

SPECIAL STUDY

THE KEY TO PROPHETICAL INTERPRETATION

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What am I to make of the Prophets?

Of What did they speak?

Can I understand them?

Why is there so much controversy about them?

Why did the apostles use them with such convincing power?

Why don't they carry the same impact today?

Can the position of the word of the prophets be restored so that their word is as final now as it was to the New Testament Christians? Yes, we believe it can. But the first steps we make with the prophets sets our course which we will follow throughout our concourse with them; so these first steps we take are so vitally important.

Should we employ a strictly literal interpretation? Should we employ a spiritual interpretation? Should we pay close attention to every detail? How did the early New Testament writers use the prophets? How did they handle them?

There is a great controversy going on in theological circles about the millennial question. Some don't want to discuss it because they have never bothered to look into the matter seriously enough and they never plan to do so. They resort to the flippant answer, "Well, you'll never change anyone's belief in this matter anyway," or they will sneer, "Oh, that's all he wants to talk about," or "Oh, he just wants to argue for argument's sake."

None of these amount to anything as far as a student of the Word of God is concerned. Admittedly much damage has been done by arrogant dogmatists on either side of the issue. This is not an issue to hold dissenters in contempt for or to mock and chide them. There have been sound evangelical scholars on both sides. Nothing is gained by such an attitude. If we are not afraid for our position why can we not listen to an objective presentation even if it is counter to our concept? Also one should

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ask, "Why do you accept your present position?" Most people stumble on to a position by "hit or miss" method then keep on the lookout for ideas to substantiate their position. A much wiser and saner approach is to examine several sides on such an issue as this, compare them, analyze them with a view of the scripture: then formulate one's own idea. I have discussed this issue with many people who do not have the slightest idea what the opposing views are. They don't try to understand. A standard attitude is this: "I know the Bible: what the premillennialists teach is just what the Bible teaches. That's all I want. That's good enough for me." But this is a narrow, legalistic approach. It is not exegetically sound for interpretation of other parts of the Bible. All the positions use the Bible, but they base their opposing views on the same scriptures.

What is needed is a key; a divinely inspired method of interpretation so that we may know if we are even on the right road or not. Is there any such thing available? For instance the Premillennialist accuses the Amillennialists of spiritualizing everything. They say the Amillennialist takes all the glory and beauty from everything. All that's left is a spiritual vacuum in an unreal utopia. This is an over simplification of the issue. Where the Premillennialist calls "Spiritualizing, Spiritualizing, Spiritualizing" out to the Amillennialist, it is just as easy and effective to turn the chide around and have the Amillennialists cry "Literalist, Literalist, Literalist" to the Premillennialist. But neither position really accomplishes much. It would be much more to the point to notice that each position has a basic method of interpretation which is pursued throughout this discussion, and so the basic approach or method of interpretation accounts for such a divergent conclusion in the end.

So the key to the issue is in the approach or method of interpretation. May we hesitate long enough to ask if we have a divinely inspired key so as to know if our approach is correct? I believe we do. There are 300 Old Testament prophecies quoted in the New Testament. Some of these are extensive quotations

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and some exegetical evaluation is made in most of the quotations by the New Testament writers. We believe they were also moved by the Holy Spirit to write the message of God. Here is then a key. Here is God's prophecy interpreted hundreds of years later by God's inspired apostles. How did they proceed? What method did they employ? To what events did they apply the prophetic messages they quoted? To what did they not apply their quotations? Did they employ a literal approach? Did they employ a spiritual approach? Did they employ an altogether different approach? What would happen if we did just what they did? Would it be wrong for us to go beyond what they did? Is it right for us to use a different method because we live in such a later date in the world's history? Does the premillennialist follow this example of the New Testament writers? Do the Amillennialists? Is there not a way here for us to be safe and sure at the same time?

These and related questions demand some answers. To ask some of them is to answer them. If we answer them correctly we will be a long ways down the road in resolving this conflict. This is not an impossible issue. It can be resolved. It should be resolved.

The main things we will want to watch in this survey are, "To what does the New Testament writer apply his quotation? How does he use it? In what does he not apply it?"

I. The earliest Advocates to Proclaim that Jesus Christ was the Messiah the Old Testament Prophets spoke of.

1. The first interpreter of Old Testament prophecy to indicate that Jesus was, indeed, the very object of the Old Testament prophetic oracles was the angel Gabriel. He was clear in his implications. No one who knows the prophets need misunderstand what he said. He must have spoken with the greatest authority and dignity. No one can set aside the message he delivered.

Gabriel speaking to Zechariah

A. Luke 1:17a quoting Mal. 4:4, 5.

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“And he shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to walk in the wisdom of the just . . .”

It is most obvious that this is quoting Malachi. Malachi said, “Before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come,” while Gabriel said “. . . He shall go before His face.” The “His Face” doesn’t have an antecedent, but it is very clear that it is “Jehovah” or “Lord” or the “Messiah.”

John the Baptist was a fore-runner of Christ. He preached to thousands and told them to, “Repent because the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Many responded to his message and were immersed by him; and many of these turned from following John to Jesus when Jesus started preaching.

Gabriel continuing to speak to Zechariah.

B. Luke 1:17b quoting Mal. 4:4, 5 and Isa. 40:3.

“. . . To make ready for the Lord a people prepared for Him.”

Here Gabriel refers to both Mal. 4:4, 5 and Isa. 40:3 as these prophets foretold the coming of the harbinger of Christ and the work he would do. John said he was that “voice in the wilderness,” Jn. 1:19-23; and Jesus said, “This is Elijah if you’ll believe it.” Matt. 11:14.

Gabriel speaking to Mary.

C. Luke 1:32 quoting Isa. 9:7.

“He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto the throne of his father David.”

Here Gabriel spoke of his deity. Jesus spoke of this relationship and the rulers wanted to stone Him to death (see Jn. 10:29-33). The Jews understood that Jesus was making Himself equal to God. But Jesus would not recant these implications. Then Gabriel called Him the exalted king who was to fulfill all that David only dreamed of doing. We cannot help but see how he quoted Isa. 9:7 especially; and from there, other related and parallel passages as Isa. 16:5, 32:1; Dan. 2:44; Zech. 6:13, etc.

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This was in accordance to God's promise to David personally. See I Chron. 17:10-15; I Chron. 22:9-13; 28:4-7. God there spoke of a son who would reign forever. Solomon never fulfilled this. All know it rings with Messianic implications.

Then Matthew and Luke are very careful to trace both Mary and Joseph the foster father back to Davidic lineage because of the widespread knowledge of this oracle.

Gabriel continuing with Mary.

- D. Lu. 1:33 quoting Isa. 9:7, Dan. 2:44, Isa. 2:1-4.

"And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

The emphasis here is upon the eternal duration of His kingdom. It then speaks of something more than frail man who lives and is soon gone. See Isa. 40:6, 7. This kingdom shall not only stand forever - but the increase of it shall always be. It is not stagnant or stale.

2. Zechariah speaking by the Holy Spirit.

- A. Lu. 1:68 quoting Isa. 40:10.

"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; for he has visited and wrought redemption for his people."

Here it is the Lord God of Israel who has visited. There are many Old Testament prophecies of the divinity of the Messiah, as the one cited, "Behold the Lord Jehovah will come . . ." Isa. 40:10. Jesus wept over Jerusalem because of their rejection of Him and their consequent total destruction assigning this as the justifiable reason. Lu. 11:44. ". . . Because you did not know the hour of your visitation." You were so blind, you were so prejudiced against Me you did not even recognize God when he stood before you face to face!

- B. Lu. 1:69 quoting thoughts from Zech. 9:9, Isa. 12:2, 3.

"And (He) has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David."

The "horn" speaks of power and rule and authority. Earlier Gabriel assigned as a reason for His name - "Jesus" - See Matt. 1:21 - "He shall save his people from

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their sins." We can not help but see the implications of Zech. 9:9 even if it is not here quoted directly. ". . . Behold, thy king cometh unto thee, he is just, and having salvation . . ." or who could fail to see application of Isa. 12:2, 3. ". . . (Jehovah) is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall he draw water out of the wells of salvation." Then once again He is spoken of as a son of David. See our earlier comments on this.

C. Lu. 1:70 Zechariah still speaking.

"As he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been of old."

Zechariah here plainly tells us he is alluding to so many prophetic oracles that he doesn't want to take the time and space to delineate them all.

D. Lu. 1:71 quoting Isa. 11:13-15.

"Salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us."

This idea is surely found in Isa. 11:13-16. We believe this warfare and conquest is spiritual. The weapons are the sword of the Spirit, etc. See Eph. 6:1-14. As the church successfully evangelizes and spreads the borders of its kingdom all over the world it will in a very effective and efficient way subdue all its enemies; and thus the Lord will reward her with peace and safety.

E. Lu. 1:76 quoting Isa. 40:2, 3.

"For you shall go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways;"

Here Zechariah predicts this as applicable to his son John the Baptist who prepared the way for his cousin who was none other than the Messiah of God! So Zechariah here is saying what Gabriel said earlier.

F. Lu. 1:78 quoting Mal. 4:2.

". . . Whereby the dayspring from on high shall visit us."

We believe there are few who would deny that the seed thought for these words find their origin in Mal. 4:3 even if it is not a direct quotation. The ideas are so parallel

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that the point can not be missed. "But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings; . . ."

Here the healing of Luke 1:77 is emphasized. The day-spring is definitely parallel with Malachi's "Arise." Also this visitation is parallel with what we spoke of earlier in #2a, Lu. 1:68. See above.

G. Lu. 1:79a quoting Isa. 9:1-3.

"To shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death."

