

Daniel — Part 2

Notes on the book of

W. Kelly.

Table of Contents

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Daniel — Part 2..... | 1 |
| Daniel 7..... | 1 |
| Daniel 8..... | 10 |
| Daniel 9..... | 20 |
| Daniel 10, 11..... | 29 |
| Daniel 12..... | 47 |

Daniel 7.

We enter now upon the second great division of the book. The Spirit of God gives us here not merely the history or visions of heathen, such as Nebuchadnezzar or others, but communications from God to the prophet himself. Hence what related to the Jews as the object of God's special favour at that time, and more particularly what was in store for them in a blessed day that is coming, are the uppermost thoughts in the mind of the Spirit. Daniel was the fitting channel for such revelations. Accordingly, the Spirit again goes over the ground of the four great Gentile empires, as well as the fifth empire, the kingdom of heaven, to be introduced by the Lord Jesus. But all is presented, though of course with perfect consistency, from a different point of view. It is not now a great image beginning with that which was gorgeous, the gold and the silver, and descending, with evident deterioration of splendour, to the belly and thighs of brass, and the legs of iron and feet of clay. Here we have ravaging wild beasts. The very same powers are meant, but it is another aspect of them. Most fitly was the figure of the image presented to the eye of the great head of Gentile empire, their changes and relations to each other; but it is now God's view of these same powers, and their relation to His people.

Thus we have in this simple consideration the key to the different way in which these powers are depicted. We shall find also in the details that wisdom which we may always look for in what comes from the mind of God.

The prophet, in the vision, sees a mass of waters, agitated by the winds of heaven. Out of this troubled sea four wild beasts emerge, successively I may add; for it is very plain that, as in the empires set forth by the metals, etc., in Dan. 2, so in the same powers here, we have to look at empires not contemporaneous, but succeeding each other in rule over the world under the providence of God. "The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings." There, beyond question, we have the empire of Babylon. Nor is it at all a novelty to find the Holy Spirit applying the figure of a lion to Nebuchadnezzar, nor of an eagle either. Jeremiah has already employed the same. "The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way." (Jer. 4: 7) Ezekiel, as well as Jeremiah, represented him also under the figure of an eagle. Indeed, he is mentioned both as the lion and the eagle in Jer. 49: 19-22. In the vision of Daniel the Holy Ghost combines the two figures in one symbol, in order fitly to represent

what the Babylonish empire was in the mind of God.

But, besides these symbols of grandeur and rapidity of conquest, we have the sign of a remarkable change that was to pass over this beast, and one of which there was no appearance, humanly speaking, at that time. But all was open to the eye of God, whose object in giving prophecy is, that His people should see beforehand what He sees. God has been pleased, in the perfect wisdom and goodness that belong to His nature, to impart such a measure of knowledge of the future as He sees to be for His own glory; and an obedient child hears and keeps the words of his Father.

Now He brought before the prophet the knowledge that the Babylonish empire was to be humbled. It was not to be absolutely destroyed as a nation, but completely put down as a ruling power in the world. This was what was signified by the wings being plucked, and the animal made to stand upon the feet as a man, which would of course destroy its strength. For however proper such an attitude may be to a man, it is plain that to a ravening beast it would be rather a humiliation. In accordance too with this, "a man's heart was given to it." There may be in this a sort of contrast with what was actually done in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, who had a beast's heart given to him. The proud king was not looking up to God, which clearly is the bounder duty of every soul of man. He is not properly a man who does not recognize the God that brought him into being, and that watches over him and abounds in beneficence towards him every day: the God that claims the allegiance of the conscience and that alone can convert the heart. In Nebuchadnezzar's case man was occupied with himself. The very gift of universal dominion from God was perverted by the power of Satan, so as to make self and not God the object of his thoughts. In the emphatic phrase of Scripture, his was not a man's heart which looks up, owning One above him, but a beast's that looks down in the gratification of itself and the pursuit of its own instincts. This was the case with Nebuchadnezzar, and therefore a most solemn and personal judgment was executed upon him. But the mercy of God interposed after a certain time of humiliation, and he was restored. This was a token of the condition to which the Gentile powers were to be brought from not recognizing the true God; but there was also the witness of their future blessing and restoration, when they shall own the kingdom of heaven by-and-bye. In the case before us, the lion was reduced from its power as a beast to a position of weakness. This actually took place when Babylon lost its supremacy in the world, which seems clearly the meaning of the latter part of the verse. We have first, Babylon, in the fulness of its power, and then the great change that occurred when it was stripped of the empire of the world.

In the next verse (verse 5) there is a description given of the Persian empire, which had been represented in the great image as "the beast, etc., of silver." "And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side," — a remarkable feature, which, at first sight, might not be obvious, but which is soon explained. It was an empire not so uniform as the Babylonish. It consisted of two peoples joined under one head. Another remarkable feature is this: it was the inferior of the two kingdoms that prevailed. The Persian takes the upper hand of the Medes. Thus we saw in Dan. 5 that Darius the Median took the kingdom; but Cyrus soon followed, and from thence onward it was always the Persian that governed, and not the Median. We have in this circumstance a fresh instance that we do not really need history for the understanding of prophecy. Inattention to this plunges people into uncertainty. We may have recourse to history as a sort of homage paid to prophecy, but the historical confirmation of fulfilled prophecy is a very distinct thing from its interpretation. Prophecy, like all Scripture, is explained only by the Spirit of God; and *He* need not leave the written word for human help to explain what He has inspired: only He who is the author of Scripture is really capable of explaining it. I ought not to have to press this, as it is a first principle of truth; but we have to insist on first principles of truth quite as much now as ever.

Here then Scripture furnishes us with the evident fact, that while the second empire consisted of two parts, and while the Medes were the elder branch of the empire, yet it was Cyrus the Persian that was to be most prominent. This was the side that raised itself up. "It had three ribs in the mouth of it, between the teeth of it," clearly, I think, the sign of the extraordinary rapacity that would characterize the Persian empire. If we were to see presented to us, in a kind of panorama, different beasts, and if one of the animals were painted with a quantity of prey and actually devouring it, at once we should have the idea of a singularly voracious appetite. Such was the case with the Persians. There were frequent outbreaks which they had to encounter, because of their extortion and cruelty. It is true that God wrought providentially through them in behalf of the Jews; but this only made the contrast with their ordinary ways the more striking. For while the Persians were excessively hard upon others, there was leniency and favour shown towards Israel; but this was only the exception. In general, as depicting their character, a rapacious wild beast sets it forth. Hence the bear is said to have three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was in the very act of showing its ravening propensities. "And they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh." That was the explanation in words of the vision: it referred evidently to its predatory habits.

In the third case, we have a leopard, with some notable features about it, though we are not to look for the regularity of pictorial consistency. There are certain truths intended by every figure; but if men try to put all the particulars into a formal harmony, they will not hold together. In the present case there was nothing in nature like this leopard; but God takes from different things that existed in nature features that were necessary to give a combined idea of this new empire. Hence, while the leopard is remarkable for its agility in pursuing its prey, yet, in order to give something beyond nature, we hear that it had "upon the back of it four wings of a fowl." If ever there was a case in which impetuous courage in pursuing great designs and speed in achieving a succession of conquests were united, we find it in the history of Alexander the Great. The Macedonian or Grecian kingdom has a character of swiftness attached to it that no other empire ever had; and hence the leopard, on the one hand, and the four wings of the fowl on the other. But, besides that, "the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it." There you have not so much what was found in Alexander himself, but rather in his successors. The four heads refer to the division of his empire into four different parts after his death. It is not, therefore, merely a symbol of what the Greek empire was in its first origin, but it presents thus its future also. It is emphatically the empire that separated into four distinct divisions. Not that there were only four, because it is clear that at one time there was a sort of division among his generals, six of whom reigned over different parts, but they gradually subsided into four. This we know from the next chapter: there is no need to go to history for it. All facts, all science, must confirm the word of God; but the word of God does not need them to prove that itself is divine. If it did, what would become of those who understand nothing of science and history? Persons who dabble much in either one or other for the purpose of confirming the Scriptures, have never reaped anything but the scantiest gleanings, as far as the Scripture harvest is concerned. It is another thing if a person feeds upon the word, grows in the knowledge of the Scripture, and then is called on, in the course of duty, to take up what men say about it: he will find that there is nothing, even down to the most recent discoveries of science, that does not pay unwitting obeisance to Scripture. The man that takes his stand upon Scripture, looking up to God, and using whatever means are given through the word and Spirit of God, has the real vantage ground: his confidence is in God, and not in the discoveries or the thoughts of men. The man that is searching here below is subject to all the uncertainty and mists of this lower world. He who derives his light from the word of God has a sun brighter than that at noon-day; and, therefore, just as far as he is subject to it, he will not, cannot, stray. And the Spirit of God is able and willing to produce this subjection in us. We all do stray, more or less, as a fact; but the reason is not

from any defect in the word of God, or any lack of power to teach on the part of the Holy Ghost. We err because we have not sufficiently simple faith in the perfectness of Scripture, and in the blessed guidance which the Spirit loves to exercise in leading us into all truth.

