, to preserve a seed and to keep faith alive in the world till Christ should come. With the coming of Christ the Church passed from its servitude under the tutors and governors of the Law into the full status of sonship. The Holy Spirit was bestowed as a Spirit of Adoption whereby we cry "Abba, Father," and in this sense the words of Christ are to be

understood, “He that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than John the Baptist” — greater because the Church has passed from the servitude of the Old Covenant into the liberty and full blessedness of the New (see Matt. 11:9 and compare Gal. 3:19 to 4:7)

The Church of the New Testament therefore is the lawful successor to the Church of the Old Testament. Our privileges are not by courtesy of the Jew, or by temporary expedient to fill in the time till more glorious days dawn in some future golden millennium with an earthly kingdom restored and centered on an earthly Jerusalem. The Church is the Israel of God. There is no other Israel, and the literalists must look elsewhere for their proofs of a Jewish revival than in those Scriptures which foretell the days of the mystic and glorious Gospel Kingdom of Christ. For the Church as the body of Christ was not only foretold in the Old Testament, but was the burden of the entire Old Testament prophecy: what was never fully understood before the Gospel came in, was that the Church was to be composed of Gentiles as well as Jews, with equal rights to all, that the Jew as a nation would lose his special rights as the natural child of Abraham and the Gentile would stand equally with all believing Jews, as much a child of Abraham as they, and a valid heir of all the promises of God made to the Patriarch.

Paul has already told us in Eph. 2:14-16 that the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile is broken down in Christ and that the Cross has abolished all distinctions of race and descent, making of twain (Jew and Gentile) **ONE NEW MAN**. A formidable part of Paul’s ministry as the specially appointed apostle of the Gentiles was taken up in proving and defending the right of Gentile believers to all promises of God in the Old Testament made through Abraham, so that “all the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ” (2 Cor. 1:20). It was for this reason that Paul wrote to the Galatians. Their faith was being subverted by Judaizing teachers who were persuading the foolish and bewitched Gauls that they could not be considered heirs and children of Abraham, with a valid salvation and access to God, unless they consented to circumcision and became Jewish proselytes. The same error is present with the evangelical church today, as reflected in recent prophetic writings. There is the same leaning to Jewish interpretations; the same expectation that some day the Jew will come into his own again as a nation and, AS A NATION inherit the Kingdom of God.

It is a curious reflection upon this error that in the year 1856 the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other states recorded a resolution rejecting as unbiblical the doctrine based on Rom. 11:25-26, and other passages, that a universal, or even such a specially numerous, conversion of the Jews as has never been before witnessed, must be expected before the last judgment. In support of that resolution the following remark was made, among others: “If it really is so that all Jews are to be saved, one might well desire rather to be a Jew than a Christian; and in fact some of the Lutherans of New York, feeling this, HAVE BEEN INDUCED TO BECOME JEWS AND SUBMIT THEMSELVES TO CIRCUMCISION, IN THE AWFULLY BLIND HOPE THAT AS ABRAHAM’S SEED THEY SHOULD BE COUNTED WORTHY OF GREATER GLORY AT THE REAPPEARANCE OF CHRIST.” We recall this, not as proof or disproof of anything, but as a commentary on certain views which

in one strength or another have always troubled the evangelical Church. It is the teaching of the New Testament that the Christian Church is the legitimate continuance of Israel. We have shown this to be the case from Paul's argument in Galatians and Ephesians and we add the comment of Dr. **E.W. Hengstenberg** (all the more cogent because Hengstenberg actually was favorable to the view that the Jew will some day be 'restored'): "Nothing is more confusing than without further inquiry to refer everything to the Jew which the Scriptures say regarding Israel. The Scriptural conception of Israel is a very subtle one, and requires for its understanding properly exercised spiritual faculties."

Writing in the middle of the last century, Dr. Hengstenberg makes the following observation regarding those enthusiastic interpretations of prophecy which since his day have matured into a system completely subversive of prophetic research and spirituality: "The hope of the future salvation of Israel, cherished in all ages by the Church, has taken in the present century (i.e. the 19th) a peculiar form amongst a not unimportant section of the believing Christians of England and Scotland, which since then has found many adherents in Germany and especially in Württemberg. They . . . went so far as to constitute the converted Jews almost the sole agents in effecting the redemption of the Church of the future, thus doing dishonor to Christ. **THE PAST AND PRESENT OF THE CHURCH WERE ALMOST CAST INTO THE SHADE IN COMPARISON OF THIS FUTURE.** In consequence of a slavish adherence to the letter they worked themselves into enthusiasm for the return of the Jews to Palestine; they dreamed of the extension of the Holy Land, of the rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem, and of the re-establishment of the Levitical cultus. The details of these hopes were carried out in the most insipid and prosaic manner, to such a point indeed as sometimes to surpass even the Rabbins, to the disgust of all who have but sipped of a deeper understanding of prophecy." Alas, what would the great Doctor have said today if he were standing amongst us with some of the recent prophetic books in his hands? We would earnestly plead with our friends of that view which foresees a Jewish re-gathering bringing in a "period richer and fuller in scope than that of Pentecost" to strike such folly from their books. Dr. Hengstenberg elsewhere says, "There is but one Church of God, one Israel, one house under two administrations, from the days of Abraham till the end of the world." Again Hengstenberg says, "Even in His choice of the apostles, our Lord was influenced by this idea of the identity of Israel and the Church. There can be no doubt that in choosing exactly twelve apostles Christ had in view the number of the tribes of Israel, and that He meant the apostles, in virtue of their being twelve, to represent Israel. And as we know certainly that the mission of the apostles was quite as much to the heathen as to the Jews, it is evident that in the eyes of the Lord, **THE CHURCH OF THE NEW COVENANT WAS ISRAEL.**"

THE SPIRITUAL VIEW OF ZECHARIAH. With all this in mind let us now turn to Zechariah the prophet and see what results may accrue. Zechariah is one of the greatest of the prophets, even though he be numbered for convenience amongst those known as "minor." He writes one of the most notable sections of the Old Testament, and in his day when the prophetic

office was about to expire in Israel (not to be revived for another five centuries till John the Baptist), God was pleased to show that the spirit of revelation was still being exerted in full vigor, as in those great days when Isaiah occupied the scene. In Zechariah God was preparing for the unfolding of the mystery of Israel in the Church by clothing the Church that was to be in the familiar dress of the earthly Israel — whose heir the Church became when the Kingdom of Christ was fully revealed.

The description of the New Testament Kingdom of Christ in Zechariah is borrowed from the history and even from the geographical elements of the earthly nation, so that Jerusalem on earth becomes a picture of the heavenly Jerusalem, and the topographical details of the Palestinian scene are woven into the tapestry of the heavenly. The restoration of the people to their old limits and the rebuilding of the city and Temple were pictures, *and intended so to be*, of the heavenly constitution of the Church which has its existence not in visible form on earth, but in spiritual dimensions and privileges “in heavenly places in Christ.” Hence when place, names, and geographical circumstances are mentioned by the prophet, it is an error to suppose that this can only be taken literally, for there is more than a hint in many parts of the prophecy that we are to look beyond the drapery to the inward spiritual reality. In no prophecy is it more plain than in Zechariah that that principle of interpretation is operating which was laid down by the apostles, “All the prophets from Samuel, as many have spoken, have foretold of these days” (Acts 3:24), and, “Unto us the prophets did minister the things which are now reported unto you ...” (1 Pet. 1:12).

In Zechariah Jerusalem becomes a city without bounds, to which God is a wall of fire round about (how literal is that?). The Temple is a living thing and not a thing of holy stone and lime. Living waters go out from Jerusalem. King David reigns again (and even our literalizing friends find they have to spiritualize there). Even the literal hints of Christ’s rejection and crucifixion are clothed with powerful elements which may not be interpreted according to the letter but according to the Spirit. What happened to the thirty pieces of silver for instance (11:13)? And of what nature is that fountain which is opened for sin and for uncleanness (13:1)? Literal water? — To our task therefore.

ZECHARIAH AND HIS PROPHETIC NAME. Like Ezekiel who preceded him, Zechariah was priest as well as prophet, and returned from the Captivity to succeed his grandfather Iddo in office. He was contemporary with Haggai whose chief ministry was the stirring up of the people to rebuild the temple. Zechariah’s burden was the building of the mystic inner temple of the Spirit — the inward reality of what the temple stood for. He is further identified as “Zechariah the son of Berechiah” — not he whom they slew between the temple and the altar (Matt. 23:35) but bearing the same name, so that the post-exilic nation might be warned of the judgment that waited the earthly people, infinitely greater than what they had already endured — as the Saviour indicated in the passage in Matthew already quoted. It is thus that the whole Scripture hangs together and divine predestination is shown in every minute and unseen part. “God foreknows because He predestinates,” thunders Luther. Students of the prophetic Word will take all this to

heart and search deep for the full significance of Zechariah's ministry. The very names of the prophets are part of their prophecy. Here was a young man strangely and prophetically born and named, prepared by divine providence even in his family and parentage, to give the Word he ministered a hidden significance which mocks at the surface theories of the literalists.

