

# THE SCOFIELD BIBLE AND DISPENSATIONALISM

## NO. 45: A WESTMINSTER STANDARD PUBLICATION<sup>1</sup>

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### 1. The Seven Dispensations

Dr. Scofield defines a dispensation as a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God. He teaches in the Scofield Bible that there are Seven Dispensations<sup>2</sup>:

- (1) The Dispensation of Innocency: before the Fall;
- (2) The Dispensation of Conscience: before the Flood;
- (3) The Dispensation of Human Government;
- (4) The Dispensation of Promise: from the calling of Abraham until Mt. Sinai;
- (5) The Dispensation of the Law: from Mt. Sinai to the cross of Christ;
- (6) The Dispensation of Grace: from the cross of Christ to the Second Advent;
- (7) The Dispensation of the Kingdom: the Millennium.

"These dispensations are regarded not as stages in one single organic development, but as distinct and mutually exclusive, or even as opposed to each other. This practice of dividing the Bible into parts, and setting one part against the others, means for instance, that in the Dispensation of the Law there was no grace, and during the Dispensation of Grace there is no law. The plan of salvation as set forth in the Bible is one organic whole, revealing a marvelous and profound unity. It cannot be split up into contradictory parts, much less into seven mutually exclusive dispensations." (Summarized quotation from *The Millennium* by Boettner).

In connection with the Dispensation of Conscience, Scofield says, "Expelled from Eden - man was responsible to do all known good, and to abstain from all known evil, and to approach God through sacrifice - - - the dispensation ended in the judgment of the flood." "Ended" — what ended? asks Professor Albertus Pieters in his *Candid Examination of the Scofield Bible*. "The responsibility of every man to do all known good, and to abstain from all known evil? Certainly not, that abides today. The responsibility to approach God through sacrifice? That command continued until the final sacrifice of Christ. The operation of conscience in the

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<sup>1</sup> Westminster Standard, Gisborne, N.Z

<sup>2</sup> Seven is the most frequently cited, there are other schemes that suggest 3 (Tidwell), 4 (Thieme), 8 (Larkin), 9 (Wilmington), 12 (Koch), and 18 (Welch), and etc.! (ed.)

heart of man? By no means. St. Paul refers to it as operative in his day and there has been no change since."

In connection with the "Dispensation of Promise" we are told that it ended with the giving of the Law upon Mt. Sinai. "Again we ask," continues Prof. Pieters, "In what sense did it end then? and again we get no intelligible reply. Was the promise revoked? It was not. St. Paul tells that the giving of the Law had no such effect. "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." (Gal. 3:17).

"The entire 'dispensational scheme,' therefore," concludes Prof. Pieters, "when subjected to examination in the light of Holy Scripture, breaks down completely — yet it is accepted by multitudes today as the undoubted teaching of the Bible, because Scofield says so."

**Some dispensationalists hold that the Sermon on the Mount and most of the Gospels belong to the Kingdom Dispensation which is yet future. The Book of Revelation after the third chapter also is said to belong to the future. Thus only part of the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles are said to be intended for the Christians of today.**

**The slogan of Dispensationalists is "rightly dividing the word of truth." But as one writer, Dr. Murray quoted by Boettner, puts it, "Dividing the plan of salvation into dispensations, is not rightly dividing the word of truth, but wrongly dividing the Word of God."**

## **2. Dispensationalism and the Church**

In its doctrine of the Church, Dispensationalism holds that the Jewish rejection of the kingdom caused Jesus to postpone the kingdom until the Second Advent, and to establish the church as an interlude between the two advents. They hold that the church is in no sense a fulfillment of the Old Testament but something entirely new and revealed for the first time to the Apostle Paul and that the Church Age will come to an end in the Rapture which it is alleged, is the first stage of the Second Advent. Following the Rapture, Christ and His people are to be in the air for a period of seven years (the seventieth week, according to Dispensationalism, of Daniel's prophecy). At the end of the seven years there occurs the Revelation, which is the public visible return of Christ and His people to the earth.

The key text on which this view of the church is based is Ephesians 3:3-7. As to the "mystery" mentioned by Paul in these verses, it is the mystery which was not revealed as it is now to the apostles, that the Gentiles were to be partakers of the same spiritual blessings as the converted Jews. The "mystery" that Paul speaks of was not completely unknown in Old Testament times, but was not so well known as it is now. It was not unknown to Abraham for the promise given to him was that "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." The Lord revealed that Christ was to be given as a light to the Gentiles and His salvation to the ends of the earth. The emphasis in the passage in Ephesians must be laid on the word as. The mystery was not formerly revealed as, that is not so fully or so clearly as under the Gospel. Stephen before his martyrdom spoke of Christ as being with "the church in the wilderness." (Acts 7:38). The Lord had a church in the world since He

revealed Himself in His mercy and grace after the Fall.

In regard to the meaning of the Greek word *ekklesia* translated 'church' it is well to keep in mind that in the Septuagint, which was a Greek translation of the Old Testament and which was in common use in Palestine in Jesus' day, the word *ekklesia* is used about 70 times to render the Hebrew word *qahal*, assembly or congregation. This translation was made in Alexandria, Egypt, about 150 B.C., by a group of 70 scholars, whence it received its name. Consequently the Jewish people would have connected the New Testament Church with the assembly or congregation of Israel as it had existed in Old Testament times - - - The glory of the Church under the New Testament dispensation is far greater than it was under the old. But regardless of the differences the church in the new dispensation is the continuation of that in the old, so that we who are Gentiles are, as Paul tells us, "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. 2:19-22)" (The Millennium by L. Boettner).

"Another serious defect in dispensational teaching is its doctrine that many portions of the Bible are not meant for the Church age at all, that is, not for Christians, but that they are intended for a future Jewish-led kingdom. This follows from their belief that most of Christ's ministry was taken up with preaching designed to prepare Israel for the Kingdom, but that when it became evident that the Jews would not accept the Kingdom the Church was substituted. This means that the Lord's prayer, the Sermon on the Mount, the Kingdom parables, the Great Tribulation, the Book of Revelation chapters 4 to 19, and some say, most of the New Testament except the Pauline Epistles, are "Jewish" and "legal" and therefore do not concern the Church. We point out, however, that Paul certainly did not make this distinction between the gospel of Grace and the gospel of the Kingdom of God. Rather, he identified the two, for late in his ministry he said to the elders from Ephesus: "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." (Acts 20:24, 25) (The Millennium pp. 244-245 by L. Boettner).