This has to refer to Isa. 9:1, 2. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: They that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them has the light shined." But it is also parallel to Isa. 49:6; 42:6; 60:1, etc. Then we think of Jesus' transfiguration, appearance to Saul on the Damascus road, or to John on the isle of Patmos, Rev. 1:12-17; and when he said, "I am the light of the world," Jn. 12:46 and Heb. 1:3 he is called "The effulgence of God's glory." We are overwhelmed. Who could miss seeing it unless he didn't want to see? Surely the message is plain enough!

H. Lu. 1:79b quoting Isa. 11:6-9.

"To guide our feet into the way of peace." He is called, "The Prince of Peace," Isa. 9:6. Isa. 42:3 is certainly a picture of His peaceful and tranquil reign. "A bruised reed will he not break . . ."

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publishes peace . . ." Isa. 52:7. This is the beautiful picture of peace in His kingdom when vicious men are converted and become humble, gentle, ambassadors even as Paul himself. Phil. 4:7. "And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." Paul is living testimony of what is spoken of here.

3. An Angel speaking to the Shepherds.

A. Lu. 2:10 quoting Isa. 52:7.

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“And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people.” Again this is perhaps not a direct quote of the prophets as such, but who could fail to see the ecstasy of Isa. 52:7 in it? “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publisheth peace, that brings good tidings of good things . . .” There are other such thoughts in the prophets. The angel was first to be able to fulfill it, later John, Jesus and the apostles completed the preaching of these glad tidings which unfolded in the full message of salvation announced through the church.

B. Lu. 2:11 alluding to Micah 5:2, Isa. 53:10, 12.

“For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

This brings to mind the prediction of Micah that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem. “But thou Bethlehem Ephrathah which are little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5:2. And to Isaiah 53:12 “. . . Yet he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors!”

He is of the city of David; He sits and reigns from David’s throne. He is king. But as the angels emphasize here He is savior too. He saves His people from their sins. See Matt. 1:21. He is from everlasting. See Jn. 17:5; or as in Dan. 7:22 “. . . Until the Ancient of Days came.” The Ancient of Days there is the Messiah. Psalms 102:25-27. “. . . And thy years shall have no end;” and the Hebrew writer applies this to Jesus. Heb. 1:10, 12. See also Heb. 13:8 and Prov. 8:22, 23.

C. Lu. 2:14 alluding to Isa. 9:6.

“Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased.” “His name shall be called . . . prince of peace.” There are many other sections referring to peace in the Messianic

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kingdom. See Isa. 32:1, 16, 17.

4. Simeon speaking of the Christ child in his arms.

- A. "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples;"

This is the prophetic meaning of Isaiah's name. See Isa. 8:18, "Behold, I and the children whom Jehovah has given to me are for signs and wonders . . ." Hosea's children's names also carried very significant prophetic messages. Hosea means "deliverer" and Isaiah means the "salvation of God."

This salvation is open to all people not just to the Jews. It is spiritual salvation and not political. See the following section.

- B. Lu. 2:32 quoting Isa. 49:6; 42:6; 60:1, 9.

"A light for revelation to the Gentiles . . ." This is exactly as Isaiah said ". . . I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou may be my salvation unto the ends of the earth." Isa. 49:6.

"And I will hold your hand, and will keep you, and give you a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." Isa. 42:6.

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee." Isa. 60:1. ". . . The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them has the light shined." Isa. 9:2.

The light and the glory of Lu. 2:32 is so well spoken of by these prophecies; many more could be cited.

Gabriel, Zechariah, and Simeon were the first to declare that Jesus the Bethlehem-born carpenter's son from Nazareth was actually and indeed the Christ - the anointed Messiah of God predicted by all the prophets. They tell us how to interpret Old Testament prophecy.

II. Early Gospel Quotations of the Old Testament Prophets.

1. It has always been intriguing to me to see how the New

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Testament begins with such a vivid emphasis on the prophets. They are telling us something. God has a plan. God told us many years ahead of time about this plan. God fulfilled all He predicted of the Messiah in Jesus. Therefore God has given you a sure foundation upon which to build your faith. He does not call upon you to make a blind leap into darkness. He calls you to order your life on a message He has substantiated.

2. The first reference Matthew makes to Messianic prophecy is in the first verse. He calls Jesus Christ the Son of David and the son of Abraham. Anyone knowing the sacred scriptures of the Jews will know immediately that this is the ultimate. Even Solomon, David's son of the flesh, was never addressed like this. Then Matthew gives a genealogy to show how this was biologically true of Jesus. Matthew wastes no time. Immediately the import of the prophet is quoted and it is assumed that the message is well understood just by quoting the prophet.

3. This is followed by a quotation in Matt. 1:23 of Isa. 7:14.

"Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel! Which is being interpreted, God with us!" Matt. 1:22, 23.

With what Matthew says in verses 18 and 25 we know he very definitely intended us to understand the emphasis is upon the word virgin. Matthew plainly tells us what God predicted in Isa. 7:14 He has fulfilled in the virgin born son of Abraham, son of Joseph and son of Mary. Then by way of emphasis he interprets for the Greek speaking people to whom he writes the Hebrew word "Immanuel," "God with us." God has visited this planet. His message is of paramount importance. It can not be over-emphasized. We have a divine Messiah in the person of Jesus Christ.

4. The next quotation Matthew makes, 2:6, is of Micah 5:2.

"And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written through the prophet, and thou Bethlehem, land

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of Judah, are in no wise least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come forth a governor, who shall be shepherd of my people Israel." Matt. 2:5, 6.

It's interesting to notice that no sooner is the question asked than the answer is given. They could have asked hundreds of questions more and in like manner the answers could have been given by the very men who knew the word of the prophets. In this section of the Messiah is called, (1) King of the Jews, (2) the governor of Judah, (3) the shepherd of Israel and (4) He is worthy of worship. Only God can be worshipped. He is our Divine Deliverer.

5. Then Matthew quotes (2:15) a section in Hosea 11:1.

"... that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophets, saying, out of Egypt did I call my son." Matt. 2:15.

This section speaks first of Israel in the flesh called out of Egypt through the prophet Moses: but under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit Matthew tells us there is a fuller application to the Messiah who was called as a child out of Egypt to live in Nazareth of Galilee.

6. The next quotation (2:18) is from the prophet Jeremiah 31:15.

"Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying: 'a voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; and she would not be comforted, because they are not.'" Matt. 2:17-19.

It speaks of the massacre of the innocent by Herod when he tried to kill the Christ child. God spoke of it 60 years before it happened. Anyone can see this if he will take time to study the prophets.

7. Matt. 2:23 quoting Isa. 11:1 etc.

"He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophets, that he should be called a Nazarene." Matt. 2:23.

The last verse in Chapter 2, verse 23 is a remarkable text in that Matthew plainly tells us he is quoting the prophets and he makes no distinction from what he was

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doing before; so we conclude that he quotes from Isa. 11:1.

In the Hebrew the word for "branch," and "Nazareth" is very similar. The same idea is in Zech. 6:12. We may call this a loose use of the prophets. The Jews said check the prophets. You know that no prophet is to come out of Galilee. Jn. 7:41, 52. But after contemplation Matthew quotes this text and claims the Jewish leaders were wrong. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit we are made to understand that the prophet was to come out of Galilee.

8. Matt. 3:3 quotes Isa. 40:3.

"For this is he that was spoken of through Isaiah the prophet, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness make ye ready the way if the Lord. Make His paths straight." Matt. 3:3.

It is applied by Matthew to John the Baptist, the harbinger of the Messiah. See Mark 1:18, and Luke 3:1-6; John 1:19-23; and Luke 7:27.

9. The next is a series of quotations related to Jesus' wilderness temptation.

Matt. 4:4 quotes Deut. 8:3 - Jesus speaking.

Matt. 4:6 quotes Psa. 91:11, 12 - Satan speaking.

Matt. 4:7 quotes Deut. 6:16 - Jesus speaking.

Matt. 4:10 quotes Deut. 6:13 - Jesus speaking.

Here it is evident that the Psalms and the law spoke of the Messiah and Jesus was well aware that He fulfilled many O.T. prophecies in His daily ministry.

10. The next messianic prophecy, 4:15, 16 quotes Isa. 9:1, 2.

"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying; the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, towards the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people that sat in darkness saw a great light, and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death, to them did light spring up." Matt. 4:14, 16.

This is a very significant text which had long been held by the leaders of Israel as messianic in nature. Matthew said Jesus' ministry itself is an exegesis of it even from its inception.

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11. Now let us go to Luke and view his account of Jesus' ministry as it began. Luke 4:16-30. In this section Jesus quoted Isa. 6:1-2.

"And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he opened the book, and found the place where it was written. 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor. He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.' And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant . . . (and said) 'Today has this scripture been fulfilled in your ears.' " Lu. 4:17-21.

Jesus used as His text Isa. 61:1-2.

This is the beginning of a section in Isaiah dealing with the "Mighty Servant" of Jehovah as opposed to the "Suffering Servant" prophecies as in Isa. 53:1-14, etc. Some Rabbis thought these represented two separate servants of God; but Jesus fulfilled both. In choosing this text He couldn't have been more obvious or blunt. He is making His debut with a grand-slam homer. There is no mistaking His position or intention. It was not a process of growth and development in Jesus' mind. "Today has this scripture been fulfilled in your ears." If this is true then it is also true that every other Messianic prophecy is either fulfilled or will be very shortly by Him. It's interesting to note the response of the home town. At first they are filled with amazement but somewhat willing to accept or at least hear what He has to say. But then He moved to His second division predicting the very chiding they would use against Him.

(1) Physician heal yourself.

(2) Work great miracles here too.

(3) A prophet is unacceptable in his own country.