The distant rumblings of that national apostasy which finally hurled the nation from its privileges in the time of the Saviour, are already heard in the opening verses of Zechariah. "Turn you now from your evil ways," he cries (verses 3-4) as he shows the people that the blessings promised under Haggai and himself would only be enjoyed by the repentant and the converted. The whole book is evangelical. Let this be remembered by all those who see in this great prophecy only national promises to an earthly Israel. Zechariah sees far beyond the figures of land and people, and describes that Kingdom of Christ which comes not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo, it is here! or, Lo, it is there. For this Kingdom is within and not without. It is the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world for our glory, which none of the princes of Israel or any other of this world knew, for had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory (1 Cor. 2).

THE BIRTH OF THE PHARISEE. Already in Zechariah's day, the Pharisee and the Sadducee were being born with their carnal notions of Abrahamic inheritance, Jewish privilege, and most-favored-nation theories — those same fatal notions which were denounced by John the Baptist, then by Christ Himself, and thereafter by the apostles, until the Kingdom of God was taken from them and given unto a nation bringing forth the fruit thereof. Yet many of our expositors nowadays borrow the same fatal and lifeless doctrines from the Scribes and Pharisees and assure the earthly Jew of a bright future in a time of Latter Day Glory — a kingdom of the same order as that which their false guides, blind leaders of the blind, taught until they and their dupes both fell into the ditch as Christ had foretold. In Zechariah's day the people were already learning, and learning fast, to walk along that road of self-righteousness and mere outward religion which so quickly wrought the ruin of the nation.

But we must run rapidly through the earlier visions of Zechariah. What a tremendous night was that 24th of Sebat in the second year of Darius! Wave upon wave, a holy octave of visions burst upon the astonished view of the young prophet — visions the glory and wonders of which remain to astonish all who inquire and search.

[1] **THE MAN AMONGST THE MYRTLE TREES** (chapter 1: 7-11). This man is Christ, leading the cavalry of heaven in divine judgment against the enemies of His people. The myrtle trees "in the bottom" are the elect, the covenant people whom the Lord comes to redeem, and their situation shows their inconspicuous and humble position in worldly eyes. The Kingdom of God cometh not with ostentation.

[2] **THE FOUR CARPENTERS AND THE FOUR HORNS** (1:18-21). The four horns are the four monarchies of Daniel's vision which were to oppress the earthly people till the Kingdom

of God should come. The Carpenters are the successive judgments of God by which each in turn was frayed and scattered, opening up a pathway through history for the coming of the Redeemer.

[3] THE MAN WITH THE MEASURING LINE (chapter 2). The dimensions of Christ's kingdom were to exceed by far the limits of the prophet's day. So vast is the city that it is not possible to enclose it within walls. God Himself is the wall — a wall of fire round about. Here is no literalism but a glorious figure of the Divine protection of the elect. The Gentile nations flow in and become one people with the inhabitants of Zion. This began to be fulfilled when the great apostle of the Gentiles was called and sent forth to lay the foundations of the Lord's kingdom in those parts where the name of God had not been known, that there they might be called the children of the living God (see Rom. 9:23-26). We prefer Paul's commentary on the prophets to that of our excellent but very much mistaken friends who transfer everything to a time yet future, and deprive the Church of the New Testament of her prophetic promises and privileges. Who else is the apple of His eye (Zech. 2:8), but His elect whom He has redeemed by His blood — not of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles? We refuse to be deprived of these consolations by a theory of prophecy which was denounced in the New Testament 2,000 years ago.

[4] JOSHUA AND HIS GARMENTS (chapter 3). Literalism has played havoc with this prophecy and it is small wonder that though many sermons are preached upon it few if any perceive the simple and obvious, though grand and elevating meaning. We have been maintaining that the prevailing prophetic theories have led to the impoverishment of the ministry of the Word, and this is our excuse, if we needed any, for risking our popularity by venturing into this most prejudiced field.

Joshua in this chapter stands not for himself, nor yet, as many have fondly taught, for the sinner needing conversion. He stands for the priesthood of the Old and New Covenants, and his change of garments, from the filth of unremoved sin under the Old dispensation to the beauty of Gospel righteousness in the New, shows the change of priesthood from the temporal to the eternal. The priesthood of Aaron has failed, and the great Melchizedek, the Lord our Righteousness, assumes the office of the eternal priesthood. The very name of Joshua is significant of this. *Joshua* is the Hebrew of what in the Greek is *Jesus*. He is the son of Josedech, which means THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. Behold, here, standing before us in Zechariah's vision, *Jehovah Tzidkenu*, the Lord our Righteousness (Jer. 23:6, and margin). The priests of the Old Covenant were sinful men, and their sacrifices of bulls and goats could not take away sin. Satan stands invisibly in the court to challenge the legality of the proceedings. The Lord our Righteousness, our heavenly archangel Michael (for so He is) durst not bring against Satan a railing accusation, for the process is a legal one, and the believer's title to forgiveness is the matter in dispute; therefore the Lord says, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is this not a brand plucked out of the fire?" (Compare Zech. 3:2 with Jude 9, and learn that 'the body of Moses' there in dispute is not a question of sepulture, but the body of the Law of which Moses was the mediator and which Satan makes the ground of his accusation against the people of the Lord who are saved without Law by One who

acted for them by suffering the penalty of the Law. Compare this with those impoverished sermons which aim to show that Joshua is the sinner in process of conversion.

We are reluctant to leave this chapter without a reference to the glory of its closing verses. Verse 8 displays the heavenly Joshua among His redeemed companions — men wondered at indeed, for His elect are the wonder, the treasure, and the riches of all Creation. “My servant the Branch” is the coming Redeemer, the root and the offspring of David. The stone with seven eyes (verse 9) is the foundation stone of the New Testament Temple, Christ, exhibiting the fullness of that sevenfold, omniscient Spirit of grace and adoption, who could not be given till the Redeemer was glorified in resurrection and exaltation to the Throne of All-power (John 7:39; Matt. 28:18). The vision closes with a scene of the redeemed people, dwelling in peace and prosperity under the hand of Him who has made peace by the blood of His Cross.

[5] THE TWO OLIVE TREES (chapter 4). From the Priesthood of the New Covenant we move into the sanctuary itself, but not, NOT, the earthly sanctuary with its golden candlesticks and daily replenishment of sanctuary oil. Here is a living Temple to defy all literalizers. Here is what the Jerusalem temple only represented in shadow — the unceasing intercession of Christ for His people. The mystic candlestick which the prophet sees is fed directly from the two olive trees growing beside it — an impossible figure to be literalized. Here we are obviously in the region of the mind and the spirit. Golden pipes communicate between the trees and the lampholders. Zechariah is bewildered and cries out for an explanation. The answer is wonderful: “THIS IS THE WORD OF THE LORD TO ZERUBBABEL SAYING, NOT BY MIGHT, NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS.” How many sermons have been preached — and preached in vain — on this text! The verse applies exclusively to the work of Christ bringing in the Gospel. It comes not with ostentation. Soft as the fall of the morning dew the Kingdom of God comes in. No exhibition of worldly might or power heralds its appearing. It is a thing of the Spirit, blowing as the wind — where He listeth. Let the Word be used for the purpose for which it was given and let the people hear from this text the nature of the Kingdom of God in contrast with the earthly kingdom of national glory dreamed of by the Pharisees, slavishly followed by the expositors of today who are unable to shake themselves free from naturalistic and carnal theories.

To the name of Joshua is now added that of Zerubbabel, the dynastic successor of David and the progenitor of Christ. These two, Joshua and Zerubbabel, priest and lawful king (who never came to the throne himself) are the two olive trees of Zechariah’s sanctuary, and they represent Christ in His two-fold office of Priest-King after the pattern of Melchizedek. Here also is the key to the understanding of the identity of the two witnesses of Rev. 11:3-4: “These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.” The vision of Zechariah and John is one. The two witnesses of Rev. 11 are not Moses and Elijah, or Enoch and Elijah as the Futurists dream, but none other than Christ in His sending forth of His Spirit of truth as a spirit of testimony in His Church, to the confusion of all enemies to the end of time. The two witnesses of Revelation therefore represent the Church of Christ animated by the Spirit

of Christ to bear witness as His Body in the world, to be slain and overcome (in the flesh) as He was, but through death to overcome death, to pass through it unscathed, and to be exalted over it by the atonement and resurrection of Christ. We leave the bones of Futurism, with their attached fables of resurrected saints brought down from Paradise to live on the earth again. We leave these bones to those who have the wish to break their teeth upon them.