Dr. H. A. Ironside, a dispensationalist and an ardent disciple of Scofield, acknowledges that the dispensational doctrine of the Church is of comparatively recent origin and that it was brought to the fore through the writings of Mr. J. N. Darby, the leader of the 'Plymouth Brethren,' who died in 1882.

When George Muller of Bristol came up against the Dispensationalist doctrines of the Brethren movement, he severed all connection with it. "The time came," he said, when I had either to part from my Bible or part from John Darby. I chose to keep my precious Bible and part from John Darby."

Dispensationalists lay special claim to "rightly dividing the word of truth." The above is instead a confounding of it, a darkening of it by a new-fangled exegesis which is alien to it.

### 3. Dispensationalism and the Rapture

The Secret Rapture Theory based on I Thessalonians 4:13-17 teaches according to Dispensationalism that Christ will descend from heaven to "the air" raise the righteous dead and translate the living saints who will be caught away to remain with Christ for a period of seven years in the air. Of the so-called secret Rapture which is silent and mysterious, neither the waiting people nor the world is to have a moment's warning, the saints being first apprised of it by their heavenly flight, and the world by the departure of the "missing ones." A leading Dispensationalist describes it in this way: "Imagine getting up some morning and your wife is not there, and you call for her, but there is no answer. You go downstairs, but she is not there. You call upstairs to daughter asking where mother is, but no answer from daughter. Daughter too is gone. You ring the police but the line is busy. Hundreds and thousands are calling up, jamming the telephone lines. You rush out of doors and bump into the pal of last night's wild party. He is white as a sheet. He is out of breath, and he stammers a few words, and bawls out, 'My wife is gone. My brother is gone, and I don't know where they are.' Down the streets runs a woman shrieking at the top of her voice, 'Someone has kidnapped my baby!' and in a moment the streets are full of people, weeping, crying and howling over the disappearance of loved ones. What has happened? The Lord has come, like a thief in the night. He has quietly stolen away those who trusted him, like Enoch, and no one is left behind to warn you any more, to pray or show you the way." (Rev. Richard W. De-Haan, Radio Bible Class, Nov. 1954). (Quoted in *The Millennium* p. 172).

**Dispensationalists make unwarranted distinctions between the words Coming (parousia), the Appearing (Epiphany) and the Revelation (Apocalypse). All these words have essentially the same meaning. They are kindred terms to describe one great future event, the second coming of Christ at the last day and are used interchangeably.**

"That the Rapture is not a secret event is evident from I Thess. 4:15-18." "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go before) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a SHOUT, with the VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL and with the TRUMP OF GOD; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

If anyone can make a secret coming out of this Scripture, language has no significance at all. There is no secrecy here! It is open, visible, audible; yet it is Christ's parousia, His coming FOR His saints and not a subsequent epiphany.

**The Parousia, the Epiphania, the Apokalipsis, the End, all synchronize at one great crisis "at the last day." The shout, the voice of the archangel, the sound of the great trumpet, the quaking earth, the passing away of the heavens "with a great noise" (2 Peter 3:4, 12), the resurrection and translation of saints, the destruction of sinners will attend the coming (Parousia) of the Son of Man.**

From all the foregoing considerations, the "secret rapture theory" must be respected as one of the most glar-

ing of errors, and it is one that has already wrought much mischief. "Let no man deceive you." If they say, Behold he is in the secret chambers, BELIEVE IT NOT!" (Will the Secret Rapture Precede the Second Coming of Christ? by Dr. G. B. Fletcher).

#### **4. Dispensationalism and the 70th Week of Daniel's Prophecy**

Dispensationalists hold that after the secret Rapture, the saints will be with Christ in the sky for seven years. At the end of this period He shall return visibly with His saints to the earth (commonly called the Revelation). "This theory," writes Dr. Fletcher, "is a perversion of Second Coming truth, a delusion of the last days, widely held. Nowhere does the New Testament teach two future comings of Christ, first for His saints, and then with His saints. Those who hold this view seek to harmonize it with the New Testament teaching on the Second Coming of Christ by asserting that the coming for and with His saints several years later are not two comings, but two stages of the Second Coming of Christ. This attempt to justify the theory cannot overthrow the testimony of the senses that the coming for the saints is a FIRST second coming, and the subsequent coming with the saints is a SECOND coming. But this cannot be. He came once, and He will come once more — and only once more: 'the second time without sin unto salvation' (Heb. 9: 28)."

If it be asked, where in Scripture is there authority for a seven year period such as Dispensationalism sets forth as elapsing between the Rapture and the Revelation, the answer must be: there is none. It is a period of time imported by inference from Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks, it being assumed that the 70th week has not yet been fulfilled, that it is the 7th week or the seven years between the Rapture and the Revelation and that during that time a number of predicted events — such as the apostasy, the appearance and reign of the Antichrist, the Great Tribulation, the return of the Jews to Palestine and their conversion are to occur.

"But there are no grounds" writes Dr. Boettner "either in reason or in Scripture for inserting a parenthesis of many centuries duration between the 69th and the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy, a parenthesis which strangely has already extended nearly four times as long as the entire period of the 70 weeks themselves. In this prophecy it is quite evident that the weeks refer to years. The Jews had just completed 70 years captivity in Babylon — years that had run consecutively. Daniel understood from the prophecies that the time was at an end, and he besought God earnestly in prayer for their deliverance. It was revealed to him that 7 times 70 were determined to complete God's dealings with Israel as a nation — for their return to their own land, the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple, and until Messiah should come and accomplish His work of redemption. Certainly the natural inference is that in this prophecy time runs concurrently as it does in any other prophecy. Nowhere in Scripture is a specified number of time-units, making up a described period of time set forth as meaning anything but continuous and consecutive time. Likewise the 70 weeks in Daniel's prophecy are 70 links in a chain, each holding to the others, a definite measure of the remaining time allotted to the nation of Israel before the coming of the Messiah.