But His word about: (1) The widow of Zarephath, and (2) Naaman the leper was the clincher. This was more than they could bear. So they sought to kill Him. So leading off with a "Mighty Servant of Jehovah" text, His first sermon leads

Him in beginning to fulfill the "Suffering Servant" prophecies. So from the very first day of His ministry Jesus is laying claim to fulfillment of both types of Messianic prophecy. But in passing you will please notice Jesus didn't say part of this verse is fulfilled; He did not say this part applies to me now and that part will apply 3,000 years later. He just plainly said; "Today is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

From what follows we know that there was both a literal and a spiritual fulfillment of this text.

III. Jesus' use of the prophets.

It is a sorry thing for us, but we do not have the sermons Jesus preached verbatim. We know He resorted to the prophets very often. What was His attitude? What was His approach? What was His method? Though we don't have all He said on the matter, at least we have enough to know what bridges He crossed and which forks of the road He took. This is clear from what He said to those on the way to Emmaus.

(1) "Oh foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all the prophets have spoken! . . . and beginning from Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24:24-27. He must have begun with Deut. 18:15-22. We know He claimed this spoke of Him.

(2) "And He said unto them, these are my words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you that all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets and psalms, concerning me." Luke 24:44. This wasn't anything new to them. This is the kind of thing He had been saying all along. It just took on more significance in light of the recent crucifixion and resurrection. But notice the emphasis Luke makes in verse 27; The prophecies of (1) Moses (2) all the prophets and (3) all the scriptures. Luke does this again later in verse 44; (1) Moses, (2) the prophets, (3) and the Psalms. Then on top of this verse 25, "slow in

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heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." Luke understands Jesus to have fulfilled all the Old Testament prophecies. As Jesus Himself said, "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you till heaven and earth pass away one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law till all things be accomplished." Matt. 5:17-18. If you look at the Olivet discourse aright and study the works of Josephus concerning the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. you would say that to the Jewish mind heaven and earth did pass away then (70 A.D.). So we conclude that all that the Old Testament prophets predicted of the Messiah was fulfilled by then.

(3) Luke 7:22-23; Matt. 11:2-6.

Go tell John. "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; now that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached, and blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

John is in trouble. He is low in spirit. He needs reassurance. He sent the request to Jesus: "Please tell us plainly if you are the Christ or look we for another?" With this kind of question Jesus was non-committal to His actual brothers or to the chiding crowd. But here was a chance to help his friend. But when I first read this answer I felt that Jesus dodged the issue here. That was because I didn't know the message of the Bible. But John did know the prophets very well. Undoubtedly he preached from the prophets again and again. So rather than dodging the issue Jesus was so very forthright with John in his hour of need. Jesus did not just say "Yes," or "Yes, I am the Messiah." He said, in essence, "John, you know the Messianic prophecies; Isa. 61:1-3; 35:11; 29:11, etc. What do they say the Messiah will do? And what am I doing; I am fulfilling to the very letter both physically and spiritually all that the prophets predicted of me! You know I am the Messiah! These prove beyond all doubt to those who look for the consolation of God that I am the

Messiah." So John was more than satisfied. In His answer Jesus has a compound corelation of the texts we have delineated; It is a loose quotation comprising all the points expressed in these several oracles. Jesus fulfilled them all in His ministry! John has great reason to be fully satisfied. Indeed the Messiah has come! We do not look for another!

(4) Luke 16:16 and Matt. 11:13. Prophets lasted unto John.

"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." Why? He of whom the prophets spoke is here; He is working! Luke 21:32. He has His kingdom open so men can come into it. "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." Jesus did not expect us to use the prophets to apply them to something way beyond our day. He fulfilled what they spoke of.

(5) The Triumphal entry. Luke 19:30-46. Matt. 21:5 quoting Zech. 9:9 and Isa. 62:11. This is the only day of coronation Jesus knew in His earthly ministry. But this is nothing compared to His enthroned splendor with which He rules the universe.

It is obvious to all that Jesus, by example of life, is a living exegesis of this; "Jerusalem receive your king." "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king comes unto you; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass." Zech. 9:9.

Then to emphasize the solemnity of the occasion by saying "I tell you that if these should hold their peace the stones would immediately cry out," verse 40. So Jesus intentionally intends for us to understand, "Because you did not know the time of your visitation" applies to the Messianic visitation. They did not know or believe therefore He predicted as Judgment the destruction of Jerusalem which occurred 36 years later. What a terror filled devastation it was. "Be sure your sins will find you out." Num. 32:23. "The way of the transgressor is hard." Prov. 13:15. They paid dearly for their

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rejection and unbelief. Now we understand the significance of His word, "This generation shall not pass away until all is fulfilled."

(6) Luke 20:42-44 quoting Psa. 110:1.

"And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.' David therefore called Him Lord, how is he then his son?"

Though the Messiah is son of David by ancestral lineage, He is David's Lord by Divine heritage. This Divinity of the Messiah was predicted by the prophets again and again. So Jesus, aware of both angles, asks a question which baffled them but it is very clear to us. Every Christian ought to understand it clearly.

(7) Luke 21:32. All is accomplished.

"Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled."

The context here would indicate that Jesus was talking of the end of the world. But actually He speaks of the end of the Jewish dispensation. The whole Olivet discourse is not easy to unravel. Special study needs to be spent on it. But we will not take time here to do so. The conclusion we will seek to emphasize is, so much of what Jesus and the prophets said was fulfilled was fulfilled in the First Coming of Christ and the establishment of His Church and its conquest in this world. They did not often go beyond this at all. This was uppermost in their minds.

(8) Matt. 12:17-21 quoting Isa. 42:6ff.

"Behold my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased; I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and a smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory, and in his name shall the Gentiles trust."

Here is the Mighty Servant of Jehovah; yet He is tender and understanding, careful not to run over anyone who is

really trying no matter how small that effort may be. He will fully succeed. The Gentiles didn't hear of Him until after His death. It was then His judgments and victory began to be realized by them. This is one of the top Messianic prophecies. Jesus plainly applies it unto Himself.

(9) Matt. 13:14, 15 quoting Isa. 6:9-10.

"And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, 'By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand, and in seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive. For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them.'" Matt. 13:14-15.

Some people see, believe and obey, and are saved. Some see, reject, rebel and are lost. The trouble is not in the Messiah nor His message. The trouble is in the evil hearts of men who do not want to accept the message and will not allow God's leading place in their life. God saw this and spoke of it millenniums ago. We are without excuse.

(10) Matt. 17:10-13 referring to Mal. 4:5, 6.

"Behold I send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah comes and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Mal. 4:5, 6.

Jesus plainly explained that this is another reference to John the Baptist. "That great and terrible day when Jehovah comes" speaks of the divine nature of the Messiah and His Judgments as final. It refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, the Judgment which fell on the Jews because they rejected their Messiah.

(11) Matt. 21:42 quoting Psa. 118:22ff.

"And Jesus said unto them, 'Did you never read the scriptures? "The stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner; this was from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes."'" Matt. 21:42-43.

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Jesus is a precious building stone chosen of the Father, rejected by the builders (they in unbelief stumbled over Him); still God exalted Him to the position of Chief corner stone. We can't but help to think of the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, see Dan. 2, which filled the earth. Here is the stone upon which the church is securely built, see Matt. 16:16.

(12) Matt. 27:9 quoting Zech. 11:12 and 13.

"Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet saying, and they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was priced, whom certain of the children of Israel did price." Zech. 11:12, 13.

This is attributed to Jeremiah by Matthew, but it is a prophecy of Zechariah as we have it in our Bibles today.

It speaks of the money of Judas' betrayal of his Master for 30 pieces of silver.

(13) John 7:38 referring to Isa. 12:3; 35:1, 7.

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, 'From within shall flow rivers of living water.'" Jn. 7:38.

There are other such thoughts from the pen of the Prophets, though it looks like John is making a paraphrase, not an exact quotation. But certainly the thought is there in the Prophets again and again, and certainly Jesus fulfilled all that was written.

(14) John 12:38-40 quoting Isa. 53:1; 6:9, 10.

"That the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, 'Lord, who has believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?' For this cause they could not believe, for that Isaiah said again, 'He has blinded their eyes, and he hardened their heart; lest they should see with their heart, and I should heal them.'" Jn. 12:38-40. Much of Jesus' ministry was rejected. At the beginning He was unknown; for a while popular, then rejected and crucified. Thinking of the masses of the world for whom He died as compared to those who embrace Him, certainly the number is small warranting this question.

(15) John 13:18 quoting Psa. 41:9.

“. . . He that eateth my bread lifteth up his heel against me.” Jn. 13:18.

Judas, one of the inner circle kicked up his heel against Jesus, betrayed Him and accepted his desolation or judgment.

(16) John 15:25 quoting Psa. 35:19.

“But this came to pass, that the word may be fulfilled that was written in their law; they hated me without a cause.” Jn. 15:25.

These last few prophecies are from the “Suffering Servant of Jehovah” section. Jesus fulfilled them all. These were necessary to perform our redemption. Once completed He was exalted higher than the heavens and now fulfills even more the aspects of the “Mighty Servant of Jehovah” predictions.

IV. Early Preachers use of the Prophets.

Jesus taught with many parables and teachings originating with Himself. These were novel with the people and recorded by those who heard Him. So much of what He did was an exegesis of the prophets’ message, we do not have many references recorded which reveal the use Jesus made of the prophets. But we have enough to be sure that He did make extensive use of them and that He left nothing wanting in their fulfillment.

As we turn from the Gospels we notice immediately in Acts the extensive use of the prophets made by the first gospel preachers. Anyone reading the New Testament for the first time is bound to notice this.

(1) Acts 1:16-26 quotes Psa. 69:25, 26 and 109:8.

“Brethren, it was needful that the scripture should be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by David concerning Judas, who was guide to them that took Jesus . . . For it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘Let his habitation be made desolate, and let no man dwell therein; and His office let another take.’ ” Acts 1:16-20.