[6] THE FLYING ROLL (chapter 5:1-4). The purpose of this and the following vision is to show to the people of the land their sin and their entire disqualification for being worshippers in the new and heavenly Temple. All would be in vain without the gift of a new heart, for no other should ever see the Kingdom of God (John 3:3). The dimensions of the Flying Roll are the dimensions of the porch of Solomon's temple, indicating there can be no access there for the sinner. The writing on the Roll selects two commandments, one from each table of the Decalogue — impiety and theft — to show how the earthly nation of Israel had failed utterly to keep either table and was thus given up to the curse. In his later chapters Zechariah shows the remedy for sin, and the gift of the regenerating Spirit — not for the Jews only, but also for the Gentiles.

[6] THE EPHAH, THE WOMAN AND THE WEIGHT (chapter 5: 5-11). This shows the final removal of the earthly people from their place of privilege amongst the nations. The ephah is a large measure of capacity representing the Law. The woman is the wicked and apostate people of Israel, once a pure virgin but now a raddled harlot. She is cast into the ephah and a great leaden weight, the heavy load of God's Judgment, is clamped down upon her. Winged figures carry her away to the land of Shinar. The ancient name of Babylonia is thus introduced again from the early chapters of Genesis to show the removal of the nation to that region which Shinar represents: the region of rejection. It was from Shinar that Abraham came; it is to Shinar that his latest descendants are banished, as way is made for the incoming of that new, elect nation of Jew and Gentile which is the true seed of Abraham to whom the promises were made. The banishment to Babylon in the days of Jeremiah was short in duration. The banishment to Shinar is perpetual. From it there can be no return as a nation.

[7] THE FOUR CHARIOTS AND THE MOUNTAIN OF BRASS (chapter 6). The brazen mountains are the Lord's impregnable defense of His redeemed people. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem so the Lord is round about His people (Psa. 125:2). The chariots issuing forth are the successive judgments by which the enemies of the Lord are swept away — as in the case of the Four Monarchies of Daniel. "The north country is not Russia, but Babylonia (our modern commentators make an elementary error there). The Assyrian and Babylonian armies always came upon Palestine from the north: there was no other possible route they could take. The south country is Egypt, the first oppressor of the people of God. Egypt and Babylon are representative here of all the oppressors of Christ's Kingdom in all ages and places.

The remainder of chapter 6 is an acted prophecy. Certain men had arrived from the captivity right at the close of Zechariah's series of visions. They were representative of the great inflow of

the nations of mankind into the kingdom of Christ. Christ appears again in the person of Joshua the High Priest who is crowned in the midst of his brethren. He builds the Temple of the Lord (verse 12) and establishes the Counsel of Peace (the New Covenant) between God and His elect people whom Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah represent. The names of the men are significant and prophetic of the Church of the Redeemed — the Strength, Grace, Knowledge and Preserving Power of God, and His concealed wisdom (Zephaniah) given to them in the Gospel. The last two verses of the chapter show clearly that the men who that day returned from the Captivity were representative of the incoming of the Gentiles to the Kingdom of Christ. It is important to remember this when we come to the later chapters of Zechariah which so many of our friends reserve exclusively for the Jew. On the contrary, Zechariah was the peculiar prophet of the mystical Kingdom of Christ, who foresaw the rejection of the people of the Old Covenant, that way might be made for the full flowering of the Kingdom of Christ in the Gospel — the divine goal of all the ages past.

WARNINGS AND PROMISES IN CHAPTERS 7 AND 8. The prophetic ecstasy of Zechariah's night of visions is now ended. Two years have elapsed. It is now the 4th of Darius and the 9th month. The temple is built, and the Jewish colony is firmly established. Delegates arrive to inquire whether the people should continue to observe the feast of the fifth month which was originally established to commemorate the day when the temple was destroyed by the Chaldeans. Zechariah's spirit is stirred within him at this Pharisaic preoccupation with outward observance instead of inward piety. No lesson was ever learned by these people. The weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy, compassion, were neglected, and piety consisted only in outward observances. As their fathers before them they 'refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears' (7:11).

We can do no better than quote Dr. Hengstenberg here: "In the second part of his address (chapter 8) the prophet proceeds to meet the question with a direct reply, the substance of which could no longer confirm the hypocrites in their carnal security, but might serve to comfort and strengthen such as were weak in faith, both in his own and subsequent times, until the appearance of Christ Himself. Such abundant deliverance was in reserve for the covenant nation that not only on the day on which Jerusalem was destroyed, but the other days also which had been set apart as fast days (as for instance the capture of Jerusalem in the 4th month, the murder of Gedaliah in the 7th, and the commencement of the siege in the 10th) would all be altered into days of rejoicing; for the blessings they were about to receive would be far greater than those which they had lost on the days referred to. In this reply the prophet embraced the whole of the blessings of salvation intended for the covenant nation, and the full meaning of his declaration was first realized in Christ. The conclusion (20-23) relates exclusively to the manner in which the Kingdom of God would be glorified by Him and, as a still further expansion of Micah 4:2; Isa. 2:3, it contains a description of the eagerness with which heathen nations would strive for admission into the Kingdom of God." Thus far, Hengstenberg (who, as we have already pointed

out, is favorable to a future restoration of the Jewish people, a point which we do not share with him).

TAKING HOLD OF THE SKIRT OF THE JEW. We add a brief comment of our own. The last 6 verses of Zech. 8 are descriptive of a regenerate people who “love the truth and peace.” The world-wide pilgrimage of the nations to Jerusalem is an evangelical picture of the spread of the Gospel, in accord with the Saviour’s dictum, “Neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem shall men worship the Father . . .” (John 4:21). The last verse signifies, by “ten men of all nations taking hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew,” not the embarrassing literal spectacle, but the accession of the Gentiles to Jewish privileges and to the promise made to Abraham, in accord with Paul in Gal.3:29 and Eph. 3:6. Noah had long before prophesied of these days: “God shall enlarge Japheth and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem,” that is, ‘Japheth shall inherit Shem’s rights and privileges — the Gentiles will enter into the promises made to Shem’s great descendant Abraham, see Genesis 9:27.

CHAPTER NINE — THE MANNER OF THE KING AND THE KINGDOM.

This chapter pronounces the doom of Persia, the oppressing power at the time of the prophecy, the Conquest of Alexander the Great, and the manner of Christ’s appearing thereafter.

Under the name of Hadrach (vs. 1), Persia is represented. This name gave great trouble to the commentators till Hengstenberg elucidated it last century. It is a name which denotes in the Hebrew the strong becoming weak, and was used prophetically concealing the identity of Persia to avoid unnecessary offence to the ruling power under which the Jews were being permitted to re-establish themselves in Palestine. Till verse 8, the historic and swift campaign of Alexander is described as he swept along the coast of Asia Minor destroying Tyre, reducing Philistia, yet respecting the State of Israel, to which he reverently did no harm, but passed it by in peace. Alexander’s great campaign which resulted in the complete and rapid subjugation of the Persian empire, was in itself prophetic in so far as Israel was concerned — again showing the omnipotent, sovereign and predestinating hand of God in history. The covenant people were spared in the Conqueror’s great march through Asia, as a token of the protecting decree of God concerning His Church. There follows (vs. 9-17) by contrast, the conquering career of Christ, but oh! So different in its character from all worldly expeditions. Zion’s King comes, righteous and having salvation, riding upon an ass. He speaks in peace and not in war to the great heathen nations and without perceptible power establishes His dominion from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. The literal fulfillment of Christ’s humble entry into Jerusalem on the borrowed colt, with the poor garments of his disciples as the trappings on which He rides, with the plaudits of the poor and not of the great acclaiming Him as the King of Israel, is itself prophetic of the nature of His Kingdom and the manner of its establishment. It comes not with observation. The literal becomes the clothing of the spiritual. It is not enough to say that the prophecy was literally fulfilled with Christ’s entry into Jerusalem. It was; but that was only the

beginning of the fulfillment of that spiritual Kingdom which for 2,000 years has grown from imperceptible origins into a Kingdom which fills the whole earth.

The Jews beheld with trembling and wonder the passage of Alexander's army, the incredible fall of Tyre and Sidon, and with that fall, the certain doom of Persia. They knew from Zechariah's prophecy that it was God who gave the dominion to the Greek conquerors; but was there nothing for them? The answer from Zechariah was that God Himself would appear. Yet His coming would be in complete contrast with the noise, tumult and energy of the Greek campaign. The march of the Greek regiments, and their iron discipline, shook the very earth around them. Here in contrast is Messiah's campaign for the establishment of a dominion which should outlast all time and could never pass away, yet should come in with quietness, meekness, peace and humility. God could not appear in any other way, because our need was spiritual and not carnal, and that must ever be the manner of Christ's Kingdom to the end of time. Those who dream of battlements and towers on earth, and pomp and glory for Israel after the flesh, had better take another look at the gospels and the epistles — and another look at themselves.