The correct interpretation of Daniel's prophecy is, we believe, that the events of the 70th week were fulfilled during the public ministry of Christ in Palestine including the completion and abolition of the Old Covenant.

After a further period of grace, some 37 years later, the final break-up of the Jewish economy came with the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem and the final dispersion of the Jews." (The Millennium).

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people" etc. (Daniel 9:24). The seventy weeks, weeks of years are 490 years. These 490 years are to the death of Christ as the remainder of the verse makes clear. It was by His death that He finished transgression, made an end of sin by His complete Atonement for it and brought in an everlasting righteousness. His death is mentioned first as it was to this end that He came into the world.

"And to seal up the vision and prophecy. He came to seal up the vision and prophecy, all the prophetic visions of the Old Testament, which had reference to the Messiah. He sealed them up, that is He accomplished them, answered to them to a tittle; all the things that were written in the law, the prophets and the psalms concerning the Messiah, were fulfilled in Him. Thus He confirmed the truth of them as well as His own mission. He sealed them up, that is He put an end to that method of God's discovering His mind and will, and took another course by completing the Scripture-canon in the New Testament, which is the more sure word of prophecy than by vision." (Matthew Henry).

"He came to anoint the most holy," that is Himself, the Holy One who was anointed (that is appointed to His work and qualified for it) by the Holy Ghost, that oil of gladness which He received without measure above His fellows: or to "anoint" the gospel-church, His spiritual temple or holy place, to sanctify and cleanse it and appropriate it to Himself, (Eph. 5:26), or to consecrate for us 'a new and living way into the holiest,' by His own blood (Heb. 10:20) as the sanctuary was anointed (Exodus 30:25 etc.). He is called Messiah (v. 25, 26) which signifies Christ — Anointed (John 1:41) because He received the unction both for Himself and for all that are His. In order to do all this Messiah must be cut off, must die a violent death, and so be cut off from the land of the living as was foretold in Isaiah 53:8." (Matthew Henry).

v. 25. "Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

The seven weeks or 49 years are from the publication of the edict to restore and to build Jerusalem. The restoring and building of Jerusalem took place "in troublous times." The troubles encountered in connection with the work are narrated for us in the Book of Nehemiah. The 49 weeks ended at the end of Nehemiah's reformation. Then 62 weeks are mentioned. The 7 weeks and the 62 weeks making 69 weeks or 483 years, are said to be "unto Messiah the Prince" unto the time of His public manifestation through the ministry and baptism of John the Baptist the forerunner of the Messiah, the Prince and King of the kingdom. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached and every man presseth into it." (Luke 16:16).

v. 26. "And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself" etc. That is AFTER the 483 years or 69 weeks, that is in the 70th week — the week embracing the ministry of John the

Baptist which lasted for about 30 years and Christ's own ministry for 30 years. The 70 weeks or the 490 years as stated in v. 24 are to the death of Christ. There is therefore no foundation whatsoever in the Word of God for the Dispensational fantasy that the final week of seven years is still future, the period between the Rapture and the Revelation. "This theory" as quoted above by Dr. Fletcher "is a perversion of the Second Coming truth, a delusion of the last days widely held."

In verse 26 we read that after Messiah had been cut off but not for Himself, "the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary and the end thereof shall be with a flood and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." The learned Dr. Gill, the noted 18th century commentator, takes this to be a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple by the Romans under the Emperor Titus and to the desolations which ensued.

v. 27. "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" etc. In the midst of the week must be therefore about 70 A.D. the date of the destruction of the city and the temple. With the destruction of the temple an end was put to the sacrifice and the oblation, as sacrifices could only be offered in the temple.

"The Romans spoken of in the latter part of verse 26," writes Dr. Gill, "in order to accomplish their design to destroy the city and temple of Jerusalem, made peace with many nations, entered into covenant and alliance with them, particularly the Medes, Parthians and Arminians for the space of one week or seven years; as it appears they did at the beginning of this week; "and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease"; the daily sacrifice of the Jews and all their offerings; and which was literally fulfilled "in the half-part" of this week, as it may be rendered, towards the latter half of it when the city of Jerusalem being closely besieged by Titus, what through the closeness of the siege, the divisions of the people and the want both of time and men, and beasts to offer, the daily sacrifice ceased as Josephus says, to the great grief of the people; nor have the Jews since the destruction of their city and temple offered any sacrifice, esteeming it unlawful to do so in a strange land."

Dr. Gill points out that the "week" spoken of here did not immediately follow the 70 weeks at the end of which the Messiah was cut off. It was 30 or 40 years after this. "The reason" as Dr. Gill observes, "was the long-suffering and forbearance of God towards the Jews, who gave them as to the old world space to repent; but His grace and goodness being slighted, things began to work at the beginning of this week towards their final ruin, which in the close of it, was fully accomplished."

"And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate" or as it is in the margin "with abominable armies," the Roman armies being abominable to the Jews.

Even until the consummation, until the time appointed by God for their return to the land, Jerusalem was to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

"And that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" or desolator (margin) — the vengeance will continue upon the Jews until the time determined when the wrath shall be turned upon those who made them desolate.

## **5. Dispensationalism and the Anti-Christ**

Dispensationalists hold that the appearance and reign of the Anti-Christ takes place during the seven year period after the Rapture. At the end of the seven years Christ returns with His saints, defeats and destroys the Anti-Christ and his armies in the battle of Armageddon, and sets up an earthly kingdom in Jerusalem over which He rules in person for 1000 years. The reign of Christ on earth at that time according to Scofield, will be a sitting on the throne of David, as King of the Jews, literally, strictly and politically understood.

This Futuristic theory of the Anti-Christ propagated by Dr. Scofield is the Popish view. "Alarmed by the fact that the Reformers were pointing to the Pope as the Anti-Christ, the Jesuit Ribera at the end of the sixteenth century, invented or at least propagated futuristic views of the Anti-Christ, and pointed to a solitary Infidel Anti-Christ who would appear in the dim future. Ribera's view soon infected the High Church party. J. N. Darby caught the contagion, and finally Dr. D. L. Scofield swallowed the Jesuit's pill. Thus Ribera succeeded beyond his wildest dreams, for the attention of thousands of Protestants became deflected from the Papacy, a future Infidel Anti-Christ was looked for, and the historic Protestant view handed down by the Reformers was despised by many. These are the hard facts of history. A Protestantism saturated with Ribera's Futurism is not the Protestantism of the Reformers, nor is it feared by the Papacy." (*The Roman Anti-Christ* by Rev. F. S. Leahy).