The next verse (ver. 7) is the opening of another vision. For, properly speaking, from the first verse down to the seventh is one section or vision, each being introduced by the words, "I saw in the night visions." Daniel first beheld the four beasts in a general way; if any were particularly specified, it was the first three. But the fourth beast was evidently that which more peculiarly occupied the mind of the Holy Spirit, and the prophet, therefore, gets a fresh view of it. "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth." Here is, clearly, a prophetic figuration of the fourth or Roman empire. I will not now enter into the many proofs of it. Hardly any person who reads these pages is likely to combat the thought, that in the four well-known empires we have the statue of Dan. 2, and the beasts of Dan. 7. Some have denied this, but it is such an eccentricity that one need say no more about it.

Admitting this, then, we have in the fourth beast the Roman empire plainly set forth. What marks it politically is all-overcoming strength. It is represented by a monster to which nothing in nature can be found to answer. We have a fuller account of it in the Revelation; because the Roman empire, being then established, and its future destiny carrying us on to the end of the age, it became the exclusive object of attention — the beast. Accordingly we have a description of it in Rev. 13, where we find it represented as a leopard, the "feet as those of a bear, and its mouth as that of a lion." And this composite creature is further distinguished (verse 1) by having seven heads and ten horns, and upon its horns ten crowns. That was the power under which John was at that very time suffering in the isle of Patmos; and as greater sufferings were in reserve for God's people, and blasphemy against God, we need not wonder that we have a minute account of it.

Here it is seen as "a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it." That is, there was unexampled power of conquest and aggrandizement, and what it did not incorporate into its own substance, it stamped upon and thus spoiled for others. "And it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it." It was an empire that maintained a strong feeling of the will of man — of the people. It combined certain republican elements with as iron a despotism as ever ruled in this world. These two things were brought into distinct, but apparently harmonious play. Besides this, there is another and most distinctive mark: "it had ten horns." In other empires it was not so. The Greek empire gradually devolved, after its founder's death, into four heads; but the peculiarity of the Roman is the possession of ten horns. Yet we are not to look for the actual development of history in this vision. Had this been the case, it is clear that the ten horns would not have been seen in the Roman beast, when it first met the eyes of the prophet. In fact, it was not until hundreds of years after Rome had existed as an empire, that it had more than one ruler. The Spirit of God clearly brings into the very first view the features that would be found at the close, and not at the beginning. It was strong and fierce; it was one that devoured; it stamped the residue with its feet; it was diverse from all others. Rome may have been all this during the time of the Caesars; but it had not then ten horns. There can be no possible pretence for such a notion until the empire was broken up; and after that, properly speaking, the Roman empire ceased to exist. There might be the keeping up of the name and title of emperor, but it was the emptiest thing possible. How, then, could this prophecy be accomplished if, as long as there was an undivided empire, there were no horns; and if, on the other hand, the empire, as such, expired when once broken up into separate kingdoms? How are we to put these two facts together? Because it is clear from what is given us here, that a beast is a totally different thing from a horn. A beast represents imperial unity.

But in Rome, as long as the empire subsisted, there were no "ten horns": and when the divided kingdoms sprang up, there was no such thing then as imperial unity.

How, then, are the two things put together in the prophecy? The Spirit of God was, I believe, looking onward to the last stage of the Roman empire, when both features shall reappear, and that together. This last stage ends in a divine judgment; as it is written a little after, "I beheld till the thrones were *set up*" (for so it ought to be, instead of "cast down"; and this is not merely my opinion, but the uniform way in which it is understood in the best ancient and modern translations of Scripture), "I beheld till the thrones were set up, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire." There you have evidently a figure of the divine glory in judgment, not some mere providential dealing on the earth, but the process of judgment that God Himself will institute. "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." At whatever time this may be supposed to take place, it is manifest that it is a divine judgment. "I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." The horn alluded to here is the eleventh one, the one that came up among the ten. And it was this little horn that began with small beginnings, that, by some means or another, managed to root up three of the first horns, and that subsequently became the guide and governor of the whole beast. "I beheld because of the great words which the horn spake," not "till the horn was put down," but "till the beast was slain," so that it is implied that this little horn had managed to govern the entire beast. This verse shows that there was to be a divine judgment that would deal with the little horn and with the beast, and destroy them. Has that taken place? Clearly not.

It is plain, that whatever has fallen upon the Roman empire in past times, has been the ordinary course and decline of a great nation. Barbarian hordes tore it up, and separate kingdoms were formed. But prophecy tells us of another thing altogether. It warns of a judgment that disposes of the beast in a totally different way, and in contrast with the others. "I beheld till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time." That is, the remains of the Chaldeans, or of the races that were called so, we have still. Persia abides a kingdom, and the Greeks have lately become one. They exist, therefore, though not as imperial powers. We have these races of men, more or less, representing those powers; smaller, it is true, and no longer having dominion as empires. This is the meaning of ver. 12. Their dominion was taken away as rulers of the world, but "their lives were prolonged for a season and time." In this last empire, when the hour of its judgment comes, the fact is far otherwise. In the case of the first three beasts, they lost their imperial dignity, but themselves might be said to exist. But in the case of the fourth empire, the hour when its dominion is destroyed is the same hour in which it is itself destroyed. "The beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." Who can doubt that this is the same scene that we have alluded to in Rev. 19, where we are told, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army"? The prophet had come to the last beast. Further back in divine revelation we had the other three beasts; they had had their day, and there only remained the last. Consequently, when John says "*the* beast," we are to understand the Roman empire. This beast, then, and the kings of the earth, are warring against the Lord. "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. *These both* [mark] were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." Now, this is very remarkable;

because here we have the lake of fire, which answers to the judgment of the burning flame in Daniel: only it is a fuller statement. It was not a mere control of circumstances, but a divine power that casts straight into hell without the necessity of a previous judgment. For it was perfectly plain what they were about. They were found in open antagonism to the Lord of glory, and were cast into the flames. Has that ever been verified in the Roman empire? Clearly not. What then follows? The Roman empire has passed away; for the last thousand years and more it has had no existence, except as an unmeaning title, which has been the object of contention among ambitious men. Separate kingdoms have taken the place of the undivided Roman empire.

But what have we here? The Roman empire reappearing. And this exactly agrees with other parts of the word of God. For there is a remarkable expression in the Revelation, that has been alluded to more than once. It is Rev. 17: 8, etc., "The beast that was, and is not, and *shall be present*." I do not know how persons could have used the expression, "and yet is." It is not even sense, and the real thought is particularly simple. No enigma is meant here. The Roman empire was to have three stages. The first is its original imperial form, when John suffered under the last of the Caesars. Then next is its condition of non-existence, from about the fifth century, when the Goths, and Vandals, etc., broke it up; in that condition it is now. But then there is a third stage, and it is in that last condition that it is to be found in open opposition to God and the Lamb. This is the future of the Roman empire. It is to be reorganized, it is to come out again as an empire, and in this last phase it will fight against God to its ruin. And mark how this leaves room for the point which I wished to illustrate. We could not in the past have had ten horns as well as the beast; in the future we can, and that is what the scene in Rev. 17 shows. "The ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet." But it is added, "They shall receive power as kings one hour with the beast." So that when the beast should make its reappearance, there would be this singular feature: that while there would be a great head of imperial unity, it would not be to the exclusion of separate kings. There would still be the kings of France, Spain, etc. Let none suppose that to say this is prophesying. The true way to be kept out of that presumption is to study prophecy. In the one case you are learning what God says; in the other you are but giving out your own thoughts. In this passage the point is, not an empire alone without the ten kings, nor the ten kings without the empire, but the union of these two things. There is the imperial unity, which answers to the beast; at the same time there are these separate kings. It is their co-existence which will mark the Roman empire in its last phase. To that everything is tending now.

The prophet saw the last condition of this empire with its ten horns. "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." (Verse 8) Men used to apply all this to the pope. No doubt the Roman pontiff was extremely obnoxious to every one that valued the word of God. But we must always take care, when we read Scripture, not to be too anxious about applying the word of God to what is in our way, or to what we may think extremely evil — as no doubt the pope and popery are. But we must seek to understand what God means by His word. Granted that there is a remarkable analogy between the papacy and the little horn. It may have been intended to be applied by the children of God in different ages, who were suffering through the papacy, for their help and encouragement. The changing of times and laws (verse 25), as well as his great words and persecution of the saints, may have been accomplished in its canons, bulls, and political influence. But it remains to be inquired, Is that the full meaning and the proper design of the prophecy? Take an example from Matt. 24. There was the beginning of sorrows; then the abomination of desolation set up in the holy place, and a warning to flee from Jerusalem; unexampled tribulation, etc. I can understand all this having a measure of application to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. But who will say that this is the end of all, and that the full

meaning is realized there? It is impossible that any one can think so who examines it attentively. When God gives a prophecy, He very often allows that there should be a sort of earnest in the accomplishment of it; but we are never to take that as the full thing. The Roman Empire has fallen, and, out of the fall of that empire, a new and singular power, with divine claims, has started up and set itself against God. But to say that this is the full accomplishment of the prophecy, would be as great a mistake as to suppose that God never alluded to it at all. There was to be Mahommedanism in the east, and the papacy in the west; but still the question recurs, Is that all that the Holy Ghost meant? I say, No, for the reason already given — that if the history of the papacy be looked at, the beast was gone, properly, when the pope took his place.