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD. There is that in the corrupt human heart which always yearns after the outward and the visible. The imposing view which many have of the Church as of a great institution which impresses the world with its majesty and influence; its reproduction of the kingdoms of this world in outward pomp and splendor and show, is not the view of the prophets. There are mighty ecclesiastical institutions which involve themselves in intrigues, diplomacies, and worldly policies, which issue impressive encyclicals and bulls, fiats and declarations, which influence governments, and which send out ambassadors and delegations and legates to court and conference, but in none of these things do we perceive the Kingdom of Christ. The wearing of royal purples and the building up of hierarchies, nobilities, aristocracies and principalities, is not the Church but the world. The Church is that spiritual remnant, that elect company of the redeemed who do not number in their ranks many mighty or noble, who consist rather of the weak things of the earth and things which are despised and nothing in the eyes of contemporary society, but who march to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They are a people apart, who cannot mingle or coalesce with the world in its ways and fashions, for they are separated as holy unto Christ, and carry the cross He gives them to bear. Nor will the scene change, brethren. This is the manner of the Kingdom till the end of time. This is our Millennium. This is the Kingdom desired by prophets and kings and righteous men of old, to whom it was revealed that not unto themselves but unto us did they minister the things which are now reported unto us through them that preached the Gospel unto us with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven (1 Pet. 1:12).

It is thus the apostles taught us to regard the Old Testament prophecies, for search through the entire New Testament and there is not a word spoken there of future national glory. Nor is there any other Kingdom of Christ and of God spoken about in the New Testament but the Kingdom of Grace of which we believers are a part. And this is the Kingdom which was prophesied by the Zechariahs and the Isaiahs of old time, and anticipated by David and Solomon.

If the Church is not the Kingdom, then the Church is not the subject of ANY prophecy. But Paul has told us that we are the Israel of God, that the children of Abraham are the election of grace, and that the Church is the eternal purpose of God from before the foundation of the world. What misconception exists amongst us of the sublime teachings of Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians! The Jewish theory of prophecy has not only severed the Church's roots in the Old Testament, but has plundered and misrepresented her inheritance in the New. When Paul speaks of "the heavenly places" or, as some will have it "the heavenlies," in his great epistle to Ephesus, he is speaking of the spiritual nature of salvation and of the Kingdom of Christ as distinct from the Jewish conceptions of earthly visibility of that Kingdom.

PAUL'S "HEAVENLY PLACES." Our conference and Convention speakers love to talk in mystical fashion of Paul's "heavenlies" as of some sublime region of higher Christian life not attained to usually by the rank and file of Christian people. Alas! They cannot see the obvious, that Paul is telling all true believers that they are already "raised up together with Christ to sit with Him in heavenly places" (Eph. 2:6). The heavenly places denote the spiritual state of the Church, completely divorced now from the earthly and visible state of the Church in the Old Testament times, when she was in the servitude and bondage to the weak and beggarly elements of this world (Gal. 4:29). Yet there are people who write us to tell us of their amazement that we should not believe it to be the purpose of God to restore in the world those same weak and beggarly and pauperizing elements as the token of His majestic favor to Israel in some future age. And even as we write these words, we are aware that some of our readers will toss this page aside for explaining that Paul's *heavenly places* are the ordinary privileges of the Christian and do not denote a superior experience of "victorious living" which we greatly fear only exists in the imagination of those who teach it and those who make profession of it.

The true Church of Christ is always in conflict with the world and Satan, and that is why we must take issue with those who imagine a millennium in which the saints visibly reign over the wicked. Our dominion is NOW, brethren, and this is our millennium, with Christ reigning at the right hand of Power, till all His enemies are made His footstool. We wage a constant warfare with spiritual foes for as Paul reminds us, "We war not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, with the rulers of darkness of this world, with spiritual wickedness in *the heavenlies*" (Eph. 6:12). So the devil too is in our heavenlies, and away goes the Convention sermon of "no defeat, no conflict."

The true believer exercises royal power in this world by his prayer and testimony. He sways empires and rules over kingdoms. He binds the kings of the earth in chains and their nobles with fetters of iron (Psa. 149). So we triumph over the world even in weakness and affliction, and what greater thing can some dreamy earthly millennium do for us than this? The Book of Revelation, which is the inner history of the Church in 'the heavenlies' shows that she is never a kingdom of this world, but an afflicted, despised people who follow the Lamb whithersoever He leadeth.

The Hadrachs — the oppressing powers of this world — crumble into dust while the Kingdom of God remaineth. Their crowns and their pride are cast to the moles and the bats while our heavenly Conqueror moves silently and majestically from triumph to triumph. This is what is spiritually reflected behind Christ's prophetic ride into Jerusalem. Riding upon the lowliest and most despised of beasts, without pomp or circumstance, He comes to reign who next shall come in the clouds of heaven and all the holy angels with Him, to summon the world to judgment.

“Just, and saving Himself.” Yes, dear reader, that is the meaning of Zechariah's words (see margin). He saves His people by saving Himself — that is, by His own righteousness, merit and obedience to the Law, and by the prerogative of His own rank and title as the Son of God, He comes back from the dead to reign. “No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (John 10:18). Because He lives, we shall live also.

Verse 10 of our chapter 9 refers to the military eclipse of Israel, which finally took place under the Roman invasion. But this circumstance would not affect the Kingdom of Christ, for by the proclamation of the Gospel of peace Christ would extend His dominion to all the earth. Zechariah, as we have been trying to say, is an evangelical prophet. This is confirmed in verse 11, which is meaningless except in terms of the New Testament revelation of the Gospel.

The remainder of the chapter (verses 12-17) is historic, but like all prophetic history, it teaches spiritual reality. The verses describe the Maccabean conflict with the Greeks (the successors of Alexander) as verse 13 determines, but this is only the drapery. The Lord is with His little flock, and makes them as the crown jewels of heaven upon His eternal brow (verse 16). How great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty (Verse 17)!

CHAPTER 10 — THE LATTER RAIN.

How our commentators spring to conclusions suited to the theories they already have in mind! Here they profess to see a promise of Jewish revival at the end of the Gospel era. But if any historical period is in view it is at the beginning, not the end, of the Gospel era. This is Pentecost. The latter rain in Palestine was the last rain before harvest and if it failed there would be famine. Pentecost, as its name and circumstance indicate, was the essential preliminary to God's harvest time in the world when Christ from the throne above sent down His Spirit in gracious showers to sprinkle many nations and extend His reign over all the earth. Verses 2 and 3 describe the dilemma of the people of God, the little flock, under the Old Covenant, whose shepherds taught them falsely (that is, false prophets and teachers and rulers arose to teach them the doctrines of the Pharisees which denied the grace of God and fed the goats instead of the sheep).

The true people of God appear at the end of verse 3 — “his flock, the house of Judah.” These are the redeemed of all ages. The remainder of the chapter shows the Lord fighting for and with His people. Judah and Ephraim, the two divisions of Israel so long separated, are seen

as one people. They return from Egypt and Assyria to Gilead and Lebanon. The sea is smitten to make way for their deliverance — a figure based on the crossing of the Red Sea in the time of Moses, and denoting the judgments of God upon the wicked world which oppresses the elect people of God. Our friends will not be too pleased with a spiritual interpretation here, but we act on the principle that the New Testament always interprets the prophecies of Christ's Kingdom spiritually as we have endeavored to show. On what principle do our friends interpret otherwise? And when was it that the pride of Assyria was brought down and the scepter of Egypt taken away? (verse 11). Let that be the answer to those who look for a fulfillment yet future, for there is no Assyria existing today, and Egypt has long ago ceased to count among the nations.

CHAPTER 11 — THE FLOCK OF SLAUGHTER AND THE POOR OF THE FLOCK.

Zech. 11 is one of the most remarkable of all prophetic portraits of Christ, and one of the greatest of all demonstrations of the divine inspiration of the Holy Scripture. Here is named the very price which the Jews paid for the betrayal of Christ, and the ultimate use to which the money was put. Yet even here literalism is mingled with spiritual-prophetic elements as we should expect in such a prophet as Zechariah, so that when we come to the place, we shall see more of the marvels and mysteries of inspiration unfolded. The chapter opens with a prediction of the final judgment of God upon the sinful nation of Israel because of their rejection of Christ. The reference to Lebanon, and the firs and the cedars, is poetic of the Temple, while the Temple itself is representative of the earthly people. Cedars and firs were significant in the construction of the Temple by Solomon (1 Kings 5:8). (See also Song of Sol. 1:17, where the bridal home of Christ and the Church is so described).