In the days of the Apostle John there were many antichrists, heretics who denied either the divinity of Christ or His actual incarnation. "Even now" he writes "are there many antichrists." He also says, "Little children, it is the last time: and ye have heard that Antichrist shall come." (1 John 2:18). According to Matthew Henry the generality of Christians had been informed of the coming of the Antichrist. Paul's 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians Ch. 2:8-10 made it clear to them. He is called the Antichrist as though there were none but he, because he was so eminently above all others. He is, therefore, called "the man of sin" and "the son of perdition" and the system of which he is the head "the mystery of iniquity."

### **The Meaning of Anti-Christ**

All the Reformers and all the Churches of the Reformation and the great body of Protestant interpreters hold that the Pope of Rome or the Papacy is the Anti-Christ, the word anti-christos being composed of kristos meaning anointed (Christ) and the prefix anti. "Anti" means against also instead of or in the place of. "When prefixed to the name of an individual it indicates an agent who assumes that individual's place, and at the same time acts in opposition to him. Thus Rome herself speaks of Anti-popes. Anti-Christ therefore means one who pretends to be a Vicar of Christ, and assumes to act in His name, but who is at the same time His rival and greatest enemy." (*The Roman Anti-Christ* by Leahy).



In the Smalcald Articles Martin Luther singles out one particular statement of the Apostle Paul which beyond all doubt labels the Pope as the Anti-Christ " - - the Pope raised his head above all. This teaching shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Anti-Christ, who has exalted himself above and opposed himself against Christ, because he will not permit Christians to be saved without his power. This is properly speaking to exalt himself above all that is called God, as Paul said, (2 Thess. 2:4) (Smalcald Art 11, art. 4:9-10).

"No one else has ever and will never be able to exalt himself above all that is called God more than the Pope of Rome, who holds millions of people at his command and over four thousand priests as agents of his ambition. He dares to oppose and rejects even the central truth of the Scriptures. He condemns justification by faith, which is fundamental to all, the heart of the Gospel. He puts himself against Christ, he damns, curses this cardinal truth given by Christ." (Who is the Antichrist? by J. Zacehello, D.D.).

"To submit to the Roman Pontiff, we declare, say, define and pronounce to be absolutely necessary to every human creature to salvation." (Bull Unam Sanctam of Pope Boniface VIII).

"If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sin for Christ's sake; or that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified, let him be accursed." (Council of Trent Can. 9.12).

The late Pope John XXIII was no sooner inaugurated in November 1958 than in his coronation address said: "Into this fold of Jesus Christ no one can enter it if not under the guidance of the Sovereign Pontiff; and men can securely reach salvation only when they are united with him, since the Roman Pontiff is the Vicar of Christ and represents His person on earth."

### **The Babylon of the Apocalypse**

As the Pope is the Anti-Christ, Babylon in the Book of the Revelation is the Church of Rome. Babylon cannot be the literal Babylon for it was not built on seven hills, nor was it the Queen of the earth in John's time. Even the great Roman Catholic controversialists have been driven to admit that Rome fits the description of Babylon in the Revelation. "St. John in the Apocalypse" says Cardinal Bellarmine, "calls Rome Babylon, for no other city besides Rome reigned in his age over the kings of the earth, and it is well known that Rome was seated upon Seven Hills."

"It is confessed by all" says Cardinal Baronius, "that Rome is signified in the Apocalypse by the name of Babylon." And the language of the celebrated French Prelate Bousset, in his Exposition of the Book of the Revelation is: "The features (in the Apocalypse) are so marked, that it is easy to decipher Rome under the figure Babylon."

The above quotations from Bellarmine, Baronius and Bousset are taken from "Is the Church of Rome the Babylon of the Apocalypse?" a classic by Charles Wordsworth, D.D., Canon of Westminster and later Bishop of Lincoln, who died in 1885.

"These Apocalyptic prophecies, which describe the Woman who is called Babylon and is seated on the Beast with seven heads and ten horns do not concern the older, literal, Assyrian Babylon. The inscription on the woman's forehead is Mystery, indicating a spiritual meaning. This word had been used by the Apostle Paul in his description of the Mystery of Iniquity opposed to the Mystery of Godliness; and St. John adopts the word from St. Paul, and applies it to the same object as that which had been portrayed by that Apostle.

"Again, the Babylon of the Apocalypse is described as a city existing and reigning in St. John's age; but the literal, or Assyrian Babylon had long ceased to be a reigning city when St. John wrote. Therefore the Babylon of the Apocalypse cannot be the literal or Assyrian Babylon."

In the conclusion Canon Wordsworth writes: "We have been contemplating the TWO MYSTERIES of the Apocalypse. The word Mystery signifies something spiritual; it here describes a church. The first Mystery is explained to us by Christ Himself. "The Mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest - - - The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches" (Rev. 1:20). The second Mystery is explained also: "I will tell thee the Mystery of the Woman." The Beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads, is described, and the seven heads are expounded to be seven mountains on which the woman sitteth. (Rev. 17:7.9).

1. The first Mystery is the Mystery of the seven stars.
2. The second Mystery is the Mystery of the seven hills.

The first mystery represents the universal church in its sevenfold fullness, containing within it all particular churches.

The second mystery represents a particular church, the church on the seven hills, the Church of Rome, claiming to be the church universal.

The first mystery represents the universal church, liable to defects, but not imposing errors as terms of communion; and therefore, by virtue of the Word and the sacraments, held together in Apostolic communion with St. John and Christ, who walketh in the midst of it, and governed by an apostolic ministry, shining like a glorious constellation in the hand of Christ.

2. The second mystery represents the particular Church of Rome, holding the cup of her false doctrines in her hand, and making all nations to drink thereof. And the voice from heaven cries, "Come out of her, my people that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not her plagues."

The first mystery is a "Mystery of Godliness."

The second is a "Mystery of Iniquity."