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They realized the replacement of Judas was a fulfillment of the prophets.

(2) Acts 2:16-27 quotes Joel 2:28-30.

“But this is what has been spoken through the prophet Joel; ‘and it shall be in the last days, saith God, I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: yea and on my servants and on my hand-maidens in those days will I pour forth of my spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heavens above, and signs on the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the day of the Lord come, that great and notable day: and it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved!’ ” Acts 2:16-21.

In the first gospel message Peter fittingly turned to the prophecy of Joel 2:28-30, showing how the establishment of the Church was in accordance to the word of the prophets. And preceding the quoting of the section Peter said, “This is that.” Notice, he did not quote just a few words. He quoted a complete section. He did not say part of this applies to our day and part of it will apply later after two thousand years elapse. He said “This is that.” We leave it with him. He was inspired by the Holy Spirit. He preached and Luke wrote what the Holy Spirit wanted communicated. He said “This is that.” So we leave it right there. Though the whole language sounds like a description of the end of the world, in actual fact it is apocalyptic literature referring to the end of Judaism and not of the world, and the beginning of the church age or the age of the Holy Spirit. Peter very definitely intends for us to see that the words, “Before the great and notable day of the Lord come” applies to this very hour. The Lord came and offered the salvation spoken of in the next lines and 3,000 were baptized. Therefore there was either a literal or spiritual fulfillment of all the rest of the message recorded there. We see not the slightest inclination on

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Peter's part to refer any of this to anything beyond his own day. We don't believe we should either. His use of this text is what is called a spiritual interpretation today.

(3) Acts 2:25-31 referring to Psa. 16:10.

"For David said concerning him, "I beheld the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope; because you will not leave my soul in hades, neither will you give your Holy One to see corruption. You made known unto me the ways of life; You shall make me full of gladness with your countenance." Acts 2:25-28.

Peter clearly shows that this text speaks of the double resurrection of Christ. He was raised from the dead - not as a spirit entity, as we see in spiritism, Shammanism or Animism, but He was raised both in body and in spirit. His Spirit was not left in Hades and His body was not left in the tomb. Thus their witness of the resurrection is vindicated by God who had predicted it 1,000 years earlier by David. The significance of this prophecy is tremendous. That is why the New Testament writers used it several times as we will see later. The prophets had predicted that the Messiah would die and rise again from the dead. Early in His ministry Jesus predicted it in plain language; yet the disciples didn't know what He was talking about. But after it was an accomplished fact they saw it so very clearly. Here is a vital link of evidence that was given to break down the unbelief of man. "Reject it if you will but be assured when the history of the world is concluded God will hold you without excuse; He will say, 'I plainly told you; you could have believed if you had wanted to. But you didn't want to bother yourself with a world shaking matter of a crucified Messiah risen from the dead for your propitiation. So now I can't be bothered with you. Away with all who sell their soul out to flippant, eroding platitudes of this world. If they spurn my only provision for their eternal salvation, if they want to "go it on their own" let them keep on "going it on their

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own." 'I'll honor their choice.' There was absolutely nothing wrong with the message I gave, the method I chose, or the Messiah I sent. The fault lies totally within the man. He is accountable for his own decisions; I honor the choice he made in his life."

(4) Acts 3:18-26. Things God foreshowed.

"But the things which God foreshowed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled." Acts 3:18.

Peter's use of the prophets in this section is constant and with a great deal of finality. God has a plan. God revealed the plan. God fulfilled the plan as depicted by the prophets. What God has so emphasized we dare not call insignificant. We must pay attention.

(5) Acts 3:21-23. Peter here quotes Deut. 18:15-18.

". . . Whereof God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old. Moses indeed said, 'A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren like unto me; to him shall you harken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul that shall not harken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'" Acts 3:21-23.

Jesus is that distinguished prophet that Moses spoke of. There was only one; none is to follow. Now notice 3:24, "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." Here Peter is quoted as saying that all the prophets looked to this day. Again his language nearly or completely forbids going beyond that period for its fulfillment.

Then he applied the Abrahamic promise to Christ and the blessings His church brings to the families of earth, "And in thy seed shall all the families of earth be blessed." Gen. 12:3, 22:18; 26:4; 28:14.

(6) Acts 4:11. Rejection of the Chief Corner Stone.

There are several references to this as seen in this study. See III. #(11).

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(7) Acts 4:25 quoting Psalms 28:1.

“Who by the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our father David, thy servant, did say, ‘Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples imagine vain things? The kings of the earth set themselves in array, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord, and against his anointed?’ ” Acts 4:25, 26.

This speaks of all who stand opposed to God in rejecting the Messiah He sent into the world. The Psalm continues to show God’s complete victory and their complete and eternal loss in this rejection. But it came as no surprise to God.

(8) Acts 7:37 quoting Deut. 18:15-18, same as Acts 3:18-26. Please refer to section #5 of IV.

(9) Acts 8:28-40 quoting Isa. 53:5-8.

“Now the passage of the scripture which he was reading was this; He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before his shearers is dumb. So he opened not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: His generation who shall declare? For his life is taken from the earth . . . And Philip . . . beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus.” Acts 8:32-35.

The key to this experience is verse 35. Philip told the Eunuch plainly that the section from which he was reading referred to Jesus. This is a “Suffering Servant” section of Old Testament prophecy. If this part applies to Jesus the whole section does.

Again the significance of this prophecy and its God inspired interpretation can not be over emphasized. Either the Bible is man-made and therefore a hoax and should be banned and burned or else it is a book from God and all men had better buckle down and submit to its oracles. If God went to the extent of the cross (the predicted Messiah - the Suffering Servant died) it was for some great reason. To flout this message is to spit in God’s face. There is no middle ground. If God predicted these things then fulfilled them all to the very letter, you had better be sure that when

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He predicted the Second Coming of Christ, it shall be as He said: When He predicted the great judgment morning, you can be sure He'll be on time. When you are subpoenaed to this court session it will be too late to seek a lawyer and a defense attorney. Extra time will not be granted to prepare the defense. When questioned, you too will be speechless. Matt. 22:12.

(10) Acts 9:22. Paul confounded the Jews?

How did Paul confound the Jews? Any one who admits Old Testament prophecy is in fact Messianic prophecy has no defense left. The life of Jesus so fulfills all that the prophets predicted the only escape left is to deny the prophecy is Messianic. This of course makes havoc of the Old Testament and hence of the whole Bible and ultimately of one's soul. That is a disastrous road to follow. But it is the road the Jews as a nation chose; this is one reason for rank atheism in their camp so much in our day. They destroyed the foundation for their faith.

(11) Acts 10:43.

Peter says it is a matter of concern. If you are concerned; its just a matter of checking the record. If you are not concerned, you will not be actually persuaded even if the rocks began to break open.

(12) Acts 13:22, 23. Jesus son of David.

Matthew and Luke intentionally trace back the genealogy of Jesus to David to show He fulfills this prophecy. You can deny it if you will: but God has plainly shown it is so.

(13) Acts 13:33 quoting Psalms 2.

“. . . as also it is written in the second Psalm; 'thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.' ”

While we may have applied this only to the birth of Christ, it is very obvious that God intended for men to see that this "begotten" extends over to and includes even the resurrection of Christ from the grave. Yea, verily, this is the important significance of the prophecy as interpreted by Paul. He then quotes Isa. 55:3 but all the Messianic element of the chapter is applied here, even as we quote the first line of a song and

imply all its message. See the last verse: "It shall be unto Jehovah for a name for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." The sign of Christianity is once and for all the cross. Because Jesus died and rose again He has established a sign that shall not be cut off. Hence the emphasis Paul here makes concerning the resurrection citing this text is vindicated.

(14) Acts 13:35 quoting Psa. 16:10.

Then He quotes Psa. 16:10 even as Peter did in Acts 2:25-31. We need not comment further here; please see #3 of IV.

(15) Acts 13:41 quoting Hab. 1:5.

"Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, if one declare it unto you."

To reject the resurrection of Christ is to reject everything - there is nothing further to say. But still they will be held accountable for their unbelief.

(16) Acts 13:47 quoting Isa. 49:6.

"For so has the Lord commanded us, saying; I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 13:47.

This is related to Isa. 9:1, 2, 60:1, which is implied by Jesus in John 12:35, 36, 46. He is the light of the world. This is a very popular theme with the prophets. See Heb. 1:1, 2 and II Cor. 4:4-6.

(17) Acts 15:15-18 quoting Amos 9:11, 12.

"And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, after these things I will return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who makes these things known from old." Acts 15:15-18.

The tabernacle is fallen. Here God plainly says He had predicted these things He has thus fulfilled. This would speak of the establishment of the church upon the foundation

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of Judaism which itself came into disrepute and obliteration a few years later when Titus with his Roman Legions marched against Jerusalem and destroyed it completely. But from among the rubble God raised up an impressive institution which has stood against the tests of time which opened its doors to the Gentiles hence it has spread to every corner of the earth since that day. The apostles and New Testament prophets saw clearly the fulfillment of this text; hence just a quoting of it was sufficient without comment to show that what God had predicted by Amos had been fulfilled by their lives and activities. They did not go beyond their day for the fulfillment of any word of the prophet.

(18) Acts 18:28. Paul confuted the Jews.

“He powerfully confuted the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.” What Scriptures? The scriptures the Jews accepted of course. What were these? The Old Testament prophets.

We’ve heard them testify today with our own ears that these very prophets we use are the very ones they have used for millenniums. How did he powerfully confute the Jews? By quoting the prophets again and again and showing that Jesus fulfilled it all and this is the exact meaning of the writing they handled. “This is that” as Peter said at Pentecost. What the prophets said Jesus did.

(19) Acts 26:27. “Do you believe the prophets?”