Verses 3-9 depict the last state of the nation at the time of Christ's appearing amongst them. They are "the flock of slaughter" — because that was the end to which they were hastening. But in the flock there is an elect core — "Even you, O poor of the flock" (verse 7). So there remaineth at this time also a remnant according to the election of grace (Rom. 11:5).

Zechariah, clothed with the prophetic spirit, comes forward in the person of Christ, as though the Spirit of Christ conveyed to his spirit all that would befall the Saviour five centuries hence. In response to the Lord's command to feed the flock, he responds, "I will feed them." In the vision he takes to himself two staves named Beauty and Bands which in New Testament language might be rendered "Grace and Peace" for these are the instruments by which Christ saves and sanctifies His people, even the poor of the flock of the slaughter. But all to no avail so far as the nation is concerned. The gracious rule of Christ is rejected by the sinful nation, and the dreaded words are uttered, "I will not feed you."

The picture is further amplified in verse 8 by the cutting off (in one month) of three shepherds. These three shepherds are emblematic of those means by which God had hitherto ruled His people — Prince, Prophet and Priest. The threefold office was to be abolished "in one month" — a short prophetic period. From that day to this Jewry has had neither priest, prophet,

nor prince, since they rejected all three when they rejected Christ. The true Shepherd who declared in the hearing of the people, “I am the good Shepherd and know my sheep and am known of mine” (John 10) united in Himself the threefold office of PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING and there can be no other after Him. What an awful significance in the words of Christ to the sinful people, “Ye believe not because YE ARE NOT MY SHEEP” (John 10:26). Let us always distinguish between the two Israels — the flock of slaughter and the poor of the flock.

THE SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL BREAKS THE COVENANT AND ASKS FOR HIS WAGES — 11:10-14. Verse 10 describes how the Shepherd of Israel, rejected by His own, breaks the staff, Beauty, as a token that His office so far as the nation is concerned is at an end. “And I took my Staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people,” Those who hold to a future restoration of Israel have never faced up to the implications of this statement in Zechariah. We ask our friends to give heed to this most serious statement. Christ has broken the covenant with the earthly people and it will never be restored. Zechariah is the last of all the prophets except Malachi, and Malachi only underlines what Zechariah prophesies here. The last word of the Old Testament is “curse.” The covenant with the earthly people was broken “in that day” — that is, the day when they crucified Him. But it was only the end of Israel after the flesh. Israel after the spirit remained, and still remains, and these are they who in verse 11 are referred to, “And so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it was the Word of the Lord.”

The good Shepherd proceeds (in the person of Zechariah) to ask for His wages, as the sign that His office has been terminated, and the earthly nation is no longer His flock. The ensuing words are remarkable for the prophetic intermingling of the literal elements with the spiritual, as though the literal fulfillment were only a parable of much wider significance. Very little justice has ever been done to verses 12 and 13 by any of the schools of interpretation. We shall attempt to repair this defect. The Word of God has been withdrawn from the sinful nation (“I will not feed you,” verse 9). The covenant which made them the privileged and chosen repository of that Word is broken for ever (verse 10). There remains only the formal winding up of the contract. The Shepherd asks for His wages in full discharge of the contract broken. He receives His price — thirty pieces of silver. Here the literal ends and the prophetic begins — a factor overlooked by so many. For it is evident that the Shepherd never received His wages and never saw them — Judas Iscariot had them in his pocket. Here the literal fades out, and the prophetic parable begins.

In the next verse, in obedience to the Word of Jehovah, the Shepherd gives the money to the Temple potter. Now the potter never handled the money in the Gospel account, nor did the Shepherd. The money went back to the priests after Judas had cast it down in the Temple. The priests could not put it back into the treasury because it was blood-money so they purchased with it the potter’s field at the entrance to the valley of Hinnom outside the city walls, and dedicated it to the unworthy purpose of burying strangers — Gentiles — whose bodies would have defiled any Jewish cemetery.

JEREMIAH EXPLAINS ZECHARIAH. But why should the potter be mentioned? Because the roots of Zechariah's post-exilic prophecy are sunk deep in Jeremiah's pre-exilic prophecy, and to obtain the meaning we must go back to Jeremiah, to the familiar but much misused passage, Jeremiah, chapters 18 and 19. Jeremiah is instructed by the Lord to go down to the potter's house; the house of the craftsman who was employed to care for the Temple pottery. There he sees the Master-Potter (who represents the Lord Himself) at work upon the wheels. The vessel being turned is marred and the potter crushes the clay, and makes another vessel. The action is explained to Jeremiah. The vessel is Israel after the flesh. The nation has failed and is rejected and is appointed for destruction. Another vessel — the mystic New Testament Church — is raised out of the ruin of the first. The action is extended to chapter 19 where in obedience to the Word of the Lord, Jeremiah takes an earthen vessel and proceeds to the valley of the son of Hinnom which is by the east gate of Jerusalem — the gate which looks out to the Gentile world. There in the presence of the priests and elders of Jerusalem he smashes the earthen jar and declares, "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury them in Tophet till there be no place to bury." This is the irrevocable doom of the nation of Israel. The vessel can never be put together again, and whatever ideas of Latter Day Glory may be entertained by some of our friends, they had better reckon with Jeremiah and Zechariah before they come to a ready conclusion. They may find that with all their skill they cannot put together again the broken vessel.

That Zechariah was the inspired successor of Jeremiah in his prophecy is clear from Jer. 19:6, where the valley of Hinnom, or Tophet, is re-named, "The Valley of Slaughter." From this source Zechariah derives the description, "The flock of slaughter" in the very chapter we are dealing with (chapter 11).

PAYING FOR THEIR OWN FUNERAL. The two prophets hang together. The priests of the Temple in Christ's day got their money back and purchased the potter's field to bury strangers therein, but they did not know they were paying for their own funeral as a nation, with the betrayal money. They were the real strangers and Gentiles, though they boasted of being the children of Abraham; the believing Gentiles were the true Israel, the true children of Abraham (as Paul and John the Baptist tell us). On their way into Zion, as the ransomed of the Lord (Isa. 35:10), these children of the East pass the burying ground of the Jewish nation, purchased with the reward of wickedness and betrayal — and that burying ground is Hell; for the Valley of the son of Hinnom was the rubbish dump of the city, where all the foulness and filth drained, where the perpetual fires burned, and became a symbol of the eternal fires of Hell. For Hinnom in the Hebrew becomes in Greek, Gehenna, one of the most powerful New Testament words for Hell. Nor is the prophecy yet exhausted, for it should be pointed out that at the entrance to the valley of Gehenna the purest white clay was found which the Temple potters used for their finest work, and hence the field became known as the potter's field where their clay and their kilns were located. And from the mouth of Hell the Lord quarries His clay, to take the place of the

Israelitish clay and to save those of all the nations of mankind who were appointed to die, who were without God and without hope and without promise, but who, as the election of grace, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, are brought by effectual calling from despair and darkness and curse into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Now let all literalizers get to work, and we shall be pleased beyond measure if they, with their theories, can do better than this. While they are considering the matter we shall add a note to clear up one of the minor mysteries of prophetic quotation in the New Testament. Matthew quotes in his gospel, verses 12 and 13 of our chapter (see Matt. 27:9-10). Matthew says, “Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet . . .” . But it was not Jeremiah but Zechariah who used the words referred to by Matthew. Why should Matthew attribute to Jeremiah what belonged to Zechariah? A mistake! Shout the critics. But our readers by now will know there was no mistake. The roots of Zechariah’s prophecy, as we have plainly shown, were in Jeremiah, and Matthew, under unerring inspiration, knowingly and deliberately refers his readers to Jeremiah as the primary source of the prophecy, and at the same time the Holy Spirit warns us thereby that we must not interpret Zechariah’s words without recourse to Jeremiah: and when we do so, we discover the spiritual nature of the prophecy altogether overshadowing the literal elements. And that is the rule of prophecy.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE THIRTY PIECES. Hide thy face, O believer, as thou seest why thy Lord could be sold for no other price than thirty pieces of silver. Exodus 21:32 is the key. Thirty silver shekels is the amount of compensation paid to a master for the loss of a servant gored by someone else’s ox. They gave for thy Lord the contemptuous price of a menial.

**A servant’s form He wore,
And in His body bore
Our dreadful curse on Calvary.**

The remainder of the chapter speaks clearly. The staff known as Bands is broken to denote the dispersion of the nation under the figure of the separation again of the former two kingdoms of Judah and Israel — reunited for a short time by the captivity of both in Chaldea and Persia (for all the twelve tribes are literally in Jewry today, and have been ever since the captivity) — now dispersed through the world and doomed to remain so, whatever may be happening or fated to happen in Palestine. Israel after the flesh is handed over to the idol shepherd (verses 15-17). Not that they ever went back to idols in a literal sense, but the powerful expression is used to denote that there is a spiritual idolatry which creates false and delusive representations of God, and woe to that people who are handed over to those delusions, for they will believe a lie. “This is the true God and eternal life,” writes John at the end of his first Epistle, “little children KEEP YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS.” In short, those closing verses (of this 11th chapter) describe the fate of the nation after they had rejected Christ and refer to the blind rabbinicalism under which they continue to suffer, for having left the Word of God and turned unto Fables.