Such is the interpretation of the two Mysteries of the Apocalypse.

"If any minister or member of the Church of Rome can disprove this conclusion, he is hereby invited to do so. If he can, doubtless he will; and if none attempt it, it may be presumed that they cannot; and if they cannot, then as they love their salvation, they ought to embrace the truth, which is preached to them by the mouth of St. John, and by the voice of Christ."

"This appeal was just made in a sermon preached by the Canon on Sunday, April 28th, 1850, in Westminster Abbey, and reiterated in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, February 16th, 1851. As far as the writer is aware, no reply has yet been made to it by any member of the Church of Rome. It is therefore repeated here."

With reference to Paul's description of the Anti-Christ in 2 Thess. 2:3-8, Dr. Charles Hodge of theological fame says, "This portrait suits the Papacy so exactly that Protestants have rarely doubted that it is the Anti-Christ which the apostle intended to describe."

"So strikingly" says Richard Baxter, "does the Church of Rome resemble Anti-Christ that any one is justified in mistaking the similarity for sameness".

"And the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth" (Rev. 17:9). "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH AND I SAW THE WOMAN DRUNKEN WITH THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS OF JESUS." (Rev. 17: 5, 6).

### **The Doom of the Papacy**

"As sure as the Papacy has had its glory, so surely shall its doom come. Paul before closing his prophecy pauses, and in solemn and awful words foretells the night of horrors in which its career is to end. "That wicked — whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." (2 Thess. 2:8). This day of wrath will be unspeakably great and will mark as one of the greatest days of vengeance since the foundation of the world. Paul dispatches it in a single sentence; John expands it into a whole chapter. And in what other chapter of the Bible or of human history is there such another spectacle of judgment — such another picture of horrors of awestruck consternation, of loud and bitter wailings and cries of woe as in the eighteenth chapter of the Apocalypse? The kings of the earth shall bewail her and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas! Alas! That great city Babylon, the mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgment come. (Rev. 18: 9, 10).

But this dark scene has one relieving feature. It is a scene that will not be repeated for it will close earth's evil days and begin the hallelujahs of the nations. "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone,

and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down and shall be found no more at all. Rejoice over her, thou heavens, and holy apostles and prophets: for God hath avenged you on her - - - and in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all that were slain upon the earth." (Rev. 18: 20, 21, 24). (The Papacy is the Anti-Christ — p. 128 by Rev. J. A. Wylie).

## **6. Dispensationalism and the Millennium**

Dispensationalists are Premillennial in their view of the Millennium. But all Premillennialists are not Dispensationalists. Many noted Premillennialists expose and reject the particular tenets of Dispensationalists. According to the Premillennial view Christ will return to this world, resurrect the righteous dead according to its interpretation of the "first resurrection" mentioned in Revelation 20, will reign in person on the throne of David in Jerusalem for a thousand years, over a world of men yet in the flesh, eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage. After the thousand years are finished the rest of the dead shall be raised. This the Premillennialists hold is the second resurrection mentioned in Revelation 20. Christ will then judge the world.

The Post Millennial view (so called because it asserts that the second coming of Christ is after the Millennium at the great day of judgment) is that the Millennium shall be ushered in through Christ coming in the power of the Holy Spirit as He did at Pentecost, blessing the everlasting gospel of the grace of God in all lands. Dr. A. A. Hodge in his *Outlines of Theology* p. 569 shows that although many of the Christian Jews in the early church, mistaking altogether the spiritual character of the Messiah's kingdom, were Millennialists or Chiliasts (from the Greek Chilia, a thousand), the view generally recognized by the whole church was the Postmillennial view. It rejected Chiliasm, as did the great Augustine who was a Post Millennialist. Chiliasm or Premillennialism, Boettner observes, was in total eclipse for a thousand years, between the time of Augustine and the Reformation, and that during the Reformation period and for a long time afterward it was held by only a few small sects that were considered quite heretical. The Amillennial view advanced by the German theologian Kliefoth in 1874 denies a millennium in this world. The thousand years or millennium of Revelation 20 is according to this view the millennium of the saints in their intermediate state of perfect blessedness. The A-Millennial millennium is not on this earth but in heaven. The Dutch theologians Drs. Abraham Kuyper, Herman Bavinck and others popularized this view. It is now widely held in Holland and in Dutch circles and professedly orthodox churches in America.

### **Shall Christ Return To This World To Sit On The Throne Of David In Jerusalem?**

"Jesus of Nazareth needed no outward enthronement or local seat of government on earth, to constitute Him the possessor of David's kingdom, as He needed no physical anointing to consecrate Him priest for evermore, or material altar and temple for the due presentation of His acceptable service. Being the Son of the living God, and as Son, heir of all things, He possessed, from the first, the powers of the kingdom; and proved that He possessed them, in every authoritative word He uttered, every work of deliverance He performed, every judgment He pronounced, every act of mercy and forgiveness He dispensed, and the resistless control He wielded over the elements of nature, and the realms of the dead. These were the signs of royalty

He bore about with Him upon earth; and wonderful though they were — eclipsing, in real grandeur, all the glory of David and Solomon — they were still but the earlier preludes of the peerless majesty which David from afar discried when He saw Him, as His Lord, seated in royal state at the Father's right hand, and on which He formally entered when He ascended upon high with the word, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth; and lo! I am with you always even to the end of the world Amen." (The Interpretation of Prophecy, P. 236, by Principal Fairbairn).

Christ sat on David's throne as David's Son and David's Lord when the Father at His ascension said to Him "Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (Ps. 110:1). That throne in the glory of His exaltation He will not vacate in order to sit on a material throne in Jerusalem. How repugnant the view that would subject the glorified Redeemer to what is tantamount to a second humiliation! He is now reigning "for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," and He shall through His Word and Spirit graciously subdue the nations of the world to submit to His sceptre, so that the knowledge of His glory shall cover the earth as the waters cover the face of the sea.