If one believes the prophets he must believe that Jesus is the Christ. If Jesus is the Christ then Paul has successfully vindicated himself of all charges brought against him. The clarity and certainty of the matter must here be emphasized. If you want to believe, all you have to do is examine the records and check the life of Christ. The noble ones (Acts 17:11) do, unto eternal life. The ignoble ones don’t, unto their eternal destruction.

(20) Acts 28:23. Persuading them all day long.

They were persuaded when they listened to Paul. They are persuaded even today when they listen to Moses and the prophets and see how Jesus fulfills it all.

(21) Acts 28:25-27 quoting Isa. 6:9, 10.

See Matt. 13:14, 15, #9 of III where we commented on this section.

The last prophecy of Acts is pathetic. God knew from of Old that blind people in unbelief would not pay attention, hence the quotation of Isa. 6:9, 19. But look at what a great expense they turn from the prophets . . . "And I should heal them." To neglect them is to neglect the only healing balm from Gilead. Jer. 8:22.

V. The prophets in the Epistles.

1. Romans.

A. Introductory remarks from the Old Testament.

The first use of the Old Testament by Paul in Romans is 3:10-18 which is a series of quotes but they are not necessarily Messianic so we will not quote or comment on them. We will just acknowledge their locations:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1) Psa. 14:1 | 5) Psa. 14:7 |
| 2) Psa. 53:1 | 6) Isa. 59:7 |
| 3) Psa. 5:9 | 7) Psa. 36:7 |
| 4) Psa. 140:3 | |

This section Paul uses to show all men are under sin. Then in Chapter 4:7-8 again he quotes the prophets (Psa. 32:1) to get a person to desire relief from the guilt of sin. Then he speaks of the victorious suffering of the saints in 8:36 as he quotes Psa. 94:32.

B. In chapter 9:25-30 quoting Hos. 2:23; 1:10.

"As he said also in Hosea, 'I will call that my people, which was not my people; and her beloved, that was not beloved, and it shall be, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people. There shall they be called sons of the living God.' " Rom. 9:25, 26.

His first real use of Messianic prophecy is Hosea 2:23 and 1:10. Here a little understanding of the prophet Hosea is required to get the full implication of what Paul is driving at. Hosea's wife turned from faithfulness to

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whoredom and ended up as a destitute slave. In mercy Hosea bought her and as a slave she had to obey orders which she transgressed as a free woman. When she obeyed he re-established her in her role as a mother of his family. The illegitimate children were also accepted into the family. What Hosea did to his wife, God sought to do for adulterous Israel in Hosea's day. But here Paul is truly pointing out that there is a third dialogue going along with this drama at the same time. The third level of this discourse is here applied by Paul to the Messiah: He drew us back and adopted us into His family. Now we are sons of God because in Christ we have been bought from the slavery of sin and now we obey orders of God which we hadn't obeyed before so He adopts us into His family and calls us by His name. By His mercy and sacrifice, family unity and respect has been re-established.

Hosea's second child's name is Lo-rahamah; it means "unpitied." The name of his third child is Lo-ammi; it means "not my people." But in both cases he elided the "Lo" and the meaning changed to "pitied" and "my people" respectfully. So also in the family of God the "unpitied" through the Messiah is "pitied" and the "not my people" are "sons of the living God!" "Behold what manner of love of father has been bestowed upon us that we might be called children of God." 1 Jn. 3:1.

C. In Rom. 9:27 Paul quotes Isa. 9:22.

"And Isaiah cried concerning Israel, 'If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved!' " Rom. 9:27.

There are other places which state it is a remnant of Israel which was predicted by the prophets which would be saved. This remnant we definitely believe is the remnant or group which would obey the Messiah. He then quoted Isa. 1:9 in Rom. 9:29 which shows us it was a very small remnant which was to be saved. God has made broader preparations than what people take advantage of; so if they are not saved, it is not God's fault.

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D. He closes the chapter (9:33) with a quotation which we have seen before, Isa. 28:16. Matt. 21:42, #11 of III.

In Zion, the city of the great King, a stone: strong, safe, secure, and immovable. A stone of stumbling because the Jewish leaders stumbled over it. They did not recognize in Jesus their Messiah even though God went to the end of the world to make it so very plain and obvious. He is the rock of offense because so many of His kinsmen have been offended in Him since the day He started preaching. But the believer shall not be put to shame, yea, verily, He shall fully and readily be saved through the exalted chief corner stone.

E. Then in Rom. 10:13 quoting Joel 2:32.

Paul quotes a part of the section of Joel 2:32 which Peter quoted more extensively on the day of Pentecost when the church was established. Please note the comments there. Acts 2:16. See #2 of IV.

F. Rom. 10:15 quoting Isa. 52:7.

“... even as it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!’ ” Rom. 10:15.

G. Rom. 10:16 quoting Isa. 55:1.

“For Isaiah said; ‘Lord who has believed our report.’ ” Rom. 10:16.

H. Rom. 10:18 quoting Psa. 19:4.

“Their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” Rom. 10:18.

I. Rom. 10:19 quoting Deut. 32:21.

“First Moses said, ‘I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is no nation, with a nation void of understanding will I anger you!’ ” Rom. 10:19.

J. Rom. 10:20 quoting Isa. 65:1.

“And Isaiah is very bold, and said, ‘I was found of them that sought me not; I became manifest unto them that asked not of me.’ ” Rom. 10:20.

K. Rom. 10:21 quoting Isa. 65:2.

“But as to Israel he said, ‘all day long did I spread

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out my hand unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.' ”
Rom. 10:21.

In sections F - K Paul quotes from the prophets as Luke did at the close of the book of Acts to show how God had spoken beforehand how people would refuse Him even if He told them thousands of years ahead of time, and then fulfilled it all in the death of His Son. Here he is saying, “Men don't care; men are intentionally blind. They don't want to be helped. Any that want help, healing or deliverance will turn to me and receive it. But the rest will not turn to me with the heart no matter what I do. If I break the rocks and scare them they tremble a few days; but for the most part they are unchanged. But in the process heaven is being peopled. All who desire may enter in. If they don't desire, I'll not force them; if they choose to rebel, if they choose the wrong road I'll allow them, but it is for all eternity; and the choice is theirs. Woe be unto their sin sick souls as Jeremiah said, “A wonderful and horrible thing is come to pass in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so; and what will you do in the end thereof?” Jer. 5:30.

L. Rom. 11:8-9 quotes Isa. 29:10; Deut. 29:4; Psa. 69:22.

“And David said, ‘Let their table be a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompense unto them: let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow thou down their back always.’ ” Rom. 11:9, 10.

All of this is a continuation of what we have in the last of chapter 10 . . . Turning a deaf ear to God will one day bring its just reward.

M. Rom. 11:26 quotes Isa. 59:20.

“And so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, ‘there shall come out of Zion the deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: and this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.’ ” Rom. 11:26, 27.

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This section is quite similar to Joel 2:28ff, which Peter quoted on Pentecost and it is quite similar to Isa. 61:1ff which Jesus quoted as He entered His ministry. Here the emphasis is upon the Messianic entry into Zion with salvation from sin as in Zech. 9:9. "Behold your King comes unto you . . . having salvation." "He who has ears to hear let him hear." God has spoken plainly enough. If it had been political salvation they would have heard Him - but salvation from sin is disinteresting to Jew and Greek alike. But that is not God's fault. He knows it is the real and vital and imperative need of man, so He has provided it.

N. Rom. 14:11 quotes Isa. 45:23.

"For it is written, 'As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess to God.' "

Rom. 14:11.

God is not mocked. God will call all mankind into judgment. The Holy Spirit convicts men in respect of sin and righteousness and judgment. Of sin - I have sinned; of righteousness - Jesus is righteous, in Him is no guile; of judgment because the devil is judged. His Kingdom is fallen and all who throw in their lot with him are fallen too. This could refer to the Great Judgment Day at the close of earth's history. It doesn't have to; but it may; if it does we must acknowledge that it is the first and only prophecy so far in the New Testament which is applied to anything beyond the age of the apostles. It really makes better sense in the context not to extend this to the end of the world's judgment; but we acknowledge it may. It will come up again in Phil. 2:10 where Paul makes a looser quote of it or states the whole idea more clearly and emphatically through the spirit of prophecy and inspiration given to him irrespective of what is meant in Isa. 45:23 or Rom. 14:11.

O. Rom. 14:3 quotes Psa. 69:9.

"For Christ also pleased not himself; but as it is written; the reproaches of them that reproach thee fell

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upon me." Rom. 15:3.

Many have been abused, mocked, chided and killed because of faith in Christ. But this is nothing more than what happened to Jesus. In the end God vindicated Him and in the end He will vindicate all who have trusted in Him.

P. Rom. 15:9-12 quotes Psa. 18:49; II Sam. 22:50; Deut. 32:43; Psa. 117:1; Isa. 11:1, 10.

"And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, 'therefore will I give praise unto thee among Gentiles, and sing unto thy name! And again he said; rejoice, ye Gentiles, with the people. And again; praise the Lord, ye Gentiles; and let all the peoples praise him. And again Isaiah said; there shall be the root of Jesse, and he that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles; on him shall the Gentiles hope.' " Rom. 15:9-12.

In each of these prophecies Paul is plainly showing that it was manifestly predicted by the prophets that the Messiah would open the door of salvation to the Gentiles. Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles. Yes! But it was no new thing; in fact it was not his idea; it was his commission. See Acts 26:17-19. But here Paul resorts to the prophets to vindicate himself and his mission and his ministry and to hold out the gospel of hope to the Gentiles at Rome. This is as God planned and predicted.

Q. Rom. 15:21 quotes Isa. 52:15.

"But as it is written; they shall see, to whom no tidings of him came, and they who have not heard shall understand." Rom. 15:21.

Paul continues to emphasize the same things discussed earlier.