More than that. The pope has never acquired three of the ten kingdoms. He might receive Peter's patrimony, but it has always been a petty power politically, of no consequence as to territory. Instead of acquiring three of the ten kingdoms, all its weight has arisen from its spiritual delusion over the souls of men. Clearly, then, a power, small in its beginnings, is to rise and put down three of these greater powers, acquiring all their dominion. The pope never has done any such thing. So that, although there has been a measure of likeness, there is enough difference to make their distinction quite plain.

The empire is in full force at the time that these ten horns and the little horn appear. This last subsequently aggrandizes itself, and rules the whole beast. Instead of this, the pope has long lost almost the half of his influence in Europe, and has been of late stripped of the chief part of his dominions in Italy; and what may be the end of agencies now at work no man can say.

We have here a most vigorous power, that has the ten horns in subjection to itself. The Revelation tells us that all the ten kings conspired to give their power and strength unto the beast. God has given all up, because it is the time when there shall be strong delusion, and men will believe a lie. I gather from that, not that this has no bearing upon the papacy, but that its full accomplishment is in the future. Scripture is explicit that the Roman Empire, which has ceased to exist, will be reorganized, and will be the instrument, under the direction of the false prophet, for carrying out the last great effort of Satan against the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Daniel we find that this little horn overthrows three powers. Then we have its moral characteristics. It has eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. It is marked by immense intelligence — not by brute force. The description of it contrasts with that of the Lord, the Lamb that was slain, who is characterized as having seven horns and seven eyes — that is, the perfection of intelligence and of power. In this case it is not so. The power outwardly looks much greater. It has ten horns instead of seven — a monster instead of perfection. The result is a sort of grotesque exaggeration of the power and wisdom of Christ that wretched man, energized of Satan, will arrogate to himself. Then comes the overthrow (verse 11) because of its fearful blasphemy against God.

A new vision follows (verses 13, 14,) in contrast with the powers that were represented by ravening beasts. The new and prominent object is "one like the Son of man." Just as in the second chapter it was an insignificant stone that struck the great image, and all crumbled to pieces from head to foot. Here the Son of man "came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him." The Ancient of days represents God as such, "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity."

In the Revelation the two glories are both united in the Person of Christ. Rev. 1 shows us one like the Son of man: but when we find the description of Him, some of the features are exactly the same as are attributed here to the Ancient of days, whose garment is said to be as white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool, etc. The Jewish prophet sees Christ simply as man. The Christian prophet

sees Him as man, but as God withal.

"And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." There will be no such thing as its being taken from Him, or as another power succeeding Him. It will be everlasting in the sense of as long as the world shall endure. But, strictly, this is not an eternal scene. The Jewish prophets show you the millennium; but they do not unfold, as the New Testament does, that when all things are subdued to God, even the Father, *God* shall be all in all. This was reserved for another day; and the Revelation follows it up in the most blessed manner, in Rev. 21: 1-8.

Just mark, by the way, a feature of some importance. The latter part of the chapter consists of explanations; but we are never to suppose that the explanations of Scripture merely refer to what has already been given. This is the case in human writings, but in God's explanations there is always further truth brought out. This is of moment. Through not understanding it, the kingdom of Christ has been supposed to be merely the ascendancy of His saints. There will be the kingdom of the Son of man and the kingdom of His people, but we are assuredly not to suppose that thereby is meant the reigning of the saints in a figurative way to the exclusion of the Son of man. The explanation brings out the saints, which the vision does not. It is no less than denying the personality of the reign of Christ, if you make the explanation merely tantamount to the vision. But the principle is false, and so is the deduction.

In verse 17, the person to whom the prophet appeals tells him, "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings which shall arise out of the earth." Their origin was purely *earthly*. There is no contradiction at all between this and the fact that we are told in verse 2 that they came up from the *sea*. The reason why they are said to rise thence is that the sea represents a mass of men in a state of political anarchy. It is out of this troubled state of peoples that empires arise. Take the French Empire for example. A revolution broke up the old system of government. Then followed a state of confusion, like the sea torn with the winds, and out of it all emerged an empire. From such a state of things in the world the four great empires arose. It was, too, very much about the same time that the beginnings of *the* four great empires were laid. There was an immense difference in the degree of development in the East as compared with the West. The Western powers were comparatively only in the cradle; but the beginning of these various powers was traceable to much the same date and the same state of confusion and anarchy. That seems to be what is meant by their coming up out of the sea. But in verse 17 they are said to arise out of the earth. They have not a *heavenly* origin. The force of the sea was merely to show that it is out of a previously troubled state of society that they grew. Such was their *providential* origin. But here their *moral* origin is looked at as being purely earthly, in contrast with the Son of man, who comes in the clouds of heaven.

What makes this still plainer is that in the next verse (verse 18) it is said, "But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever." The margin says, the saints of the "high ones." It is the origin of the expression in the New Testament, "heavenly places." The phrase is the same whether applied to our blessings, "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," in Eph. 1, or to the foes in "high places," in Eph. 6. The saints of the heavenly places (that is, probably, of God in connection with the heavenly places) "shall take the kingdom." This gives the contrast. As for these four great powers, the best that could be said of them, if you look at their political origin, was that they arose out of a confused and tumultuous state of things in the world; or, if at their moral origin, it was not from heaven. If, on the other hand, you look at the saints of the heavenly places, they are those destined to take the kingdom, which they possess for evermore. This adds an important truth to the fact of the Son of man's getting the kingdom. When dominion is given Him, He

will not take it alone. All that have ever waited for this kingdom, in all ages, will come along with Him. It will be the time when He will manifest His risen ones, when Abraham, Enoch, David, no matter who they may be that have known Him by faith, will be there in their changed and glorified bodies, and will reign along with Him. "Know ye not," the apostle says, "that we shall judge the world?" That clearly must mean in this kingdom of the Son of man. Because if it were merely a question of going to heaven to be with Christ, that is not judging the world. So that, while it is true that we are to go up to heaven, it is not all. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" If we have not known it, how comes it to pass? Some truth has been let slip, if we have not looked for such things. And mark the practical importance of it. The very fact that you do not know it proves that you lack something that God makes a great deal of. And how does God use it in the Epistle to the Corinthians? It was to reproach those saints for carrying their questions before the world. Do you not know, he reasons with them, that you are called to this place of dignity? It is not merely that you will have it by-and-bye; but God makes it known and true to faith now. Just as the heir to the kingdom is instructed and fitted for the throne that he is to occupy, so God is educating His saints now to share the kingdom of the world which is to belong to Christ. It is a revealed truth of God that the kingdoms of the world shall become that of our Lord and of His Christ; but when He does reign, the saints will reign also. The saints of the heavenly places — who are they? Those whose hearts are with Christ above, those who will be converted before Christ comes, and will govern a people gathered upon the earth; those who have in past ages died in Christ, or who are now waiting for Christ; those too who will pass through the great tribulation: all these are saints of the Most High. They are in contrast with others. For there will also be saints when Christ comes to reign, who will be blessed upon the earth. There will be a great harvest there. The Lord will bring those saints into all the promised blessings of His kingdom. But we are chosen in Christ *before* the foundation of the world, and shall reign *over* the earth. That is distinguished from the kingdom and dominion *under* the whole heaven. There are certain saints that are in the heavens; but there is another class spoken of that is here below. The kingdom shall be given to *the people* of the saints of the Most High. Those are some of the persons that the saints will reign over. "Know ye not," urges Paul, "that the saints shall judge the world?" Accordingly, here we have "the people of the saints of the Most High" as a distinct class.

There are many details in this chapter that I have not entered into. But there is a description of the evil conduct of the little horn that I must say a few words upon, although a little out of order. It is said (verse 20) that "it had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Then, in the further account, it is said (verse 25) that this little horn "shall speak great words against the Most High' and shall wear out the saints of the Most High [referring to his persecutions], and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." It is necessary to understand what the little horn will do. The meaning is, that he will destroy the Jewish worship, at that time carried on upon the earth. By the "times" is meant their festivals or feast-days. He will interfere with these as Jeroboam did; "and they shall be given into his hand," etc. It has been often supposed that "they" means the saints. But this is a total mistake. It is "the times and laws" that are to be given into his hand, for a certain limited period of time. God will allow him to have his way. He shall think to do it. And the fact that they are to be given into his hands shows that he succeeds for a time in carrying out his desires. But God will never give His saints into the hands of His enemies, even for a time ever so short. He always keeps them in His own hands. Job was never more in the hands of God than when Satan desired to have him that he might sift him as wheat. The sheep are in the hands of the Father and the Son, and none shall

ever be able to pluck them thence. There is no such thought in the word as God leaving or forsaking them. Here it is simply the outward arrangements of worship, of which the Jews will be the representatives on the earth ; and they will be allowed for a time to fall under his power. For it is plain that at that time there will be Jewish saints owning God and Jesus, too, in a measure: as it is said (Rev. 14), "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." These saints will be in a very peculiar position. There will be a sort of combination of the law with a recognition of Jesus to a certain extent. During this state of things, they will come under the power of the little horn, "for a time, times, and the dividing of time" — that is, for three years and a half, closed by the coming of Christ in judgment.

Daniel 8.

There is a remarkable change which takes place at the point where we are now arrived, anti it may not be known to all readers of the Book of Daniel. The language in which the Spirit of God reveals this vision, and those that follow, is a different one from that in which He had conveyed the previous portions of the book. From the early part of Dan. 2 up to the end of Dan. 7. the language was that of the Babylonian monarch — Chaldee: whereas from Dan. 8 to the close, it is Hebrew — the ordinary language of the Old Testament. Now this was not without purpose. And I think the clear inference that we are to gather from it is this: that what particularly concerned the Gentile monarchies was given in the language of the first great Gentile Empire. They were immediately concerned in it: and, in fact, as we know, the first vision (of the image) was seen by the Gentile king himself — Nebuchadnezzar. From that to the end of Dan. vii. is in his own tongue.