### **Shall Christ appear in Person in the world at the beginning of the Millennium?**

Let us hear what the renowned Puritan divine, Dr. John Owen, the greatest theologian ever raised in Britain, wrote — "Should the Lord Jesus now appear to any of us in His majesty and glory it should not be unto our edification nor consolation. For we are not meet nor able, by the power of any light or grace that we have received or can receive, to bear the immediate appearance and representation of Him. His beloved apostle John had leaned on His bosom probably many a time in His life, but when He afterward appeared unto him in His glory, he fell at His feet as one dead." And when He appeared unto Paul, all the account he could give thereof was "that he saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun," whereupon he, and all that were with him, "fell to the ground."

"And this was one reason why in the days of His ministry here on earth, His glory was veiled in the infirmities of the flesh and all sorts of sufferings, as we have before related. The church in this life is no way meet, by the grace which it can be made partaker of, to converse with Him in the immediate manifestation of His glory. And therefore those who dream of His personal reign on the earth before the day of judgment, unless they suppose that all the saints shall be perfectly glorified also (which is only to bring down heaven to the earth for a while, to no purpose), provide not at all for the edification or consolation of the church. For no present grace advanced into the highest degree whereof it is capable, can make us meet for an immediate converse with Christ in His unveiled glory." (The Glory of Christ).

## **7. Dispensationalism and the "First Resurrection"**

Dispensationalists and Pre-Millennialists hold that the "first resurrection" in Revelation 20 is to be understood as a literal physical resurrection. "This notion that the resurrection of the righteous is to occur a thousand years before the end of the world is contradicted by Jesus who on four different occasions, said He would raise up those who believe in Him at the last day. (John 6:39, 40, 44, 54). Clearly there can be no other

days after the last day." (The Millennium p. 169).

"The glory and happiness of this thousand years reign of the saints is to be understood, not literally but spiritually and figuratively according to the common style of the book. It could not consist with the happiness of the saints to leave the heavenly mansions and live in bodies needing meat and drink, nor if their bodies were raised spiritual and incorruptible would they need any such thing. The dead in Christ are also represented as all rising together at the last day. And a proper resurrection is never in Scripture represented as a reviving or living again of the soul but of the body. The resurrection of the martyrs' and confessors' souls here spoken of must therefore mean, not the resurrection of these deceased persons, but the remarkable reformation, deliverance, comfort and activity of the church in their successors. As Elijah is represented living in John the Baptist and Anti-Christian Rome is called in the Revelation. Sodom, Egypt and Babylon on account of her likeness to them in luxury, cruelty, pride and idolatry, so the ancient martyrs will live in the Christians of this period, being united to the same Head, members of the same body and of the same temper, faith, patience, zeal and fortitude and professing the same Gospel truths." (Prof. John Brown of Haddington).

"The visible kingdom of Satan shall be overthrown, and the kingdom of Christ set up in the ruins of it, everywhere throughout the whole habitable globe. Now shall the promise made to Abraham be fulfilled that 'in him and in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed'; and Christ now shall become the desire of all nations, agreeable to Haggai 2:7. Now the kingdom of Christ shall in the most strict and literal sense be extended to all nations, and the whole earth. There are many passages in Scripture that can be understood in no other sense. What can be more universal than that in Isaiah 11:9 'For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' As much as to say, as there is no part of the channel or cavity of the sea anywhere, but what is covered with water; so there shall be no part of the world of mankind but what shall be covered with the knowledge of God. It is foretold in Isaiah 45:22, that all ends of the earth shall look to Christ, and be saved. And to show that the words are to be understood in the most universal sense, it is said in the next verse, 'I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.' So the most universal expression is used (Daniel 7:27) 'And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God.' You see the expression includes all under the whole heaven." (Jonathan Edwards).

### **The Final Apostasy and the 'Second Resurrection.'**

A little before the end of the world, a great part of the world shall fall away from Christ and His Church. Accordingly we are told that when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison to go forth to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog. Gog and Magog indicate a resurgence of evil powers, hostile to the church of God. We also read, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." (Rev. 20:5).

"But who are the 'rest of the dead'? They are the wicked dead who lived not again until the thousand years were finished. They did not live in that time. Their views and customs during the thousand years were not

triumphant. They are to live again when the thousand years are past. Their principles, etc., are to have a resurrection — this is the second resurrection, but there is no blessing pronounced upon those who have a part in this resurrection such as is pronounced upon those who have a part in the first resurrection. The wicked dead now live and reign with Satan. Here again the resurrection is figurative. Neither the first nor second resurrection is of the body — they are of souls. There is not a word in these verses (4-6) which says anything about the coming of Christ nor about a bodily resurrection." (Rev. D. Beaton, Free Presbyterian Magazine, Vol. 39, p. 10).

‘They compassed the camp of the saints about and the beloved city.’ (v. 9). "The Church is likened to a military camp. This is a figure borrowed from the time of Moses and Joshua when the church even externally presented the form of a military camp. The twelve tribes with their banners surrounded the tabernacle on four sides. The camp was in the form of a square; of which the four sides were to be placed toward the four quarters of the compass. This was a type of the heavenly city as seen by Ezekiel 48:20 and the city foursquare of Revelation 21:16. The camp and the city are but different figures of speech to describe the church upon earth. The Church in heaven will never be surrounded by enemies such as are pictured to us in Revelation 20 (Revelation Twenty by Rev. I. Marcellus Kik). Commenting on the statement that fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them, Mr. Kik says, "Since nothing more is written in this prophecy concerning an intervening period and the resurrection of the just and the unjust at the last day, this must be the final destructive blow. It is the revealing of Christ as described in 2 Thessalonians 1: 7-9, "with His mighty angels, in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" etc. The chapter closes with an account of the resurrection of the dead and the judgment of the great day.

## **8. Dispensationalism and the Jews.**

Dispensationalists hold that during the seven year period between the Rapture and the Revelation, which they claim to be the 70th week of Daniel’s prophecy, a number of predicted events are to occur — such as the apostasy, the appearance and reign of the Anti-Christ, the Great Tribulation and the conversion of the Jews. At the Rapture, they maintain that the church is caught up out of the world to be with Christ in the air. With the departure of the church the Holy Spirit is also withdrawn from the world. "The Jews, so this theory holds, are to be converted at the mere sight of Christ their Messiah on the Mount of Olives, and through their testimony, whole nations are to be converted. We must point out, however, that people were not converted at the mere sight of Jesus at the time of His first advent, and that it is the particular work of the Holy Spirit to regenerate the soul and give it new vision and so enable it to turn to Christ. The mere presence of Christ often had the effect of hardening His enemies rather than converting them. Dr. David Cooper, a leading Dispensationalist and President of the Biblical Research Society, says: "The greatest revival of all ages will occur in the Tribulation — after the Church has been removed from the earth by Rapture." "It is simply preposterous" writes Dr. Boettner, "to believe that during the Tribulation Jews without the Pentecostal presence and power of the Holy Spirit can accomplish the evangelization of the world after the Church has been removed." Alexander Reese, a Premillennialist but not a Dispensationalist, in "The Approaching Advent of Christ" p.