2. I Corinthians.

A. I Cor. 1:19 quotes Isa. 29:14.

"For it is written; 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning will I bring to nought.' " I Cor. 1:19. This prophecy leads up to a description of the ministry of the Messiah. Later when

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John's servants came asking Jesus for a sign He quoted this Messianic prophecy and told them they were seeing it fulfilled every day as they watched Him work. Here Paul is quoting this leading thought which shows the hardness of men's hearts. They see God working before their very eyes and fail to believe. Woe unto those who make wisdom their God and reason and intellect their only Lord. God easily destroys the wisdom of the wisest men with His foolishness or less complicated act. How shall we stand against Him in His strength?

B. I Cor. 2:9 quotes Isa. 64:4.

"But as it is written, 'things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man, whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him.' " I Cor. 2:9.

God saves blessings untold to those who walk by faith and in patience all the days of their life wait to the day when God will exalt them. I Pet. 5:5, 6.

C. I Cor. 15:27 quoting Psa. 8:6.

"For he put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he said, 'All things are put in subjection,' it is evident that he is excepted who did subject all things unto him." I Cor. 15:27.

Through the spirit of prophecy in him it appears that Paul is amplifying this prophecy beyond what we can see in the text so that it then included something beyond his and our day. It goes clear to the conclusion of the history of the world itself. So here is a first definite or second possible reference we have found which is applied to Christian eschatology.

D. I Cor. 15:54 quotes Isa. 25:8; Hos. 13:14.

"But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written; 'Death is swallowed up in victory! O death, where is thy victory, O death where is thy sting?' " I Cor. 15:54, 55.

This, again, could as in Isaiah's text, all be applied to

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our being made alive in Christ, though we were dead because of our trespasses and sins. But here Paul applies it to something beyond us in time. The context fairly demands it. So here we have either the second definite or maybe a third Old Testament prophecy quoted and applied to a day way on the other side of the apostles. It speaks of the consummation of the Christian's life and victory in Jesus Christ.

Here in Hos. 13:14 is a third definite or possible fourth Old Testament prophecy applied by a New Testament writer to a day millenniums beyond his day, and is paralleled with what we have just seen in the 55th verse. Christ arose from the dead. We will be raised to reign with Him when the fullness of time comes according to what God has allotted on His eternal calendar.

In all three cases the quotes are brief and no elaborate system is built of the text by the New Testament writer. Just a casual mention of victory itself is enough.

3. II Corinthians.

A. II Cor. 6:2 quotes Isa. 49:8.

"For he said, 'at an acceptable time I hearkened unto you, and in a day of salvation did I succor thee.'" II Cor. 6:2.

Paul applies this to the urgency of the present hour. Sinful man ought not keep God waiting. He may too soon run out of time with no recourse left to him.

B. II Cor. 6:16 quotes Lev. 26:12.

"I will walk among you;" Ex. 29:45, "I will dwell among them;" Ex. 29:45, "I will dwell among them;" Ez. 37:27, "My tabernacle shall be among them;" Jer. 31:1 "I shall be God to all the families of Israel and they shall be my people." Isa. 52:11, "touch no unclean thing." Hos. 1:10, "Ye are the people of the living God." Isa. 43:6, "Bring my daughters from the ends of the earth." There are also many other such quotes which could be applied to this section. But the meaning is clear: under the Messiah God would have new, closer affiliation

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with His people. Jer. 31:31-33 is a more full aspect of this prophetic oracle.

C. II Cor. 8:15 quoting Ex. 16:18.

"As it is written, 'He that gathered much had nothing over; and he that gathered little had no lack.'" II Cor. 8:15.

God has always sought a measure of equality among His people. We are brothers together. The advancement of Christ's Kingdom anywhere in the world is my particular gain and advantage. We need to see and realize this. Also see Matt. 19:29.

D. II Cor. 9:9 quoting Psa. 112:9.

"As it is written, 'He has scattered abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness abides forever.'" II Cor. 9:9.

God watches over His children. In all His righteous goodness He waits an opportunity to bless His Saints.

E. II Cor. 10:17 quotes Jer. 9:24.

"But he that glories, let him glory in the Lord." II Cor. 10:17.

This is the same as II Cor. 1:31. We do not exalt in men. Men fail us. Jesus is exonerated. We trust in and praise Him. We do not call ourselves after the names of the reformers. We call ourselves by Jesus' name. We glory in the Lord. See also Gal. 6:16, Isa. 62:2 and 65:15. We go by the name he gave us. It is His church; He died for it. It is Christ's church: we are Christians with no aliases.

4. Galatians.

A. Gal. 3:8 quotes Gen. 12:3.

"In thee shall all the nations be blessed." Gal. 3:8.

This is definitely Messianic. Abraham's seed is Christ, (see Gal. 3:16) the seed of woman, the saviour of men. See Gen. 3:15 and Gen. 17:8. Through Him all the families of the earth are blessed.

B. Gal. 3:13 quotes Deut. 21:23.

"For it is written, 'cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.'" Gal. 3:13.

Jesus tasted of ignominy to cleanse us from sin. All our

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sins were cast upon Him. "The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Isa. 53:6.

C. Gal. 4:4 quotes Gen. 3:15.

"But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under Law." Gal. 4:4.

The oldest prophecy of the Bible speaks of the ultimate victory of Christ, The seed of woman, over satan and all his seed (cohorts).

D. Gal. 4:27 quotes Isa. 54:1.

"For it is written, 'Rejoice, thou barren that beareth not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for more are the children of the desolate than of her that hath the husband.' " Gal. 4:27.

Jesus Himself had no children. This was a disgrace to a Jew. But through the Word of God and the New Birth untold millions have been born into the family of the faith so that in actuality Jesus has a greater posterity than any other man of the history of the world. And it is a perfected family which shall stand for all eternity. He is proud of His family. He gladly shares His inheritance together with them. Rom. 8:16, 17. He fully accomplished His purpose.

5. Ephesians.

A. Eph. 4:8 quotes Psa. 68:18.

"Wherefore he said, 'when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.' " Eph. 4:8.

This speaks of the conquest of the Messiah. He shall make conquest in the Name of God. He shall establish the rule of God in the hearts of men. He shall succeed. His conquest shall not be small. He shall fully realize His purpose.

B. Eph. 5:14 quotes Jer. 1:12.

"Wherefore he said, 'awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee.' " Eph. 5:14.

The sleeping almond was the first plant to blossom from the long winter sleep. It was first to show life from what appeared to be dead, so see Isa. 60:1 and 66:24.

6. Philippians.
7. Colossians.
8. I & II Thessalonians.
9. I & II Timothy.
10. Titus.
11. Philemon.

It is an amazing thing to me that in these eight epistles Paul does not make direct use of the prophets at all. Certainly it is a break from what he did in Romans and Corinthians and from what we find in Acts. These are addressed to Gentiles and those more unacquainted with the Old Testament, hence we assume he made less use of the prophets.

12. Hebrews.

A. Heb. 1:1.

“God, having of olden time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions in divers manners.” Heb. 1:1.

Immediately the writer speaks of the work of the prophets as occupying a prominent part in the program of God and His plan for the history of man on the earth.

B. Heb. 1:5 quoting Psa. 2:7.

“For unto which of the angels said he at any time, ‘you are my son, this day have I begotten thee?’ ” Heb. 1:5.

This, as interpreted by Paul in Acts 13:33, refers to or was fulfilled by the resurrection of Christ. Here it seems to speak of His office or position.

C. Heb. 1:5 quotes II Sam. 7:14.

“And again, ‘I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.’ ” Heb. 1:5.

The son of David was to sit on his throne forever. So though the next text speaks of Solomon in particular it has also some prophetic implications because David’s spiritual son was to reign and complete all that David started and dreamed of in expanding the borders of the kingdom of God and securing peace and prosperity for the people of God.

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D. Heb. 1:6 quoting Deut. 32:43, Psa. 97:7.

“And when he again bringeth in the first born into the world he saith, ‘and let all the angels of God worship him.’ ” Heb. 1:6.

There are many prophetic utterances relating to the divine nature of the Messiah. Here, this utterance, with the command for angels to worship Him, reveals that He is more than lofty, more than prophet, He is worthy of worship - only God is worthy of worship. Hence He is divine. All this was told beforehand by the prophets.

E. Heb. 1:7 quotes Psa. 104:4.

“And of the angels he saith, ‘who makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire,’ ” Heb. 1:7.

He lays a foundation for the following verse which completes the contrast.

F. Heb. 1:8 quotes Psa. 45:7.

“But of the son he said, ‘thy throne O God, is for ever and ever; and the sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy Kingdom.’ ” Heb. 1:8.

This is a Messianic Psalm pointing out His lofty position, person, and attributes.

G. Heb. 1:10-12 quotes Psa. 102:25.

“You, Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands; they shall perish; but you continue; and they all shall wax old as does a garment, and as a mantle shall you roll them up, as a garment, and they shall be changed: but thou are the same, and thy years shall not fail.” Heb. 1:10-12.

The prophets by prophetic vision looked back into the ancient past instead of the distant future and saw the Messianic position in the act of creation. All that is made is the work of His hands. Here stress is laid on His lofty position again.

H. Heb. 1:13 quotes Psa. 110:1.

“But of which of the angels has he said at any time, ‘Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet?’ ” Heb. 1:13.

The obvious answer to the question of the verse is, None; He never did. But He did to His Son, the Messiah, hence, He is greater than any or all of the angels.

I. Heb. 2:6-8 quoting Psa. 8:4.

“But one has somewhere testified, saying, ‘What is man, that you are mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor, and did set him over the works of your hands; you did put all things in subjection under his feet!’ ” Heb. 2:6-8.

Here a description of the nature of man is used as a foundation of a contrast depicting the divine nature of the Messiah.