CHAPTER TWELVE — THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST EXALTED.

Zechariah's fourth and last discourse commences with the opening verse of chapter 12 — "THE BURDEN OF THE WORD OF THE LORD FOR ISRAEL." In these 3 chapters is described the first coming of Christ, the setting up of His Gospel Kingdom, and the privileges and glories of that Kingdom.

The opening verse introduces the Lord as the sovereign Creator, Almighty in power, who knows all that is in man seeing He is the Creator of the spirit of man within him. The reassuring Word — and how necessary in such a time as this? — is designed to strengthen the people of God for their age-long conflict with the world.

Jerusalem is the preoccupation of the Holy God — the centre of all His purposes on earth; not the city in Palestine of that name, but that which the earthly city represents — the true Church of Christ, the new and heavenly Jerusalem, that Zion to which the tribes of the Gentiles come that they might be taught the word of the Lord. This gospel Zion becomes a burdensome stone to all who oppose it, for so has been the true Church of Christ through all the ages. Those who oppose God only injure themselves. The governors of Judah who become like a fire among wood or a torch in a dry sheaf (verse 6) are the apostles of the Lamb. The Word is God's Word and acts like a fire among the nations and must prevail. Futuristic views of prophecy can make nothing of this verse without denying their own millennium, for if the apostles are reigning again on the earth, then Satan is bound, and who are they to whom they will act as a fire in a sheaf?

THE FEEBLE AS DAVID AND DAVID AS GOD. But the literal view fails completely when we come to verse 8: "In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David as God, as the angel of the Lord before them." Here if anywhere, we are on Gospel ground. Here is a view of the Gospel which transcends all the glory of the Old Covenant. The great deliverer in the Old Testament was David. He was the pattern of Kingship, the shepherd of his people. The kingdom really began with him. But in the Kingdom of Christ, the meanest believer will be as the royal house of David, while the House of David itself will appear as God — for in Christ's Kingdom, deity is enthroned. Nothing but the Gospel can explain this verse. The Saviour Himself, in His earthly ministry, plainly had this verse in mind when He said: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 11:11). In what respect is the least believer in the Gospel Kingdom of Christ greater than the greatest of Old Testament times? Not in regeneration, for the Old Testament believers were born again of the Spirit just as we. Not in faith, for they are still our examples in faith. Not in prayer and devotion, for the Psalms are still our handbook of prayer and praise, and no man-made Christian hymnbook contains words which compare in seraphic fire with the 45th Psalm, the 72nd Psalm, the 24th Psalm, or the Song of Solomon. What then? We are superior in status and privilege. When Christ told the disciples that the day was about to dawn when He would "show them plainly of the Father" (John 16:25), He was disclosing an epoch in the affairs of mankind.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit were not fully revealed till Christ had ascended to heaven. The FULL glory and power of the Divine Name awaited the fullness of times when God should send forth His Son; neither could the Holy Spirit be given or fully revealed till Christ was glorified (John 7:39). Now in the Gospel the entire revelation of God is thrown open wide. The Holy Spirit is bestowed as a Spirit of Adoption whereby we cry “Abba, Father” (Rom.8:8). The divine law is written on our hearts (2 Cor. 3:3). The Church has passed from its Old Testament phase of servitude under the tutors and governors of the Law, and enjoys that liberty wherewith Christ has made her free. We have an access to God by the blood of His Son, which existed only in the types and shadows of animal sacrifices in the Old Testament. We have exchanged Moses for Christ and an earthly temple and priest for the heavenly Temple of His body and His eternal and efficacious priesthood as our great Melchizedek. In all these things we enjoy under the Gospel a greater blessedness than was possible under the Law, and are greater than the greatest saint before Christ. This is the meaning of Zechariah’s text, and let no one make a futurism of it, for here we stand our ground like Shammah in the field of lentils (2 Sam. 23:11-12). Here we will maintain the battle, nor yield one inch to those interpreters who would give our consolation to the Jew and rob us of our liberty which we have in Christ.

Throughout this chapter the phrase recurs — “In that day . . .” What day? What other than the Gospel day, God’s long day, which dawned at Calvary, has lasted nigh on 2,000 years, and which will only end when the eternal day dawns? — that day without a cloud when Christ shall come for His own and we exchange our present lot for immortality and glory, and the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed us, and lead us to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. Brethren, they try to take even this from us, alleging by their pernicious theories that Rev. 7 does not belong to us. Yet they regard us as unorthodox and dangerous when we do not consent to their Jewish interpretations. It is they who are astray from Christian orthodoxy, but erroneous views of the prophetic Scriptures have become so entrenched in the last century and a half that the expositor who sees the Church and the Gospel as the ultimate and final disclosure of the Divine wisdom is considered at the least eccentric, and at the worst, a danger to the community.

How is the House of David revealed “as God, as the angel of the Lord before them?” By the fact that Christ is the House of David and the Angel of the Divine presence. The Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament revealed God; in the New Testament, He is revealed as God. There is the difference. The meanest believer has become as David: we are, says Peter, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people (1 Pet. 2:9). The expressions are borrowed from Moses (Deut. 14:2; Exo. 18:6, etc.). Who now is Israel in the sight of God?

But back to our Zechariah. His 9th verse (chap. 12) shows the indestructible nature of Christ’s Kingdom. Verse 10 describes the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem in that verse are the same people of verse 8, so let no one rob the Church of this out-pouring and reserve it for a generation of Jews yet future. “Looking unto Him whom they pierced” is no mere Jewish exercise. Whoever says that the

whole world of the redeemed is not here is a danger to faith and truth. For no further generation of Jews, any more than we Gentiles of the 20th century, ‘pierced’ the Son of God in a literal sense. We were not there. We had not been born. Yet inasmuch as our sins nailed Him to the tree, and it was for our cause that He suffered, every redeemed soul may look upon Him as the One whom he pierced.

Verses 11-14 again refer to the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem according to the meaning of verse 8, and by taking a part for the whole, the significant families in the history of David are mentioned, for here is David’s greater Son, and David’s Kingdom here is the whole Church of the Redeemed, for that is Christ’s Kingdom, and the individual mourning of husbands and wives shows the individual nature of salvation and the need for personal repentance on the part of each one of us, as distinct from that vague thing which people speak of as “national repentance.” The mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo (Armageddon) is mentioned in verse 11 because that was the mourning for good King Josiah in whom the effective monarchy of David’s House expired in blood on the field of Megiddo. Those who followed Josiah were not true kings but puppets set up and put down at will by the great powers of Egypt and Babylon. The glory of the Old Testament monarchy expired in Josiah on the awful field of Armageddon. The bitter grief of the people is quoted as the measure of the grief of those who see in a crucified Saviour their King expiring in agonies and blood: but their sorrow is turned into joy, for He who died for sin rose again from the dead, and will appear the second time without sin unto salvation. This is not a Jewish prerogative. We are in Gospel country, my brethren, in these closing chapters of Zechariah.

CHAPTER 13 — THE FOUNTAIN OF THE DOUBLE FLOW.

Chapter 13 commences with the opening of a fountain for sin and for uncleanness — opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for cleansing from their sin. Let this verse set the tone of interpretation for the remainder of this prophecy. What, a fountain opened for the earthly Jew only? Is this what our friends ask us to receive? We repudiate all such dangerous interpretations. The identity of the house of David and the Jerusalem citizens we have already cleared in the preceding chapter, and these are the same people — and this, if we will receive it, is particular redemption also. We Gentiles will hold hard by this fountain from which there flows out blood and water, for atonement and for sanctification. It is that same fountain which John saw and bore witness to seeing and made a deliberate remark about it on the pages of Holy Scripture, not only in his gospel (19:34-37), but also in his epistle (1 John 5:6-8). This is He who came by water and blood, for earthly Jew (who believes) and for stranger-Gentile (as he too believes). John in his gospel quotation above refers to Zech. 12:10, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced,” so he had well in mind when he wrote of that sacred flow of water and blood from the pierced side, this verse Zech. 13:1. He recorded the double flow of water and blood, and later said, “This is He who came by water and blood.”