269, ridicules this Dispensationalist notion that the Jews will convert the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the world at a time when the Holy Spirit is in heaven and the Anti-Christ is raging here below."? (The Millennium pp. 186, 187).

Not only is this notion preposterous and ridiculous, but thoroughly unscriptural. The scriptures make it clear that it is through the outpouring of the Spirit of grace and of supplication that the Jews will be converted and come to a saving knowledge of Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah. (Zechariah 12:10). It is the Spirit of the Lord as the apostle declares, that will destroy the veil that is upon their heart. (2 Cor. 3:15-17).

### **Will the Temple Be Rebuilt?**

Dispensationalists insist that Chapters 40-48 of Ezekiel are to be taken literally, that their fulfilment will be in the millennial kingdom, that the temple will be rebuilt and animal sacrifices are again to be offered. "Doubtless these offerings," says Scofield, "will be memorial, looking back to the cross, as the offerings under the old covenant were anticipatory, looking forward to the cross." (p. 890).

In connection with the crass carnality of such views, the Rev. Harold Dekker writes, "It is one of the plainest universal teachings of the New Testament that the sacrifices of the Mosaic economy were fulfilled in Christ and were taken away as vanishing shadows that prefigured the substance.

Paul's warnings against a return to them are cited: "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, where unto ye desire again to be in bondage." "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." (Gal. 4:9 & 5:1).

"The Epistle to the Hebrews" says Dr. J. H. Snowden is one long and conclusive argument that the old ordinances are fulfilled and done away in Christ, "who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he offered up himself." (7:27) (The Coming of the Lord).

There will be no further "memorial looking back to the cross" but the memorial which the Lord Jesus instituted the night in which He was betrayed and which He commanded His disciples to observe "till He come."

The glorious temple detailed in Ezekiel, chapter 40, etc., is a symbolic representation of the New Testament Church in her millennial glory, described in Old Testament language. It is not a literal temple, any more than the words "this is my body" and "this is my blood" are to be taken literally. This is the view held by the godly and eminent divines of the past. Jonathan Edwards says, "A very great and clear evidence, that the city of Jerusalem, the holy city and the temple in all its parts and measures, and its various appendages and utensils, with all its officers, services, sacrifices and ceremonies, and so all things pertaining to the ceremonial law, were typical of things appertaining to the Messiah and His church and kingdom, is that these things are evidently made use of as such, in a very particular manner in the vision of the prophet Ezekiel: that we have an account of in the nine last chapters of his prophecy. These there mentioned which are the same which were in



Israel under the law, are mentioned as resemblances, figures, or symbolical representations of spiritual things. So that God has in these chapters determined, that these things are figures, symbols, or types representing the things of the Messiah's kingdom, because here he plainly makes use of them as such." (Vol. 2, p. 674).

Is it any wonder that Dispensationalism has been described as among the sorriest in the whole history of freak exegesis?

Philip Mauro says, "*Dispensationalism may be fascinating as a work of art, but as a revelation it rests on a foundation of sand. The entire system of dispensational teaching is modernistic in the strictest sense; it is modernism, moreover of a very pernicious sort, such that it must have a Bible of its own (i.e., the Scofield Reference Bible) for the propaganda of its peculiar doctrines since they are not in the Word of God.*"

In connection with the Scofield Bible it has been said; "*It is a matter of great concern to many Christians that a book should exist, and be offered for sale, wherein corrupt words of mortal men are printed and set as positive statements in the midst of the Holy Word of God Almighty. Is not this an affront before God Himself? 'Let God be true and every man a liar' (Rom. 3:4)*"

### **The Conversion Of The Jews**

"With the destiny of Israel has always been linked that of the universal race of man. The casting away of them hath been the reconciling of the world, and the receiving of them will be life from the dead." So said the saintly Rev. John Duncan, LL.D., in one of his addresses on the subject of the evangelization of the Jews at the Free Church General Assembly in Edinburgh in May 1860. His profound knowledge of Hebrew and of oriental languages of which he was professor, and his love for the Jews, earned him the title of "Rabbi" Duncan.

The conversion of the Jews to Christ their Messiah is recorded and set forth in both the Old and New Testaments. "For I would not, brethren," writes the Apostle Paul in Romans 11, "that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved" etc. (v. 25, 26).

"By all Israel here we are not to understand the whole Church of God, all the elect consisting of Jews and Gentiles. It is true that in Gal. 6:16 and elsewhere, the word Israel is applied in that general sense to the Church of God. But in this chapter Israel means the nation and people of the Jews. 'All' is used as in many other instances in a general way and here indicates a very great number, and in a manner the whole Jewish nation in a full body." So writes the eminent Netherlands divine, Hermann Witsius D.D. (1636-1708), Professor of Divinity in the Universities of Utrecht and Leyden.

"They depart from the apostle's meaning" he continues, "who by 'all Israel' understand the mystical Israel, or the people of God, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, without admitting the conversion of the whole Jew-

ish nation to Christ, in the sense we here mentioned. Notwithstanding this may be confirmed by the following arguments. First, the apostle speaks of the Israel, to whom he ascribes his own pedigree v.1. whom he calls his flesh, that is, his kindred, v.14, and the natural branches v.21, whom he constantly distinguishes from the Gentiles; to whom he testifies, blindness has happened. All this is applicable to Israel properly so called. Secondly, he lays before us a mystery, but it was no mystery, that a very few Jews were converted to Christ together with the Gentiles; for we have daily instances of that. Thirdly, he reminds the Gentiles not to exalt over, or despise the Jews, from this argument, that, as they themselves were now taken in among the people of God, so, in like manner, the Jews were in due time to be taken in again. But if the apostle meant that the body of the Jewish nation was to continue in their hardness; and but a few of them to be saved, who, joined to the Gentiles would form a mystical Israel, the whole of the discourse would be more adapted to the commendation of the Gentiles, than of the Israelites; and encourage rather than depress the pride of the Gentiles. Fourthly, as the fall and diminishing of Israel, v.12, and their casting away, v.15, are to be understood; so likewise the receiving and saving them, for here the rules of a just opposition must be observed. But the fall, diminishing and casting away of Israel are to be understood of the generality of the Jewish nation; therefore the receiving and saving of Israel in like manner.