But now we are about to enter upon visions which specially concern the Jews. Dan. 8, e.g., alludes to the sanctuary, to the holy people, to the daily sacrifice, and a number of other particulars, which would hardly have been intelligible to a Gentile, and which had no sort of interest for him. But although they may even be little in our eyes now, although it may seem only something of the past, concerning a people broken to atoms, scattered over the face of the earth, yet, nevertheless, it has a real and enduring interest in the mind of the Spirit. For the Jews are not done with yet. Far from it. The Jews have known, throughout their whole history, the misery of attempting to deserve the promises that were given to the fathers; and they have been allowed to work out the terrible experiment of the folly and ruin that necessarily follow man's attempting to earn what the grace of God alone can bestow. That has been, and is, the whole secret of their past and present history. They were brought out from Egypt by the power of God; but at Sinai they undertook to do all that the Lord spoke unto them. They did not say one word about what God had promised. The Lord alluded to it. But in no way did they remind Him that they were a stiff-necked nation — a rebellious, unbelieving people. And when God proposed that they should obey Him, instead of acknowledging their utter incapacity, instead of throwing themselves only on His mercy, their answer betrayed, on the contrary, that boldness which always characterizes man in his natural state. "All that the Lord hath spoken," say they, "will we do, and be obedient." The result was that they did nothing that the Lord had said. They were disobedient at every turn, and God was obliged to deal with them as they deserved. No doubt there was divine goodness in it all; and every step even of their failure only brought out, through God's grace, some type or shadow of the blessings that God will give them by-and-bye, when, cured by His mercy of this fatal mistake of the flesh, and being disciplined in suffering and trial and that fearful tribulation through which they are destined yet to pass, they will then fall back upon the Blessed One whom their fathers despised and crucified, and will own that the mercy of God alone can give them any blessing, and that it is His faithfulness which will accomplish all that He had spoken to their fathers. This we saw beginning to

dawn in a particular way in the prophecies of Daniel. For although in the previous parts there had been types of it — Daniel himself in the den of lions — or as interpreter to the king — the three Hebrew children who refused to worship idols — all these things foreshadowed what God will work in the latter day for Israel, in a little seed that He will reserve for Himself. But they are not types so clear, but that many Christians now would think it fanciful to consider them as such at all. We are now about to find what none ought to gainsay for a moment. Yet there are many true Christians who take these prophecies as finding their only answer in what concerns the Christian Church. Such suppose that the little horn of Dan. 7 is the papacy. And in this chapter many have been disposed to find Islamism, the scourge of the eastern world, as the papacy is of the west. Whatever may be the analogies that would readily occur to any thoughtful mind, and that I by no means denied as to the little horn in Dan. 7, I admit there are the same with regard to Mahomedanism in the east. But what I would desire to bring out clearly is the direct intention of the Spirit of God in these scriptures. It is all very well to find that there are seeds of evil germinating in the world, and that the horrors of the last days have their heralds — admonitory signs that arise ever and anon over the surface of the world, to show us what is coming. But in looking at the word of God, it is of importance to be divested of any desire to find the answer to prophecy in the past or present. The great thing is to go to it with an unbiassed mind, desiring nothing but to understand what God is teaching us. Therefore, whether it be about the past or the future, just as about the present, the chief requisite is, that we should be subject to God and to the word of His grace. I desire, in this spirit, to endeavour, as far as the Lord enables me, to explain the meaning of our chapter.

As in Dan. 7, so here, the vision was during the reign of Belshazzar; whereas the subsequent visions were after the power of Babylon was overthrown. But up to this time there was no judgment of Babylon. Notwithstanding, the very place where the new vision was seen prepares us for a certain change. It was in the east — still farther east — "at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam." Elam is the Hebrew name for Persia, or one of the names, at any rate. "And I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai." I only mention this to show that we have certain clues as to the bearing of the prophecy that follows. He lifts up his eyes and sees a ram — a well-known symbol, used in Persia itself, and very familiar in its monuments and public documents. "Behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last." Clearly the allusion is to the composite character of the Persian Empire. There were two elements in that empire, as distinguished from others — the Medish, which was the first, and the Persian, which was the younger element of the two. But the younger becomes in course of time the greater. Therefore it says that one horn was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. Although Darius the Mede takes the kingdom on the fall of Babylon, yet Cyrus the Persian is the one who acquires the supremacy in due time, and after that it is always the Persian that is more particularly mentioned. But still earlier even, in the language of the nobles to Darius, we find them saying, "the law of the Medes and Persians." The ram had two horns.

"I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward" — that is, the direction of the various conquests of the Persian Empire — "so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great." We find as to this how entirely all profane history is obliged to bow to the word of God. But we need not go farther than Scripture itself. Let any one read the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, etc., and he will see how wide and undisputed was that dominion. Even in profane history this was the term used about them — "the great king" — emphatically so about the Persian monarchy. It is manifest how entirely this goes along with the prophetic account given of them here. "He did according to his will, and became great."

"And as I was considering, behold, an he-goat came from the west." Now this was the first inroad

that the west had ever made upon the eastern world. And nothing seemed more improbable, because the east was the cradle of the human race. It was in the east that man was put when he was first made. It was in the east that he began his second history in the world — I mean in the world after the flood. It was from this centre that the various races of men, after the Lord had confounded their language at Babel, spread themselves all over the world. It was also in the east only that there was any considerable development of civilization, for hundreds of years before the west had emerged from barbarism. Yet here we find, from this striking prophetic figure, that when the Persian kingdom was still without a rival, not declining, but in the very plenitude of its power, there suddenly comes from quite another quarter a power represented in the vision as a he-goat — a western adversary. And this power advances with the greatest possible swiftness; as it is said here, he "touched not the ground." No person of the least openness to conviction could question for a moment what is meant, even supposing he had not a divine interpretation of it in the chapter. There was but one ancient empire that it could be conceived to set forth — the Grecian Empire — and the great horn in its head was clearly its first chief, Alexander. "And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns." Here we have the Spirit of God giving in a few words what all history confirms. A new empire should rise after the fall of the Babylonian, symbolized by the ram, peculiar in this, that it had two different peoples which composed its strength. This empire might go on in fulness of power for a certain time; but then, from another quarter, where there had been no kingdom of any note known before, comes a power of amazing swiftness in its progress, led on by a king of extraordinary courage and ambition. And this personage smites the Persian Empire so completely that "there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand." "Moved with choler" is said more particularly about the Greek Empire and Alexander. The Greeks had a ground of hatred against the Persians, which was not the case with the other empires. There was much of personal feeling in it, and this is admirably expressed by the word *choler* here. Why so? We do not read of that in the attacks of the Persians on the Babylonians, ferocious as they might be, or in those of the Romans upon the Greeks; but it was peculiarly true of this Greek inroad upon the Persian Empire. The Persians had before invaded Greece, and thus had roused the strongest feeling against themselves. This traditional resentment descended from father to son, so that the Greeks considered themselves the natural enemies of the Persians. Such was the provocation that the Persians had given to the Greeks, who were but a petty nation at that time, and who had not at all sought to extend their bounds beyond their own native country. Now the moment was come that this blow should be returned, and the Persians attacked in their own land: and the he-goat with this notable horn in its head comes, moved with choler, and smites the ram and breaks his two horns, casts him down to the ground and stamps upon him. Nothing can be clearer, nothing more exactly descriptive as giving an idea of the relative position of these two powers to one another. If you were to read history all your life, you could not have a more vivid picture of the Persian downfall than what the Spirit of God has furnished in a few lines.

In this case it was rather less than three hundred years from the time of Daniel till these great events took place — a time long enough to show the wonder of God's perfect wisdom and the way in which He unveils the future to His people, but a comparatively short space in the history of the world; yet this is not His great object. The Spirit always looks forward to the close. He may introduce what is to be fulfilled in a comparatively brief time, but His main attention is directed to the end of this age, and not to those events that actually surround the parties of the world. God has a people that His heart is set upon: a people, it is true, who, through their own folly and want of leaning upon God, have been

most feeble and failing, and who are, to this day, the scorn and by-word of the nations, according to the word of God. But whatever might be the apparent might of Persia, if not of Greece, and the importance of their controversies as filling up the history of the world, God thinks but little of them. He disposes of the records of centuries in a few words. The point to which God hastens forward might be small then in the eyes of the world, but being connected with the interests of His king, and His people, He goes on to the great events connected with them in the last days. This gives the key to the verses that follow. Their importance is because of their connection with Jewish history, and because they reflect what is to take place before the great day of the Lord come.

"Therefore the he-goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken." This was exactly the case with Alexander. He was cut off, while quite a young man, in the midst of his victories. "And for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven." There was a certain time that elapsed after the death of Alexander, when his generals were squabbling together, and trying to set up a number of kingdoms; but the end of all was that there were four kingdoms formed out of the proper dominions of Greece. So that I do not question that the allusion here is to the well-known division of Alexander's empire, into four kingdoms, which took place about three hundred years before Christ.