Our friends challenge us to give an exposition of the last chapters of Zechariah. We have done better. We have given an exposition of the whole of Zechariah, which they cannot do, and never have done to the satisfaction of any soul looking for comfort and mercy. We avow that by the grace of God we could fill a shelf with the exposition of Zechariah, but we are confined to our own limited resources in giving our readers a true perspective of this great prophet, however meager in compass we ourselves feel it to be. We challenge our dissenting friends in return to give a literal exposition of Zech. 13:1. They cannot do it. They are compelled by facts and by the New Testament quotations, to make a spiritual and gospel interpretation of it — or surrender the whole issue to the Jew and exclude not only us, but themselves likewise from participation in the eternal benefits which flow from that fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. We await with confidence the outcome of our challenge.

ON GOSPEL, NOT ON JEWISH GROUND. Having established the spiritual interpretation of Zech. 12 and 13, notably by the 8th verse of the former chapter and the first of the latter, we ride confidently into the territory which remains, assured that throughout we are on Gospel and not on Jewish ground. We hope to carry our readers with us for the remainder of the journey. In verse 2 (13th chap) we do not descend suddenly from the spiritual to the literal or the natural. We would not be so inconsistent. The cleansing of the land from the false prophets is the theme, and sure the Kingdom of Christ brought in such a triumph over sin and Satan, and over the errors of the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, as amounted to a cleansing of the Gospel country from them all, as the Church passed (under the apostles) from the old order to the new. Prophecy failed in Israel (verses 3-5) and it is a fact that the earthly people have had no prophet since they rejected the Great Prophet. The Kingdom of God was taken from them and given to the Gentiles.

THE WOUNDS IN THE HANDS. But here we come to a verse which has baffled most of the expositors on all sides. “One shall say unto him, what are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends” (verse 6). It seems as though it is one of the discredited prophets who is speaking. Even John Calvin taught that this was not Christ speaking, and the wounds in the hands had nothing to do with the crucifixion. Many of the best teachers before and since have been baffled. Yet we venture upon the task. That it is Christ who is in view is proved by the entire setting of the verses. It is all “in that day” (verses 2 and 4) — that long day, that Gospel day — in which the spirit of Zechariah is feasting. The beginning and ending of chapter 13 speak clearly and exclusively of Christ. First we have the failure of the prophetic office in Israel because it had become an office of lies, deception, and idolatry. The people are disgusted with the prophets. The prophets themselves feel their shame. They no longer dress like Elijah in a hairy garment, to pretend to what they are not. But John the Baptist came in Elijah’s clothes and they did not receive him. Out from the discredited office of Israelitish prophecy (dormant for five centuries before John the Baptist) comes the Great Prophet, yet despised and rejected. His office and preaching are treated with contempt. The wounds in the hands, pierced at Calvary by the Roman nails, are themselves symbolic (showing again that even the most literal of interpretations in Zechariah contain elements of concealed

prophetic truth). It was Israel that pierced His hands, though a Roman soldier held the hammer. The wounds in the hands are the token of rejection and repudiation.

Verse 7 is supreme in its grandeur and mystery: “Awake O sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. Smite the shepherd and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered: and I will turn my hand upon the little ones.” It is the Eternal Father who speaks. The rejection of Christ in the house of His friends is controlled by the eternal decree of redemption. In the last analysis it is God who smites, who awakes the sword of divine justice against His Fellow — His companion, His only begotten, His own divine image and likeness. This is the mystery of all mysteries and the clue to Creation. This is the meaning and purpose of all God ever set out to do. By this means He overcomes all evil and establishes His throne in holiness, righteousness and truth. This is the Holiest of the Holies and the very heart of God. Christ identifies Himself with the prophecy in Mark 14:27. The scattering of the sheep mentioned in the verse is the rejection of the nation and its age-long dispersion because of its repudiation of Christ. This is brought out in the concluding verses (of Zech. 13), which describe the division of the nation into three parts — two are devoted to destruction, and the third is the election of grace, who in the refinement of affliction and trial are brought to salvation and identified as the Lord’s people. This division of the nation may not be localized. The remnant according to the election of grace is enlarged by the accession of the Gentiles, in accord with all those prophecies which show how the Church is concealed in the Israelitish remnant as the true heir of Abraham and the inheritor of the promises. This is in accord with that principle of interpretation laid down by Paul in Romans 4:12, where he shows that Abraham is “the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which he had being yet uncircumcised.”

CHAPTER 14 — THE GOSPEL, THE TRUE MILLENNIUM.

We accept the challenge to produce a consistent “spiritual” interpretation of chapter 14 and would remind our friends that to take this chapter literally involves serious contradictions. The literal interpretation puts the whole of this chapter into a future “millennium,” and in doing so produces a millennium so filled with the horrors of plague, death and destruction as to make a mockery of the Golden Age which our friends fondly anticipate. The chapter gives a clear picture of the triumph of the Gospel Kingdom of grace. When the people are reduced to their last extremity, the Lord appears on the Mount of Olives to open for them a way of escape by dividing the mountain. His judgments are poured upon the pursuers and the Gospel goes out in the form of living waters to earth’s utmost bounds. Christ receives the homage and worship of the elect from every nation in spiritual Jerusalem (the Church, as in Gal. 4:26) and raises the status of the Gospel economy above that of the Law to the extent that its common things rank with the holiest vessels of the earthly sanctuary. The temple is purged of the Canaanite — which as we shall see, means the spiritual Canaanites, the Pharisees and Sadducees. We shall prove this from the actual words of the Lord Jesus Himself. Literalism rules itself out of this chapter by its false and contradictory teaching on the Lord’s appearance on the Mount of Olives; by the figure of the

living waters issuing from Jerusalem; by the revolting Millennial plague described (according to literalism) in the chapter; by the impossibility of all the world worshipping at Jerusalem; by the holy harness and kitchen pots; and the exclusion of the Canaanite from the Temple. We proceed:

Verses 1-3: *The Siege and the Sack.* Under the figure of the siege and fall of Jerusalem is portrayed the passing of the old order and the bringing in of the New Covenant. The Old Covenant preserved in national form the two conflicting elements of the nation — the ungodly and the elect. In the fall of the old order, a final separation is made. Half of the city is devoted to destruction and the other half of the population is preserved unto salvation.

Verse 4: “*His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives.*” Is there a more misunderstood prophecy than this? Almost the entire evangelical world says this is the Second Coming of Christ, whereas IT IS HIS FIRST COMING. There is nothing in the prophecy which has the remotest bearing upon Christ’s second appearing. Literalism disintegrates completely as the verse is examined. The people of God flee from the city, pursued by their enemies. They take the route which David took when fleeing from Absalom. The Mount of Olives terminates the Valley of Jehosphaphat and presents an obstacle of grave proportions to the fugitives. Like the children of Israel who fled from the Egyptians and found themselves entangled in the land at the shore of the Red Sea — for them there is no escape. But the Lord opens up a way. Christ appears in His glory on the Mount. The mountain cleaves asunder so that the valley is lengthened as far as Azal. The way is opened to the plain beyond and the fugitives pour through to safety.

Literalism fails here, because no-one can suppose that an army suddenly confronted with the glory of the Lord standing on the Mount of Olives would or could continue the pursuit. If the sight of an angel smites to the ground saints like Daniel, what will the sight of the Lord of Glory be to the ungodly? Do our friends wish us to believe that the view of that Face from which heaven and earth will flee away, has no more effect upon the wicked than some common sight? The fact that the flight of the covenant people continues along the newly opened chasm through the Mount of Olives, shows that the enemy is still in hot pursuit — despite the One whose feet are resting on the Mount of Olives.

Verse 5: “*And ye shall flee . . .*” The flight continues, because this is the gospel flight of the people of the Lord who flee for refuge to the hope set before them — even that hope which they have as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. In short, this is the Gospel day, the beginning of it, and the continuance of it down through the ages.

Verses 6 and 7: *The Day without Night.* The day of mercy is described as a day without an ending. We are not the children of the night but of the day. We are translated from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. For the believer there is no night — not even in the eventide of his days — for at eventide it shall be light.

Verse 8: *The living Waters.* This is the same glorious gospel stream of life, truth and grace of which Ezekiel speaks, only in Ezekiel the waters flow one way only — to the Dead Sea —

bringing fullness of life where all was death, and apostles and preachers become fishers of men along its ever-expanding course. In Zechariah the same river has a double flow, east and west. The vision in the two prophets is one. That it is expanded and developed in Zechariah, the later prophet, shows clearly we are in the region of painting and not of literality. The former and the hinder seas indicate the world-wide nature of the Gospel blessing. Summer and winter indicate that God's mercies are constant, ever the same.