"To this restoration of Israel shall be joined the riches of the whole church, and as it were, life from the dead (Rom. 11:12) "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness?" and v.15 "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" The apostle intimates that much greater and more extensive benefits shall redound to the Christian Church from the fullness and restoration of the Jews, than did to the Gentiles from their fall and diminution; greater, I say intently, or with respect to degrees, and larger with respect to extent.

As to intensesness or degrees, it is supposed that about the time of the conversion of the Jews, the Gentile world will be like a dead person, in a manner almost as Christ describes the church of Sardis, Rev. 3:1, 2, namely, both that light of saving knowledge, and that fervent piety, and that lively and vigorous simplicity of ancient Christianity, will in a course of years be very much impaired. Many nations, which had formerly embraced the gospel with much zeal afterwards almost to be extinguished by the venom of Mahommedanism, Popery, Libertinism and Atheism would verify this prophecy; but upon the restoration of the Jews these will suddenly arise, as out of the grave; a new light will shine upon them, a new zeal be kindled up; the life of Christ be again manifested in His mystical body, more lively, perhaps, and vigorous than ever. - - -

Agreeably to which James has said, Act 15:15-17 "And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, after this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." The reparation of the fallen tabernacle of David signifies the restoration of true and spiritual worship among the Israelites. And when that shall come to pass, the rest of mankind, who never gave up their names to Christ. and the nations, upon which His name was formerly called, but which by their falling away lost the benefit of the Gospel will then

with emulation seek the Lord.

"And what is more evident than that prophecy in Isaiah? The prophet in Ch. 59:20, 21, having foretold the restoration of Israel, according to the apostle's commentary, immediately, in Ch. 60:1 exclaims, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee," and in v.3 "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" etc. (The Economy of the Covenants Book 4, ch. 15).

### **Rich Gleanings from "Rabbi" Duncan**

At several General Assemblies Dr. Duncan delivered highly animated and elevated addresses, marked by genius and spiritual power, on the subject of the evangelization of the Jews. Six of these addresses from 1857-1867 are given in Rich Gleanings After the Vintage from Rabbi Duncan, edited by the late Rev. James S. Sinclair, Glasgow. The following are extracts linked together.

"How miserable, yet how deeply interesting the situation of Israel after the flesh And how deeply mysterious the procedure of God's adorable providence toward them! The spirit of the Lord preserveth among them the holy books of the law and the prophets, and thus maintaineth even in the synagogue a constant, though ever resisted testimony for Christ. They are perpetually conversant with what is spiritual (for the law is spiritual) though only after a carnal manner, they themselves being carnal. Wonders (glorious things) are still before their eyes, but their eyes are not opened to behold them. The Spirit is present by the Word, a loud reprover, but unheard, for His saving influences are for a period judicially removed. Christ is present by the Word, for the whole of the Old Testament is full of Him — all day long stretching forth His hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people. (Rom. 10:23). For behold God hath laid in Zion a stumbling-block and a rock of offence; and whosoever believeth in Him shall not be ashamed." (Rom. 9: 33). What a lesson does this afford to us, how insufficient the best means and noblest privileges are to benefit a people, unless the gracious presence and inward operation of the Holy Spirit accompany them! What a warning that we do nothing to grieve and provoke that good Spirit, especially by refusing to behold the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ! And as regards the Jews themselves, how astonishingly has a system of means, fitted and destined to prepare them for the ultimate reception of the kingdom of God, been, during all the fierce anger of the Lord, kept up among them! How wide in one respect and yet in another, how small is the separation between the church and the synagogue! Let but the veil which is between the face of Moses, and the heart of Israel, and which has been removed from Moses' face in Christ, be removed also from their heart, and the synagogue immediately becomes the church; for if they believe Moses, they will believe Christ. But remove this veil no creature can; it is the work of God's Spirit solely and entirely. God will not give His glory to another. The residue of the Spirit is with Him and it will be bestowed in answer to believing, earnest, importunate, persevering prayer. Oh then pray — pray without ceasing, that the salvation of Israel may come out of Zion.

"I would call on you to remember the days of old, when Israel was holiness to the Lord, the first fruits of His increase, at the time when God left all nations, our own fathers among them, to walk in the way of their own hearts. How bright was then the beauty over whose departure for a time, we mourn! He showed not such

favor to any nation, for they had not known His judgments. Think on all the exalted privileges conferred on them by Him who had mercy on them — the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God. Think that theirs are the fathers; and greatest of all, that of them, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all blessed forever. Think of our obligations to them. When we were poor aliens they thought on us, they prayed for us: "We have a little sister and she hath no breasts; what shall we do for our sister, in the day when she shall be spoken for?" (Songs 8:8). "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all (heathen) nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah." (Ps. 67:1-5). Into their olive tree we have been ingrafted and partake of the root and fatness: on the skirts of a Jew we hang for life everlasting. "Salvation is of the Jews." Think of the benefit still in prospect for ourselves, to whom the receiving of them shall be as life from the dead.

Meanwhile, let us pray, hope, work and wait. Israel waited long for us; longer for us than we have yet had to wait for him. He waited, for he had a promise that we should be brought; and so we have been. We also have a promise concerning him. It cannot fail; and we shall yet receive him. How glorious shall the consummation be when it comes! The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold, as the light of seven days, when the Lord shall bind up the breach of His people, and heal "the stroke of their wound."

O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall sing. Rejoice ye Gentiles with His people, for:

"Be mindful of his grace and truth  
To Israel's house hath been;  
And the salvation of our God  
All ends of the earth have seen"  
(Ps. 98:3)

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