"And out of one of them came forth a little horn," otherwise called in Scripture the king of the north. Being in the north, he pushes his dominions down "toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land." My reasons for so thinking, beyond that of the direction of his conquests (which shows where his own power lay, and the point from which he started), will more particularly appear when we come to verse 11. What we have here is the succession of these two empires — Persia first, and then Greece. For out of one of the fragments of the Grecian Empire there sprang a king that was afterwards to play a most important part in connection with the land and people of the Jews. This is the great point of the chapter.

Here then we find that this little horn "waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them." Thereby is meant, I apprehend, those that were in a position of honour and glory before the Jewish people. Thus, stars are used, in the New Testament, as the symbol of those who are set in a place of authority in the Church. Just so, I conceive, the "host of heaven" here alludes to persons that held a place of authority in the Jewish polity. It is the key-note to all this part of the prophecy. The importance of all that affects Israel is now more and more coming into view. Hence you find an expression used that may seem strong — "the host of heaven." But we must not be surprised at this. God takes the utmost interest in His people. Bear in mind that this does not imply that His people were in a good state. On the contrary, in judging of failure, we must take into consideration the position the people occupied, and for which they are responsible. If you look at Christendom you must remember that all who profess the name of Christ, whether truly or falsely — every baptized person — every person that has come under the outward recognition of the name of Christ, is in the house of God. People fancy that it is only those who are really converted that have any moral obligations. This is a total mistake. A new kind of responsibility, no doubt, flows from the fact of conversion and the relationships of grace.

But there is a responsibility that involves a vast accession of guilt when men are in any place of privilege. This is a very solemn truth, and God attaches importance to it. Look at the Second Epistle to Timothy. God's house is there compared to a great house among men, and in it there are vessels to dishonour as well as to honour. The former are not converted at all; they might be altogether bad people, but still they are said to be vessels in the house of God. The Church, that which bears the name of Christ upon the earth, is always responsible to walk as the bride of Christ. Yet you cannot allude to

such a privilege and responsibility as that, without seeing the utter ruin, and failure, and declension of what bears His name. And this is the practical importance of keeping in view the position which God has assigned us. We never can judge how low we have got till we see the place in which God first put us. Supposing I have to examine my ways as a Christian, I must bear in mind that a Christian is a man whose sins are blotted out; that he is a member of the body of Christ, and loved with the same love wherewith the Father loved the Son. Some are accustomed to think that, if a man is not a Jew or a Turk, or heathen, he must be a Christian. But when a believer hears that a Christian is one who is made a king and a priest to God — a purged worshipper, having no more conscience of sins — he becomes anxious, and feels that he has not one right or full idea of his own calling and responsibility. He then begins to find a different standard of judgment in Christ, to measure how he ought to feel, and work, and walk for God.

The same thing applies to Israel here. Those that held this place of responsible authority in Israel are alluded to here as the host and stars of heaven. They were put in a place of authority by God. For we must remember, in connection with Israel, that they are the people that, in the mind of God, have the first place upon the earth. They are the head, and the Gentiles the tail. This, I am aware, is a new thought to persons who are wont to look at Jews with an air of contemptuous pity, only judging of them by their present degraded condition. But, in order to judge rightly, we must look at things with God, we must feel with God; and God uses this strong language in regard to persons put of old in a position of outward authority among the Jews. Commentators have supposed that, because certain were spoken of in such exalted terms, Christians must be meant. But, as God's nation, Israel held the first place in His mind in the government of the world. That is their calling; and "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." God will never give up the great thought, that He has called Israel into this place; and they are judged according to it. This vision is while the power of Babylon is not yet judged. It gives you a view of what will be realized in the last days with regard to Israel, before the power that began with Babylon has been completely set aside.

This little horn waxed great, and cast down some of the host and stars of heaven, and stamped upon them. That is, certain Jewish rulers are overthrown that were in this place of great authority; treating them with the utmost cruelty, and degrading them "Yea, he magnified himself even to the Prince of the host," which, I suppose, means the Lord Himself. The marginal note is right in the next clause. "*From him the daily sacrifice was taken away.*" This at once makes it all plain. On the contrary, it introduces the utmost confusion to take "by him" to mean the little horn, and then "the place of his sanctuary" to mean that of the Prince of the host. The person that was represented by this little horn is to magnify himself even to the Prince of the host. "And from him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression." And then we go back to the little horn again. "And *it* cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered." In other words, the 11th verse and the first half of the 12th form a parenthesis. Then in the latter part of the twelfth verse we again have "*it*," which designates the little horn of verse 10. The "*it*" takes up the horn that was to appear and deal in a cruel way with the Jewish people, and with their rulers, in an aggravated form.

Then we have, as the prophet says, "one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." I strongly suspect that, in the main, what we have here, save the portion which is marked parenthetically, has had a partial accomplishment in the past. We shall read of a personage in Dan. 11 where the characteristics alluded

to here, as marking this little horn, are still more minutely stated. He is called, in profane history, Antiochus Epiphanes, and was a particularly bad man. If you have read the Books of the Maccabees (which, though not Scripture, are in the main historically true, at least two of them), you will know that they describe this king of Syro-Macedonia, and show the dreadful feeling he cherished against Israel. He attempted to force heathen worship upon them, especially that of Jupiter Olympus; and he put to death all the Jews who resisted his designs, till at last, partly by the Romans and partly by the force and courage of the Maccabees themselves, he was repressed and defeated, and the temple was once more cleansed again, and the Jewish worship resumed. No doubt, this was the person meant historically by the little horn. But he shows the same kind of features, which will reappear in another great leader of the last days, and I think that this will be made evident from the last part of this chapter. For when the prophet is spoken to by the angel Gabriel, he says, "Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision."

The statement denotes, that what he is going to explain more particularly looks onward to that time. But it gives me the opportunity to repeat a remark which has been before made — that we are never to suppose that the explanations of a vision in Scripture are merely a repetition of what has preceded. They allude to the past, but they add fresh features not given before. This is particularly plain in the present case. The past portion of the vision (that which had already been seen by the prophet) has been in the main accomplished; whereas the explanatory part adds fresh information that looks onward to the last days. Nevertheless, there is an explanation in measure of what is gone before. But it is observable how frequently, in the explanations of the angel, the last days are brought before us.

"And he said" (verse 19), "Behold I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be." There can be no question, if we are at all familiar with the prophets, what this means. Take the first of them. There I find this very expression, "the indignation." In the end of Isaiah 5, and then in Isa. 9, Isa. 10, this word, "indignation," is repeated over and over again. The prophet shows, that, in consequence of the idolatry of Israel, and especially of their kings, God's indignation was roused against His people. He sends a chastening upon them. But, whatever the first effects of the chastening might be, the evil burst out again with fresh fury, as evil always does, unless it is put away. Therefore sounds forth that terrible word, "For all this His anger is not turned away; but His hand is stretched out still." His wrath burns again and again. Then, in Dan. 10: 25, we find the Lord saying His "indignation shall cease." But wherein? There is a personage brought forward there, called the Assyrian; and this scourge of Israel was set forth in measure by Sennacherib, the then king of Assyria. He was the first who was particularly mixed up with the affairs of Israel, or rather of Judah. And what do we learn? The Assyrian there is to be used as the rod of God's anger; but when God has performed His whole work upon Mount Zion, and on Jerusalem — when He has allowed, as it were, the indignation to burn out, it will cease in the destruction of the Assyrian himself, because he forgot that he was merely a rod in the hands of the Lord. He flattered himself that it was all his own wisdom and might; but the Lord says, that He will deal with the rod itself, and destroy it. Accordingly, that very chapter shows us the indignation of the Lord ceasing in His destruction. The indignation is solely connected with His people Israel.

It is evident to me, that this confirms what was before said, that here we are upon Jewish ground. It is not a question of what popes or Moslems may do, nor about the inroads of the eastern or western apostasy. It concerns Israel — the last indignation of God against Israel. But it may be asked, Why is not the fourth empire introduced here? The reason is this: that while the dominion of these empires is taken away, upon which we have the successive rise of a new empire, yet the body remains in existence. Because it is out of the third empire, and not out of the fourth, was to rise this power that

plays so important a part in the last days. So that we must remember, that the little horn of Dan. 8 is an entirely distinct power from the little horn of Dan. 7. That of Dan. 7 is the last leader of the Roman Empire, who arises out of the fourth empire when it is divided into ten kingdoms; whereas this power rises from the third empire, wherein there was a division into four parts — not into ten. Nothing can be more distinct. Although the chief dominion of the world has passed away from the third to the fourth empire; and although we have had in Sennacherib a representative of the third empire, yet in the last days there will also be an inheritor of the third empire, who will meddle with Israel in a particular way. As there will be a grand leader in the west, so there will also be one in the east, springing out of the Greek Empire. Further, we must remember, that, although being the Grecian Empire, it was west in comparison with Babylon and Palestine, it was east in comparison with Rome. This little horn we shall see more of afterwards.