J. Heb. 2:12 quoting Psa. 22:22.

“Saying, I will declare your name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I sing praise.” Heb. 2:12.

This is accomplished in the church. Jesus is our elder brother. We are joint heirs with Him. Rom. 8:16, 17.

K. Heb. 2:13 quoting Psa. 22:8.

“I will put my trust in Him.” Jesus did this. In fact they chided Him on the cross with these very words. Matt. 27:43.

L. Heb. 2:13 quoting Isa. 8:17.

“Behold, I and the children God has given me.” Heb. 2:13.

The same kind of thing we spoke of earlier; though He had no natural children He did have numerous spiritual children.

M. Heb. 3:7-11 quoting Psa. 95:7.

“Harden not your hearts as in the day of provocation. . . . As I swore in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest.” Heb. 3:7-11.

The writer works with this scripture through the rest of the chapter and on into the middle of the next and he culminates it in verse 9 with the words, “There remains therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God.” This is now the fourth example and may be the fifth we have

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found where a New Testament writer may have gone beyond his day for the fulfillment of prophecy of which he is dealing. This may speak of our eternal abode with God.

N. Heb. 5:5 quoting Psa. 2:7.

“ . . . This day have I begotten thee.”

As we have seen earlier in 1:5 and once again this time the verse is applied to His office and how He got into it.

O. Heb. 5:6 quoting Psa. 110:4.

“As he said also in another place; ‘thou are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.’ ” Heb. 5:6.

This also speaks of the dignity of His office and again in Heb. 7:17 and 21. It is much higher and filled with more dignity than that of Aaron.

P. Heb. 8:5 quoting Ex. 25:40.

“Even as Moses is warned of God when he is about to make the tabernacle: for ‘See,’ saith he, ‘that you make all things according to the pattern that was shown thee in the mount.’ ” Heb. 8:5.

This calls to mind how the tabernacle of God was to be built. We also expect in establishing the church to see everything built according to the pattern. We must be careful how we build. I Cor. 3:12-14. Those building with wood, hay and stubble had their works burned up; they suffered the loss of their lifetime of labor. Those building with silver, gold and precious stone endured the testing of fire and were eternally blessed. If we build according to the pattern we will be eternally blessed. If we pay no attention to the pattern and build according to the dictates of men we will suffer eternal loss of reward.

Q. Heb. 8:8-12 quoting Jer. 31:31ff.

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them forth out of the land of Egypt; for they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord for this is the covenant that I will

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make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and on their heart also will I write them: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his fellow-citizen, and every man his brother saying, know the Lord: For all shall know me, from the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and their sins will I remember no more." Heb. 8:8-12.

This is one of the most extensive quotations of the O.T. prophets. It is one of the two extensive Messianic prophecies we find from the pen of Jeremiah. Its meaning is very clear.

The only thing some people miss is why Christians don't teach "every man," "know the Lord." The Jews had to do this because they were born Jews and had to learn of their faith later. But a Christian becomes a Christian only after he "knows the Lord." He is not born a Christian, he becomes a Christian by choice. Once becoming a Christian then it is not necessary to teach him to "know the Lord" because this is the very knowledge he has learned which caused him to become a Christian. But the only application the writer makes here is the "new covenant," which replaces the "old covenant." This fact could have been as well established by Jeremiah's other extensive Messianic prophecy too. See Ch. 3 of Jeremiah.

R. Heb. 10:5-7 quoting Psa. 40:6.

"Wherefore when he came into the world, he said, 'Sacrifices and offerings thou wouldst not, but a body did you prepare for me; in whole burnt offerings as sacrifices for sin you had no pleasure:' then said I, 'Lo, I am come (in the roll of a book it is written of me), to do thy will, O, God.' " Heb. 10:5-7.

This is applied to the incarnation of the Messiah which led the way to the sacrifice for sin which He made. Again the writer concludes from the text that there is a new sacrifice or a new covenant separate from Judaism.

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S. Heb. 10:16 quoting Jer. 31:33f.

Going back to Jeremiah, having established the idea of a new covenant, he wants to emphasize the thorough, extensive forgiveness from sin we have through the blood of Jesus. Ours is a much better covenant! See Q above.

T. Heb. 10:37-38 quoting Hab. 2:3, 4.

“For yet a very little while, He that commeth shall come, and shall not tarry. But my righteous ones shall live by faith.” Heb. 10:37, 38.

Some would quickly conclude that this is applied to the Second Coming of Christ. But Habakkuk spoke of a judgment and we believe as Jesus spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem in His Olivet discourse He spoke of His coming in judgment. That came just seven years after this epistle was written and is probably closer to the context. “The righteous living” here would be the Christians who escaped this destruction because they believed the warnings of Christ and left before Jerusalem fell. But though it is doubtful, in passing we will say that this admits the interpretation of the Second Coming of Christ if we ignore the context and the people addressed in the epistle and their living situation.

U. Heb. 12:5 quoting Prov. 3:11.

“My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd of him; for whom the Lord loves he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” Heb. 12:5, 6.

Here the family father is paralleled with the heavenly Father in His roll of dealing with Christians as His children to perfect them.

V. Heb. 12:22-24. You have come to Zion.

“But you are come

1. unto Mount Zion, and
2. unto the city of the living God,
3. the heavenly Jerusalem, and
4. to innumerable hosts of angels,
5. to the general assembly and

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6. the church of the First born
7. who are enrolled in heaven, and
8. to God the Judge of all, and
9. to the Spirits of just men made perfect, and
10. to Jesus the mediator of a New Covenant, and
11. to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better than that of Abel."

The significance of Zion in Isa. 2:1-4 is so very important in rightly interpreting that section of Messianic prophecy. But in this contrast the Hebrew writer is making between the Church of Christ and the religion of the Jews (see Heb. 12:18-24) it can not be mistaken. The church is the Zion of which the prophets spoke. This whole list of titles in fact are titles used by the prophets in describing the utopia which the Jews looked forward to which would be established by their Messiah. Look how Zion is used in these Messianic sections: Isa. 28:16; "Behold I lay in Zion a Foundation Stone." Isa. 35:10; "Come with singing into Zion." Isa. 40:9; "Oh, thou that bringest tidings to Zion." Isa. 52:7; "That says to Zion, 'Behold thy God reigns.'" Zech. 2:10; "Rejoice oh daughter of Zion." Zech. 9:9; "Zion - thy King comes." Here the Hebrew writer is claiming they all speak of the Christian Church. He is doing like Peter did in I Pet. 2:9. All those titles were used exclusively of the Jews in their special relationship to God because of their being a chosen people. But Peter applies them all to the Christians. They have taken the place of the Jews who fell because of rebellion and refusal to accept their Messiah when He came. But those who accepted Him take on these significant titles and receive these special privileges no matter what their national background may be. Paul did the same thing in Gal. 6:16 where he called the Christians the "Israel of God," irrespective of national descent or race. So here the Hebrew writer is doing the same thing except his list is fuller and more complete.

1. We come to Jesus by way of "Mount Zion" because

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the church was established there and the law went forth from there. (see Isa. 2:1-4).

2. We come to "the city of the living God," because he is perfecting us unto his city. "Our citizenship in heaven." Phil. 3:20. Heaven is a prepared place for the prepared people. We are prepared for it by the sacrifice of Christ. I Cor. 1:30.
3. We come to "Heavenly Jerusalem." This is not a new idea; it is a further description of the last statement. We are in the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. At death we do not enter into a new kingdom. We cross the threshold into a fuller realization of this present kingdom.
4. "To hosts of angels." All we need to do is reflect on the material the author has just presented and we will see that this clause is applicable to the church today also. We do not have to go beyond our day to see its fulfillment. In chapter 11, the author speaks of the saints in God's Hall of Fame. Then verses 1 and 2 of the next chapter are a conclusion of that chapter and should not be divided from it. "Seeing we are encompassed by such a cloud of witnesses." We are on the field; the ball is in our hand right now. Eyes are focused on us. Let's do our best. These I believe are angelic eyes as well as eyes of Old Testament saints plus New Testament saints who have finished their course. As Elijah requested, "Lord open his eyes," then he saw the mountains filled with horses and chariots of fire. We in the church of Christ are also "come to innumerable hosts of angels." See II Kings 6:17.
5. "The general assembly." This is a general name for the church rather than something specific. It is the gathering together of those who belong to Jesus. We are called out from the world to serve Christ.
6. "The church of the First Born." This is much more specific, the word "church" here connotes the same

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things as "assembly" did in the last clause. The "First Born" here would speak first of all of Jesus Christ, "The First-born from the dead," Rev. 1:15. It is His Church, see Matt. 16:18. We come to His church. But I believe this term is extended to all those twice born ones over whom the power of the second death has no influence. It is powerless over them because they were spiritually born again or born-first - prior to the finality of death hence they too are first-born. The church is comprised of those born again from the dead or first-born ones.

7. "Enrolled in Heaven" (see Luke 10:20 and Rev. 20:15) A Christian is now ready if he remains faithful, Rev. 3:5. (See Mal. 3:16; Dan. 12:1; and Psa. 69:28)
8. We come to God - we are unshamed. Col. 1:22, we are presented without blemish and faultness. We have no fear of judgment because of what Christ has done for us.
9. "Spirits of just men made perfect." Just men, because of the sacrifice of Christ. We are justified by the blood of His cross, Rom. 5:1. We are made perfect because we have a perfect saviour, a perfect sacrifice, a perfect high priest, a perfect new covenant and a perfect word of God to instruct us. God sees us not as we are but as we can be through Christ. God sees us not as we are, but just as we look through a telescope to see distant stars, so God looks through the telescope of Jesus Christ Himself and sees us perfected. (see I Cor. 1:30).
10. "To Jesus the mediator of a new covenant." This absolutely identifies this as the present Church of Christ rather than some future millennium. (see Matt. 26:26) Jeremiah spoke graphically of this new covenant; 31:31ff and 3:14-18. This is the new testament or new covenant of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If this speaks of the church and it most certainly does, and if numbers 5 and 6 do too, and

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they do, and so does #11; *then all the rest of them do too!* This whole business speaks of the church as having taken on the significant titles of Judaism. So what the prophets foretold as a glorious future for the Jews is fulfilled by us who are called by the name of Christ. The prophet's glorious day or better day is realized in the church of Christ today!