Verse 9: *King over all the earth.* In contrast with David who was king over a mere fragment, Christ's dominion is from sea to sea and from continent to continent: No region into which His Word does not enter and no age which is not irrigated with His truth. On the throne of the universe is our great King and Redeemer. The Father said to the Son in the day of Resurrection and exaltation, "Sit thou at my right hand till I make thy foes thy footstool;" for "He must reign till all enemies are put under Him." Some of our evangelical brethren, it is to be feared, are still waiting for Christ to reign, but the Scripture assures us again and again, that HE REIGNS NOW; all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth, and He now wields the scepter of All-power to break the nations as with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

It is because so many of our friends do not recognize the facts of the Second Psalm (see how the Church in Acts 4 quotes that Psalm when confronted for the first time with the persecuting might of the world!) — it is because the Second Psalm is neither remembered nor understood, that evangelism today is so ineffectual.

Verse 10 and 11: *The change of the landscape.* The city exalted, the surrounding hills leveled to the plain to show the glory of the city. This is the great exaltation of the Kingdom of Christ as compared with its Old Testament manifestation. The figure is akin to Isaiah 2 and Micah 4, but there the hill on which Jerusalem is built is raised high above its neighbors: in Zechariah it is the other hills which are leveled to the plain. This is another indication that we are in the region of the Spirit and not of nature. The details vary between prophecy and prophecy, but the truth indicated is the same. The use of place names in this verse, Geba, Rimmon, Benjamin's Gate, the Tower of Hananeel, shows the city restored to its ancient limits, under which figure the New Covenant of the Gospel is symbolically expressed.

Verse 11: *The city preserved, inhabited and safe.* In comparison with what it was as the Prophet knew it. Here is represented the security and prosperity of the Kingdom of Christ for ever.

Verse 12: *The Plague.* The judgment of God on the ungodly who oppose the Kingdom of Christ. A pretty millennial picture this, with flesh dropping off the living corpses and empty eyeholes and tongueless mouths filling the world with horror. Believe it or not, but prophetic books are being traded amongst Christian people today, disgustingly illustrated with these

horrors. To what lengths will literalism go? We prefer the interpretation which shows the judgment of God on what eyes and tongues and flesh represent in spiritual terms.

Verse 13: *The tumult of the nations.* Let them rage, against the Kingdom of Christ, as they have done through the centuries, but God will turn their swords against themselves. The meaning is: there is no wisdom, counsel or might against the Lord.

Verse 14: *Judah spoiling the heathen.* Is this the millennium our friends desire — a time when gold and silver and fancy dress in great abundance are the reward of an earthly people fighting against enemies? Let those who will, have it this way, but we will retain our contempt for all that upon which the world sets value, and we will continue to regard the spoiling of the heathen in this verse as the token of their utter defeat, and hopelessness of Satan's cause as he vainly assembles his forces to fight against the people of God. For we war not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, the rulers of darkness of this world, even spiritual wickedness in heavenly places.

Verse 15: *Horses, mules, camels, and asses . . .* This millennial plague even strikes the beasts of the field despite the fact that “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain” (Isa. 35). Let our friends make what they will of this in a carnal way. To us it is meaningless if it does not indicate that the judgment of the heathen will be complete. As for the horse, we have heard it is going out of use nowadays all over the world. This is an old time picture, and shows we are not here in the region of literal interpretation.

Verses 16-19: *The Feast of Tabernacles.* Again our friends are welcome to their literal interpretations, but we refuse to believe it Scriptural truth to assert that God will restore the ancient feasts. These were abolished by the death of Christ as being only part of the apparatus for the tutelage of the nation till the time of Gospel reformation. Are we happy about the feasts being restored, and imposed upon the heathen under penal sanction of famine, plague and pestilence? Or does this not represent the gospel feast? Those who ignore the Gospel ordinances of God do so at their peril. Our own nation today (Great Britain), for long a depository of Gospel truth, favored beyond most peoples by such a preaching of the Word of God in times gone by as has scarcely ever been known since men were upon the earth — our own nation has in latter times despised its heritage and cast away the Word of God. It no longer “comes up to the feast”. Hence there is a famine of the Word, there is the blight of sin on all our institutions; we are being given over more and more to the consequences of ungodliness, the plague of immorality, vice, violence, murder, deceit. The feast of Tabernacles is selected here as a figure of that rest the people of God enjoy through the arrival of the Gospel day, with its forward look to that of which it is itself but a foreshadowing — the rest that remaineth unto the people of God.

Verses 20 and 21: *Holy Harness and Kitchen Pots.* The bells on the horses' necks chime the same note of holiness as the holy bells on the High Priests' robe: HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD. Every pot in the domestic kitchens of the citizens of Jerusalem is the equal of the golden

vessels of the sanctuary in Solomon's day — those vessels dedicated to receive the sacrificial blood which prefigured the death of Christ. What — literal? Alas for the infatuation which has seized the minds of so many excellent people these days, that they can accept this literal conclusion, just because it is Jewish, and they will pass by the deep spiritual truth figured therein — that in the Kingdom of Christ there is nothing save that which is holy. Gone is the distinction between holy and profane, because the sacrifice of the Redeemer has undone the effects of the FALL and re-established in the Gospel man's true relationship to his Maker and Saviour.

Verse 21: *No Canaanite in the House of God.* But the Temple has been abolished. There can never be another Temple, for a Temple has reality only if there is a priest, a sacrifice and an altar. Let no one dare to insult the ONE TRUE SACRIFICE and PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST by re-erecting that altar and raising up a fresh generation of priests to point to the insufficiency of His own mediation. It is in this region that literalism becomes positively dangerous. We have pointed out in our first chapter of this study, that there are evangelical men who have taught, and still teach, that a Temple will be built with the approval of Christ — probably in His very presence — and THE TEMPLE VEIL WHICH WAS RENT AND ABOLISHED AT HIS DEATH WILL BE REHUNG IN THAT MILLENNIAL SANCTUARY. Yet there are some who question the propriety of our making a tumult by venturing into the realm of prophecy and rebuking those theories which if allowed to flourish unchecked can only be subversive of the Gospel, of Christian liberty, and of the validity of eternal salvation. We refuse to be silent or to be silenced in such a cause as this.

In any case we have a sure interpretation of this sentence drawn from the words of the Saviour Himself. Few appear to be aware of the connection of the incident of the cleansing of the temple, with the words of Zechariah. "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise" said Christ (John 2:16). Now the name "Canaanite" means "a merchant." Christ by the scourge of His Word drove from the sanctuary of God those Pharisee pretenders to the Kingdom, who bought and sold the Kingdom of Heaven with the merchandise of their own dead and rotten works, and the bad coin of human merit. In the New Testament temple there is no place for the Canaanite, and so the last word of Zechariah's prophecy confirms and establishes the spiritual interpretation thereof, for in the last verse of all, NO OTHER INTERPRETATION IS TENABLE OR EVEN INTELLIGIBLE.

Old Testament exposition in Abeyance: One of the saddest and most disturbing products of the Literal theory is that it allows no depth of meaning to the Word of God in the Old Testament. It is surely evident that since this theory prevailed, preaching from the Old Testament — the only Bible of the Apostles — has almost dried up from the roots in the evangelical body. Apart from the obvious Messianic passages, and the usual types and allegorical interpretations (many of which go up to the border, and beyond, of the discreditable and the childish), a great deal of the Old Testament is a closed book to the evangelical pulpit. But we think Dr. John Duncan (1796-1870) was right when he said, "The true Christianity of the Old Testament is not to be sought merely in some isolated passages, but as the pervading element of the whole Book. The passages

which have been selected as Messianic are but the culminating points of the rock whose foundations lie deep in the ocean of Old Testament Scripture. Herein is their infinite importance and solemnity that they speak of Him with whom we have to do, or rather He with whom we have to do speaks to us in them.”

It was statements like these which, many years ago now, set one searching for the true key to the Old Testament. In that search great help has been given by such scholarly tomes as Hengstenberg’s “*Christology*.” The importance of those orthodox German theologians of the last century, of whom Hengstenberg was one of the greatest ornaments, lies in the fact that they were raised up by God to stem the Rationalistic flood which even then was engulfing the entire continent. It is not sufficiently realized that the Rationalistic heresy was answered on the spot by men who were giants both in piety and learning, and well able to measure their strength with the very best which the Philistines could produce. There has been no comparable Biblical exposition since their day. The wisdom of God did more than provide a counter to Rationalism. The controversy was a fulcrum by which Biblical science was raised to its highest level and at last, at the end of the days, the Church was provided with the tools by which the exposition of the mighty Old Testament Scriptures might rise once more to the expansive dimensions of apostolic times.

Alas, there are few who visit that forge today, and every man now takes his mattock or his ploughshare down to the Philistines or, as in the case of too many of our evangelicals, scarifies the surface of the ground with his blunt wooden stump, and wonders why there is such a poor harvest, and looks wistfully to a golden Millennium when things might be expected to be better.

This manuscript typed and provided for us by Brother Lynn V. Connell, Feb. 2011, from his original Charles D. Alexander booklet (circa 1960s or 1970s).