In verse 20, the ram with two horns is explained to represent the kings of Media and Persia; and, in verse 21, "the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king." Then, in verse 22, we have the breaking up of the Grecian Empire; and in verse 23, it is added, "And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up." This, I think, does not refer to Antiochus Epiphanes, but to the person whom Antiochus typified. Mark the expression again, "In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full." "And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power": a remarkable word, which is not said at all about the little horn of Dan. 7. There, I apprehend, it was by his own power. Satan might give him power, too; but in his own person he wielded the force of the Roman Empire. But, in the case of this ruler, though his power will be mighty, it will not be by his own power. He depends upon the strength given him by others. He will be the instrument of foreign policy and power, not his own. "And he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and destroy the mighty and the holy people." That is, we find that he is principally and expressly mentioned in connection with the Jews as a people. Observe here, that you have not the saints of the Most High. What we find now is merely a figurative expression of the great men of the Jewish people, and this, as contrasted with Gentiles. There is no allusion to their character personally; that does not come into view in chapter 8.

This king shall meddle with them, and destroy the mighty and the holy people. "And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many." That is, he will take advantage of their being in a state of ease and unprepared for his wily encroachments. "He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand." He will be utterly helpless in this last struggle; as in another scripture it is said (Dan. 11: 45), "He shall come to his end, and none shall help him."

Let me point out scriptures that will make the importance of this clearer than by confining ourselves to Dan. 8. Is there light from other passages as to who this personage is and what he will do? I answer, Yes. He is the same person that is spoken of, in various parts of the word of God, as the "Assyrian," or "king of the north." He is always described as the great foe of the Jews in the last days. The Jews at that time will be exposed to two evils. They will have an evil within in their own land — the Antichrist setting himself up as God in His temple; and they will have another evil from without — the Assyrian. He comes up as an enemy against them; and he is one also marked by a subtle policy. It is not merely by warlike power that he is distinguished. He is, no doubt, of fierce countenance, but he understands dark sentences. He will take the place of a great teacher, which would naturally have much influence over the Jewish mind; for they have always been a people given to research and intellectual speculations of all kinds. Of late years, the mass of them have been too much occupied with money-

getting to pay much attention to these things; but there have been constant representatives of the intellectual class among the Jewish people. And over such the influence of this king will be immense, when they are re-established in their own land, and are becoming important again, as the objects of the dealings of God in the way of judgment. For the indignation will not have ceased. Thus it is that these two evils will afflict the Jews. The Antichrist, or the wilful king, will take the place of the true Messiah in the land of Israel. For, it is plain, that if any one assumes to be Messiah, it must be in the midst of the Jewish people, and in the land of the Jews; whereas the Assyrian is one who is opposed to them as an open enemy. This I take to be the king alluded to by the other prophets as the king of the north.

I would now refer to a few Scripture proofs, that the Assyrian and Antichrist are totally distinct and opposed powers. The Assyrian will be the enemy of the Antichrist: the one will be the great self-exalting man inside, and the other the leader of the enemies outside. Isaiah 10 gives us the first plain intimation that we have of him in the prophets. "Wherefore it shall come to pass that when the Lord hath performed His whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." Many persons will tell me, the Assyrians are all gone; there is no such nation existing. But, I ask, has the Lord performed His whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem? No! Then the Assyrian is not all gone. The Lord tells me here, that when He shall have performed this whole work, He will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria. But the Jews are not in their land, and Jerusalem is still trodden down of the Gentiles. Who knows it not? But does it prove that the Jews are not to be in their land again, nor Jerusalem to be delivered from Gentile bondage? When the power of God gathers the Jews back into their own land, that same providence will bring out the representative of the Assyrian in the last days. And as the Assyrian was the first great enemy of Israel, so he is the chief one at the last. He it is that will come up for his judgment, when the Lord shall have performed His whole work upon Zion and Jerusalem. God has not performed the whole. He has performed a part of it, but His indignation still continues against Israel. This is the reason why they are not in their land. Even when they do get back, the indignation will still break out. There will be a return of the Jews in unbelief; and then will come this great crisis; and God will gather the scattered ones that remain, and set them in their own land; and the Assyrian will be judged. There is a certain great personage, typified by the Assyrian in the past, that will reappear in the last days. He is spoken of as this redoubtable king. He will govern in the very quarter where this little horn had its power — Turkey in Asia. Whether the Sultan will be the then possessor of these dominions, I do not pretend to say; but, whoever he may be, he is the person referred to by our prophet (Dan. 11) as the king of the north. He will come down towards the pleasant land and will attack the Jews; but will afterwards be broken to pieces. "He shall come to his end, and none shall help him."

Look again at Isaiah 14. And what makes it remarkable is this: that, in the beginning of that chapter, you have the king of Babylon spoken of. (Ver. 4) "Take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!" The king of Babylon does not represent the Assyrian. Babylon and Assyria were two distinct powers. Babylon was only a little province when Assyria was a great empire. And when the Assyrian was in ruins, Babylon rose to an altogether new rank, as an imperial power.

Isaiah 14 opens by showing, that "the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place," etc. It proves the intense interest that God will give the people of the world in seeing them back in their place. "And the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids." The Gentiles, instead of

being masters, will be glad to be servants in those days. "And they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors. And it shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow that thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers." There evidently you have what has never yet been accomplished. No person with knowledge of Scripture can suppose that ever, from the time of Babylon's supremacy, Israel had been in a position to take up such a proverb as that. The "times of the Gentiles" began with the Chaldean power being established over the Jews. And Jerusalem is, to this day, trodden down by the Gentiles. One power after another has taken possession of the city. Now, in these last days spoken of here, we have the Jews putting these Gentiles under them — making them their servants. And when that time comes, and not till then, they will take up this proverb, "How hath the oppressor ceased!" etc. And this prophetic strain looks at the king of Babylon, of whom Nebuchadnezzar was the type — the last holder of that same power that came in with Babylon. Who is this? The beast — the last inheritor of the power that commenced with the king of Babylon, whose strange destruction calls forth the joy and triumph of Israel. When the king of Babylon got this power, where was the Assyrian? Gone — broken. The empire of Babylon, that had been a little power, rose upon the ruins of the Assyrian. But mark, in this chapter, verse 24, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: that I will break the Assyrian in My land, and upon My mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth." There, evidently, we have the fact, that when the day of Israel's restoration comes, not only will they triumph in the fate of the king of Babylon, but the Lord will put down the Assyrian. How can this refer to the mere historical Assyrian of the past? He was already gone when Babylon came into power: so that he can only have been a type of a power yet to come. This shows that there will be two great powers in the latter day — the beast, represented by the king of Babylon, who at that time will be the enemy of the true-hearted Jews, though he purports to be the friend of the nation, that is, of the ungodly mass; as the Assyrian, on the contrary, will be the leader of the openly adverse coalition of the Gentiles against Israel.

Other scriptures prove the same thing. Thus in Isaiah 30 you will find the same two powers coming into view again. In verse 27 it is said, "Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with His anger And the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of His arm For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod" — (evidently alluding to his being the instrument of the Lord's chastening His people, as in Isa. 10: 5); "And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the Lord shall lay upon him, it shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will he fight with it. For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared: He hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, shall kindle it." This shows that it is not merely a judgment of the earth, but a deeper thing. Tophet, or the pit, is ordained of old. "For *the king also*" is the true meaning of the next clause. Tophet is not merely for "the Assyrian," but also for "the king." There are two distinct personages referred to, as we saw also in Isa. 14. "The king" will be in the land of Israel, and will reign there, under the auspices of the inheritor of the power of Babylon in that day. He will there assume to be the true Messiah. Tophet is prepared for him — but also for the Assyrian. They will be both consigned to divine judgment. I need not refer to all the passages that refer to them; but you will find a great deal that is deeply interesting in Isaiah and other prophets as to "the king."

But so far is it from being true, that Antichrist, or "the king," most occupies the mind of God,

that, on the contrary, the prophets speak far more of the Assyrian. Christians are not generally aware of the large extent of prophecy. One of the most important powers in it is hardly thought of by them. If you look at the minor prophets — for instance, Micah 5 — you will find an allusion to the same ruler, which is very plain. The chapter opens with a call. "Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek." There is the rejection of the Messiah. Then the second verse is a parenthesis, which shows us who the Judge of Israel is. "But thou Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel." They may smite Him upon the cheek; but, after all, not only is He to be the Ruler, but He is the everlasting God, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Then he resumes, in connection with verse 1, "Therefore will He give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth": that is, till the great purpose of God come to pass about His people. "Then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord.... And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land." Mark that — "when *the Assyrian* shall come," and "when he shall tread in our palaces": a thing that never has been accomplished yet. When the Assyrian came of old into the land of old, it is clear there was no such fact as this Judge of Israel there, nor had Israel been given up at that time; but the Assyrian of that day was only the type of the great heir of the same name and power of the last days. And then will the Judge of Israel go forth on behalf of His people. The Judge, that was once smitten upon the cheek, will be received by His people, when God's great purposes are accomplished. "This man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land." Then we find (verse 6), "Thus shall He deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he "readeth within our borders. And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord . . . and the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep; who, if he go through, both "readeth down and feareth in pieces, and none can deliver." So that it is very plain, that we have the encroachment of the Assyrian and his final overthrow in connection with the final deliverance of Israel.