11. "The blood . . . of Abel." Most commentators want to apply this to Abel's blood; but we believe it speaks of the blood of his sacrifice which was accepted while his brother's was rejected. It was accepted because it was offered in faith and obedience. But he didn't realize that God looked forward to the blood of Christ to forgive him because Heb. 10:4 tells us the blood of bulls and goats couldn't take away sin. So ours is a better sacrifice because it doesn't look through and on into another era and age, ours is efficacious because of itself. Abel's was efficacious because of a perfect sacrifice made later. Ours then is better than Abel's.

Jesus is the long awaited Messiah of the Jews. He is deliverer to those who follow Him. His own people rejected him. John 1:11; so He made those to become His people who were outside the chosen circle. He brought them in and at the same time cast those who were inside by election out. So now those who were not Jews are the real Jews and the real Jews are not Jews really. So the Jewish Messiah makes Messianic Jews. But these Messianic Jews are not those many people expected them to be.

So in a graft the foreign wood becomes the genuine fruit bearer while the real tree is cut away to make room for it. So has God done with His church. How thankful we are, unworthy as we are, to be grafted into the vine of Christ that we might bear much fruit. Jn. 15:5.

W. Heb. 12:26 quoting Hag. 2:6.

“... Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven.” Heb. 12:26.

The “shaking” here would apply first to Judaism and then to anything else which does not find itself anchored in Jesus and the kingdom He is establishing in the hearts of men. As Daniel says, “it shall stand forever.” Dan. 2:44. It is eternal. It can not be shaken. So the context is clear. They, the Hebrew Christians, should not drag their feet in changing from the old and decaying covenant to another of great glory; from one kingdom to another. But they should make the transition quickly while they yet have opportunity. It is a wise and very profitable thing to do.

X. Heb. 13:6 quoting Psa. 118:6.

“... The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what shall man do unto me?” Heb. 13:6.

We have nothing in this world or of this world to fear. God is for us. Who can be against us. To die is to enter directly into heavenly bliss; to live is to serve Jesus and fulfill plans God laid so very long ago. We can't miss unless we reject the very thing that impressed the prophets so.

13. James. He does not make direct use of O.T. prophecy as such.

14. I Peter.

A. I Pet. 1:10-12. Prophets spoke of the grace we have.

“Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what time or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but to you, did they minister these things. . . .” I Pet. 1:10-12.

Peter emphasizes that the prophets ministered not to themselves but unto us in the Christian faith. We have revealed through the preached gospel the epitome of what the prophets spoke.

B. I Pet. 1:24 quoting Isa. 40:6.

“The word of the Lord abides forever.” I Pet. 1:24, 25.

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What word of the Lord? The gospel Peter preached; the gospel of which the prophets spoke in grand detail.

C. I Pet. 2:6-8 quoting Isa. 28:14-16, Psa. 118:22, etc. See Matt. 21:42, #11 of III.

Jesus, the Chief corner stone was rejected by the builders. They stumbled over it not seeing its beauty, value or worth; but God exalted it to the position of being the Chief corner stone, the very most important part of the building in Jewish architecture.

15. II Peter.

16. I John.

17. II John.

18. III John.

These also do not make direct quotes from O.T. prophets.

This makes a total of 14 short epistles which do not use the O.T. prophets.

19. Jude.

Jude 14 "And to these also Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied saying, 'Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones . . .'"

This is not found anywhere in the Old Testament.

It seems to be a quote from the apocrypha. Jude 14 speaks of the Second Coming of Christ. But we know this is not an Old Testament prophecy. Without passing sentence on its validity either way we are just plainly stating a fact that it is not an O.T. prophecy as we have it. But the Old Testament as we have it is the only Old Testament we have. So this verse does not contribute directly to our discussion.

VI. Old Testament Prophets in Revelation.

1. Revelation.

While John quotes extensively from Jewish history and thought, he does not quote any Old Testament prophet directly and amplify it or apply it to any future message he has to deliver. This is an amazing thing. If Premillennialists

followed his example the whole idea of premillennialism would fall crumbling and broken to the ground. They claim their authority from the Bible and say we have to listen to them but they are not using the Bible as did Philip, Peter, Paul or John. When they quote an Old Testament prophet they do not apply it to anything the New Testament writers did. Why can they do something entirely different than the New Testament writers did and expect us, demand of us, that we accept their interpretation as the only canonized interpretation of eschatology?

VII. What the New Testament writers did not do with the Old Testament prophets.

Can I understand the prophets? Jesus intended His disciples to. He called them foolish and slow to learn because of their ignorance of the prophets. Paul and Apollos powerfully confuted the Jews, proving from the prophets that Jesus was Christ. We ought also to be able to understand and use the prophets. The two on the way to Emmaus said, "Did not our hearts burn within us as He opened unto us the scriptures?" Lu. 24:32. Any student of the prophets ought to be able to truly say this many times as he studies and comes to an understanding of the prophets. Their message carries the same impact today that it ever did. Why is there so much controversy about them? Because people try to make the prophets say what they want them to say, without paying any attention to how the New Testament writers used and applied them. But if we return to the method of interpretation the New Testament writers used and stand with a united voice declaring the same thing from the prophets they did, then the voice of controversy and confusion will be shattered and the prophets will be restored to their original position of import.

We find some literal application of the prophets applied by New Testament writers. But for the most part it was a figurative or spiritual interpretation. It was applied only to the Christ and His church as it was established and made

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conquest in the world. It was a very rare thing indeed for them to go beyond their own time. When they did the application was short and uninvolved. They very seldom paid close attention to details or sideline issues of the prophets. The general thrust of the prophecy was emphasized and being a final voice the issue was dropped. Never once did they give a word for word application of every thought raised by the prophet. We are left to assume that many times the prophetic oracle was robed in apocalyptic garb which spoke of the great significance of the occasion rather than a scientific, literal unfolding of the exact details spoken of, such as real stars falling or the moon dripping with blood.

1. They did not once quote an Old Testament prophet to apply his message to a millennial kingdom.
2. They did not once apply an elaborate prophetic test or system to anything beyond their own day.
3. Less than one percent of the time did they ever apply an Old Testament prophecy to any date beyond their own age.
4. They always applied the Old Testament prophet's message to their situation even if it did sound apocalyptic.
5. They never did say part of their text was part of what the prophets said, while the rest was to come millenniums later.
6. Not once do we ever find a series of Old Testament prophecies quoted in support of a second or third coming of Christ.
7. There are only four prophecies quoted in reference to any aspect of Christian eschatology. None of these are elaborate or extensive, and some are questionable.
8. Anyone can see that the New Testament writers employed what is called a spiritual interpretation to Old Testament prophets. What they did we must do. We are in the same age or dispensation as they were in; "Now is the last hour." They did not feel they were taking all the glory from the prophets. Counterwise they emphasized the glory and splendor of the present kingdom especially in

the mind of God. In this we do not deny the beautiful eschatology of the Christian faith; No, not at all! We believe there is a beautiful eternal heritage for every true believer. But we are saying it is vain and antiscritptural to turn to the Old Testament prophets to establish any long drawn-out doctrine concerning these ending things of the Christian faith. It is a misuse of the Old Testament. The inspired New Testament writers didn't do it. There is no living man who can give us a more clear interpretation of the Old Testament prophets than the New Testament inspired writers did. We don't have anything more dependable to rely on to guide us. To rely on tradition is a bankrupt, helpless, inexcusable method to follow. Rather we have a key. Let's use it; let's follow it. Let's be sure of the ground upon which we build our faith. How can we be wrong if we do not go beyond what the New Testament writers did?

Rather than taking all the glory and beauty out of eschatology just the opposite is accomplished. The real glory and beauty and significance of the present system is emphasized. What are we really involved in now? What does Christ think of His church? How is it compared to the world of Judaism? This is the outcome of a study of this nature. We do not reject the idea of a utopia. We maintain that once the utopia begins it is filled with more glory and splendor than the premillennialist speaks of for the millennium, but it is not something transitory; it is for all eternity. There is no need of a transitory kingdom between the Church age and eternity. In fact the Church is the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It goes right on through time into eternity without an interruption of 1,000 years delay of the millennial kingdom. That's why the New Testament writers speak of Christians as having citizenship in heaven, now! The transition is from earth to heaven. It is not delayed for 1,000 years in between. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye we shall be

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changed." I Cor. 15:52.

There are characteristic themes descriptive of the Messiah recurring in the prophets again and again such as:

1. That day - The latter day
2. The King
3. The light
4. The shoot or branch
5. Righteousness and/or peace
6. The highway
7. The water in a dry place
8. The stone
9. The kingdom
10. Conquest
11. Jehovah will come
12. Singing and everlasting joy
13. Vengeance of God

The New Testament writers apply all of these to Christ His first advent. The premillennialists want to reserve numbers 2, 9, 10, etc. to the second advent or to the future millennium; but there are no such reservations on the part of the New Testament writers at all. Actually by the time they finish there isn't anything left which is descriptive of a future utopia after the Christian era this side of eternal bliss of heaven itself. They applied almost everything to Christ of His conquering church.

The burden of Old Testament eschatology is the end of Judaism and the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of His kingdom in this world. The burden of the New Testament eschatology is the eternal bliss with perfection with God in heaven. The two are not the same. Old Testament and New Testament prophets did not see the same mountains as some interpreters report.