I have endeavoured to show, that while Antiochus Epiphanes was the type of this Assyrian, yet that after all it was only in a very small part indeed that he meets the requirements of the prophecy; which, while it makes use of him, as a type, looks onward to the latter times of the indignation of God against Israel, when their foe comes up to receive his judgment from God. You will see how important it is to keep clearly in mind, that God has these great purposes about Israel, and that what man makes so much of — the episode of Popery now or of Mahommedanism — is passed over very slightly indeed. I acknowledge, that we find a certain measure of accomplishment in both, but the Church is never allowed by God to be an earthly people. When the Jews again come into view, then we have the importance of what touches them, and the Assyrian will come down from without, at the same time that there will be "the king" within: and both will fall under the unsparing judgment of God who will put down all enemies. And His people, purged by their trials, and looking to Jehovah-Jesus, will be thus made meet for the purposes of God in mercy, and goodness, and glory, throughout the world to come.

The Lord grant that we may know His purposes about us. We have nothing to do with this world, being strangers in it. We are entitled to read all these visions in the light of heaven. It is not said that Daniel did not understand them: the others did not. But, whatever may have been the case then, we, by the Holy Ghost, are entitled to understand these things now. And the Lord grant, that our minds may be heedful of what He puts before us as to our own path.

Daniel 9.

The fall of Babylon was connected, in the prophecies of Isaiah, as well as in those of Jeremiah, with brighter hopes for the Jew. The partial restoration, that took place in consequence, furnishes the type of the final ingathering of Israel. This accounts for the notion, which has prevailed among some Christians, that what happened then is all that we are to look for in behalf of Israel as such, and that their subsequent sin in rejecting their Messiah, and the mercy of the gospel to the Gentiles, has involved them in irreparable national ruin.

Although there are true elements in such thoughts, they are very far indeed from being the whole truth. God does not abandon the people that He called. Never does He give a gift of grace and then withdraw it utterly. For the same grace which promised deals with the person and heart of the believer, and works till it is brought home morally by the power of the Holy Ghost. Thus, along with the mercy, whether to an individual or to a people that He calls, there is also the long-suffering faithfulness and power, which in the end always triumph.

The history of the past, no doubt, has been a total failure. The reason of this was because Israel chose to stand upon their own strength with God, and not upon the goodness of God towards them. This is always and necessarily fatal for a time. "This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled." That is, all that was threatened and predicted must yet befall the generation of Israel, which presumed upon its own righteousness, and which finally showed its real character by rejecting Christ and the gospel. A real sense of moral ruin (that is, repentance towards God) ever accompanies real, living faith. Israel have gone through this phase of self-confidence, or are still going through it. "This generation" has not yet passed away: all things are not fulfilled. They have not yet suffered the full results of their own folly and hatred of God's Son. They have yet to suffer the severest chastening for it: for, although the past has been bitter enough, there are still more terrible things in the future. But when all has taken place, they will begin a new scene, when it will be, not the Christ-rejecting generation going on, but what Scripture speaks of as "the generation to come": a new stock of the same Israel, who will be children of Abraham by faith in Christ Jesus — children, not in word only, but in spirit. Then will follow the history, not of man's failure, but of a people whom the Lord blesses in His grace; when they will joyfully own that same Saviour, whom their fathers with wicked hands crucified and slew.

This chapter is especially occupied with Jerusalem and the Jews. It is a sort of episode in the general history of Daniel, but by no means an unconnected one. For we shall find, that the closing history of Israel peculiarly connects them with these personages that are yet to figure against God and His people, as we have read in previous chapters. It must be evident to any person who reads the chapter intelligently, that its main object is the destiny of Jerusalem and the future place of God's people. Now Daniel was exceedingly interested in this. He was one that loved them, not merely because they were his people, but because they were God's people. He resembles Moses in this — that even when the moral condition of the people hindered God from being able to speak of them as *His* people (He might care for them secretly, but I speak now of God's publicly owning them), Daniel still continues to plead that they were His people. He never gives up the truth, that Jerusalem was God's city, and Israel His people. The angel might say, Daniel's people and city — that was all quite true; but Daniel still holds to the precious truth, which faith ought never to give up — Let the people be what they may, they are God's people. For that very reason they might be chastened more and more sorely. In truth, nothing brings more chastening upon a soul who belongs to God, and who has fallen into sin, than that he *does* belong to God. It is not merely a question of what is good for the child. God acts for Himself and from Himself; and this is the very hinge and pivot of all our blessing. What would it be to

us if it were merely true that God was working for our glory? We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. We shall have something far better, because it will be God blessing us according to what is worthy of Himself.

Now Daniel was one that emphatically entered into this thought. It is the prominent feature of faith. For faith never views a thing barely in connection with oneself, but with God. It is always thus. If it is a question of peace, is it merely that I *want* peace? No doubt I do want it, as a poor sinner that has been at war with God all my life. But how infinitely more blessed when we come to find that it is "peace with God": not merely a peace with one's own heart and conscience, but with God! He gives a peace that stands in His sight. All His own character comes out in giving it to me, and in putting it upon such a basis that Satan shall never be able to touch. It is to deliver me, to break the very neck of sin; and nothing does it so completely as this — that God met me when I deserved nothing but death and eternal judgment, and spent His beloved Son in giving me a peace worthy of Himself. And He has done it; He has given it; and all Christian practice flows from the assurance, that I have found this blessing in Christ.

Here, then, we have Daniel deeply interested in Israel, because they were God's people. He consequently seeks in God's word what He has revealed about His people. This took place "in the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes." It was not some new communication. "In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."

Besides being a prophet, Daniel understood that Israel were to be restored to their land, before the event took place. He did not wait to see it accomplished, and then merely say, The prophecy is fulfilled. But he understood "by books," not by circumstances. No doubt there were the circumstances in the fall of Babylon; but he understood by what God had said, and not merely by what man had done. This is the true way of understanding prophecy. So that it is remarkable that when we are about to enter upon a very distinct prophecy, occupied almost exclusively with the narrow sphere of Israel, God shows us the true key to the understanding of prophecy. Daniel read the prophecy of Jeremiah; and he saw from it clearly, that, Babylon once overthrown, Israel would be allowed to return. And what is the effect of this on his soul? He draws near to God. He does not go to the people whom the prophecy so intimately concerned, telling them the good news, but he draws near to God. This is another feature of faith. It always tends to draw into the presence of God him who thereby understands the mind of God in anything. He has communion with God about that which he receives from God, before even he makes it known to those who are the objects of the blessing. We have seen the same thing in Daniel before, in Dan. 2. Now, we may observe, it is not with thanksgiving, but with confession. We could understand readily, that if the people of Israel were just going into captivity, he must feel it as a deep chastening, and would be before God to acknowledge the sin and bow under His rod. But now God had judged the oppressor of Israel, and was about to deliver the people. Nevertheless, Daniel draws near, and what does he say? When he does speak to God, it is not merely about their deliverance. It is a prayer, full of confession to God.

As to this, I would make another remark of a general kind. If the study of prophecy does not tend to give us a deeper sense of the failure of God's people upon the earth, I am persuaded we lose one of its most important practical uses. It is because of the absence of this feeling that prophetic research is generally so unprofitable. It is made more a question of dates and countries, of popes and kings; whereas God did not give it to exercise people's wits, but to be the expression of His own mind touching their moral condition: so that whatever trials and judgments are portrayed there, they should

be taken up by the heart, and felt to be the hand of God upon His people, because of their sins. This was the effect on Daniel. He was one of the most esteemed prophets — as the Lord Jesus Himself said, "Daniel the prophet." And the effect upon him was, that he never lost the moral design in the bare circumstances of the prophecy. He saw the great aim of God. He heard His voice speaking to the heart of His people in all these communications. And here he spreads all before God. For having read of the deliverance of Israel, that was coming on the occasion of the downfall of Babylon, he sets his face unto the Lord God, "to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him, and to them that keep His commandments, we have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly," etc.

Another thing observe here. If there was one man in Babylon who, from his own conduct and state of soul, might be supposed to have been outside the need of confession of sin, it was Daniel. He was a holy and a devoted man. More than that, he was carried away at so tender an age from Jerusalem, that, it is clear, it was not because of anything he had taken part in, that the blow had fallen. But not the less he says, "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity." Nay, I am even bold to say, that the more separate you are from evil, the more you feel it: just as a person emerging into light feels so much the more the darkness that he has left. So Daniel, being one whose soul was with God, and who entered into His thoughts about His people — knowing the great love of God, and seeing what He had done for Israel, (for he does not keep this back in his prayer,) he does not merely notice the great things that God had done for Israel, but also the judgments that He had inflicted upon them. Did he, therefore, think that God did not love Israel? On the contrary, no man had a deeper sense of the tie of affection that existed between God and His people; and for that reason it was, he estimated so deeply the ruin in which the people of God were. He measured their sin by the depth of divine love, and the fearful degradation that had passed upon them. It was all from God. He did not impute the judgments, which had fallen upon them, to the wickedness of the Babylonians, or the martial skill of Nebuchadnezzar. It was God he sees in it all. He acknowledges that it was their sin — their extreme iniquity; and he includes all in this. It was not merely the small people imputing their sorrows to the great, nor the great to the small, as is so often the case among men. He does not dwell upon the ignorance and badness of a few; but he takes in the whole — rulers, priests, people. There was not one that was not guilty. "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity." And this is another effect wherever prophecy is studied with God. It always brings in the hope of God's standing up on behalf of His people — a hope of the bright and blessed day when evil shall disappear, and good shall be established by divine power. Daniel does not leave this out. We find it put as a kind of frontispiece to this chapter. The details of the seventy weeks show you the continued sin and suffering of the people of God. But before this, the end, the blessing is brought before the soul. How good this is of God! He takes occasion to give me, first of all, the certainty of final blessing, and then He shows me the painful pathway that leads to it.

I need not enter now upon the thoughts suggested by this beautiful prayer of Daniel, save one thing of practical importance. It is this — that the prophecy came from God as the answer to the state of soul which was found in Daniel. He took the place of humble confession before God, became the expression of the people, the representative of the people, in spreading out their sins before God. Perhaps there was not another soul that did so, certainly there were not many. It is rare, indeed, to find many souls taking the place of real confession before God. How few now have an adequate sense of the ruin of the Church of God! How few feel the dishonour done even by the faithful to the Lord! In Babylon, those who were the most guilty felt it the least; whilst the man, who was the most free from guilt, was he who spread it out the most honestly before God.

In answer to his genuine and deep feeling of Israel's state, God sends the prophecy. The soul that refuses to examine such words of God as these, knows not the loss it thus sustains. And wherever the child of God is kept from what God communicates as to the future, (I speak not now of mere speculations, which are worthless, but of the grand moral lessons contained in prophecy,) there is always feebleness and want of ability to judge of the present.

But there is another thing to notice, before passing to the seventy weeks. Although Daniel spreads out before God their great failure, and falls back upon His great mercies, yet he never pleads the promises that were given to Abraham. He does not go beyond what was said to Moses. This is of interest and importance. It is the true answer to any who suppose that the restoration of Israel, which took place at that time, was the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promises. Daniel did not take this ground. There was no such thing then as the presence of Christ among His people as their King. Now, the promises made to the fathers suppose the presence of Christ, because Christ is, in the only full and proper sense, the Seed of Abraham. Without Him what were the promises? Accordingly, with divine wisdom, Daniel was led to take the true ground. Whatever restoration was to take place then was not the complete one. This prophecy does bring us to the final blessing of Israel when the seventy weeks are consummated. But the return, after the fall of Babylon, was the accomplishment of what was partial and conditional, not the fulfilment of the promises to the fathers. This is worthy of observation. The promises made to Abraham, etc., were absolute, because they depended upon Christ, who is the true Seed in the mind of God, though Israel were the seed after the letter. So that until Christ came, and His work was done, there could not be the full restoration of the people of Israel. When Israel took the ground of the law, in the time of Moses, they soon broke it and were broken. Even before it was put into their hands, on the tables of stone, they were worshipping the golden calf. The consequence was, that Moses from that time took a new place — the place of a mediator. He goes up again into the mount, and pleads with God for the people. God would not call them His people. He says to Moses, "thy people," and would not own them as His. Moses, however, will not let God go, but pleads with Him that, let the people have done what they may, they are "Thy people"; rather let me be blotted out than Israel lose their inheritance. This was what God delighted in — the reflex of His own love to them. You may have got some fault to find with one whom you love, but you would not like to hear another person finding it. So Moses' pleading on behalf of Israel was what met the heart of God. No doubt they had sinned a great sin, and Moses felt and confessed it, but he insists withal that they are God's people.

God draws out the heart of Moses more and more; puts grand things before him, offers to exterminate the people, and make of him a great nation. No, says Moses, I would rather lose everything than that they should be lost. This was the answer of grace to the grace that was in God's heart about His people. Consequently, when God gave the law a second time, it was not given as before; but the Lord proclaimed His name as One that was abundant in goodness and truth, while He showed at the same time that He would by no means clear the guilty. In other words, the first time it was pure law, pure righteousness, which terminated in the golden calf, *i.e.* pure unrighteousness on the part of the people. And they must justly have been destroyed, but that, on the pleading of Moses, God brings in a mingled system, partly law and partly grace.

This was the ground Daniel takes here. He pleads that, although they had broken the law, God had pronounced His name as "abundant in goodness and truth." He believes that. He does not go back to the promises made to Abraham; on which ground the restoration would have been full and final, whereas this was not. And if you take a man now, who is partly standing upon what Christ has done for him, and partly upon what he does for Christ, will you ever find such a one happy? Never. That was

the ground the Israelites were on. Daniel, therefore, does not go beyond it there. Christ was not yet come. On the other hand, when Christ is born, you will find, if you look at the song of Zacharias (Luke 1) or of the angels (Luke 2), that the ground taken was not what God had said to Moses, but the promises made to the fathers. Up to the moment appointed of God, Zacharias had been dumb, a sign of the condition of Israel. But now that the forerunner is named, on the eve of the coming of Christ, his mouth is opened.

Before we enter upon the prophecy of the seventy weeks more fully, as the Lord may enable us, I would first call your attention to this: — "Whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel." Observe, all his thoughts are about Israel and about Jerusalem. The prophecy is not about Christianity, but about Israel. There is no understanding it, unless we hold this fast. "Whiles I was speaking . . . and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation." Then, in verse 24, the prophecy begins. It has to do with Daniel's people — "upon thy people." It speaks of a special period that was defined in connection with Israel's full deliverance. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city." Any one must see that the Jews and Jerusalem are meant. It is "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy [or Holy of holies]." From first to last this was a period that was marked out in the mind of God, and revealed to Daniel, touching the future destiny of the city and the people of God here below.

Some are startled, and ask, Have we, then, nothing to do with "reconciliation for iniquity" and "everlasting righteousness"? I ask, Of whom does the verse speak? You will find other scriptures, which reveal our interest in the blotting out of sin, and the righteousness which we are made in Christ. But we must adhere to this golden rule in reading the word of God — never to force Scripture in order to make it bear upon ourselves or others. When a person is converted, but not yet in peace, if he sees something about "an end of sins," he at once applies that to himself. Feeling his need, he grasps, like a drowning man, at what cannot bear his weight, or at least is not said about him. If directed to the declarations of the grace of God to us poor sinners of the Gentiles, instead of loss, great would be his gain; he would have far more definite Scripture to meet his need, and, if assailed by Satan, he would feel no weakness, nor fear, nor uncertainty. Whereas, if he were taking passages that applied to the Jews, Satan might touch him as to the ground of his confidence, and he would be obliged to say, This is not literally and certainly about me at all. The "seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city." But I do not belong to them. There is the importance of understanding Scripture, and seeing what God is speaking about.

Had this been borne in mind, the greater part of the controversy that has arisen about the passage never could have taken place. People were hasty and anxious to introduce something about themselves as Gentiles or Christians; whereas the attitude of the prophet, the circumstances of the people, and the words of the prophecy itself, exclude all thought, save of what concerns the Jews and their city. We must look elsewhere to find what relates to the Gentiles. Allow me, however, to remark, that the end of sins for that city and people rests upon exactly the same foundation as our own. Thus the apostle John tells us, Jesus died "not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." (John 11: 52) There I find two distinct purposes in the death of Christ. This prophecy only takes in the first. He died for that nation — the Jewish nation. But He also, in the very same act of death, made provision, not only for the salvation that God has brought in for

sinners, but also for gathering together "the children of God that were scattered abroad."

Thus, if we take the Bible as it is, without being too anxious to find ourselves here or there, instead of losing, we shall always be gainers, in extent, depth, and, above all, in clear firm hold of the blessing; and we shall not feel that we have been taking other people's property, and claiming goods upon a tenure that can be disputed, but that what we have is what God has freely and assuredly given us. This will never be the case, if I take up prophecies about Israel, and found my title to blessing upon them; for they are neither the gospel for the sinner, nor the revelation of the truth about the Church.

This, then, is the proper bearing of the closing verses of the chapter before us. The details of the weeks follow the first general statement. "Seventy weeks," he says, "are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." Then, in verse 25, the first particular comes in, after defining the starting-point. "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks." Now, in the Book of Ezra, we have a commandment from the king Artaxerxes, called in profane history Artaxerxes Longimanus, one of the monarchs of the Persian Empire. The first commandment was given to Ezra, the scribe, "in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king." In the twentieth year of the same monarch's reign, another commandment was given to Nehemiah. Now it is important for us to decide which of these two is referred to by Daniel. The earlier of them is recorded in Ezra 7, the second in Nehemiah 2. A careful examination of the two will show which is meant. Many excellent persons have interpreted it in a way which differs from that which I believe to be correct. But Scripture alone can decide the questions that arise out of Scripture. Foreign elements often lead to perplexity. Remark, that it is not merely a general order to the Jews, like that of Cyrus permitting their return, but a special one to restore their polity. Now, what is the difference between the two in the reign of Artaxerxes? The one to Ezra was mainly with a view to the rebuilding of the temple; the other to Nehemiah looks toward the city. Which is it here? "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to *restore and to build Jerusalem.*" Evidently the city is intended in Daniel; and if so, then we must see which of the two commandments concerns the city. There can be little doubt it was the second, not the first. It was the commission given to Nehemiah in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, not that to Ezra thirteen years before. A comparison with Nehemiah will confirm this.

What led some to take the first of these decrees, as the one meant here, was the idea, that the seventy weeks were to terminate with the coming of the Messiah. But this is not said. Verse 24 gives us much more than the coming of the Messiah. "Seventy weeks are determined . . . to make an end of sins and to make reconciliation for iniquity." There you have at least His work. His suffering and death, we know, are implied. But more than that: "To bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Holy of holies," by which last every Israelite would understand the sanctuary of God. It is plain that all this did not take place when the Messiah came, nor even when He died. For though the foundation of the blessing was laid in His blood, yet the bringing it in was not yet realized for Israel; and these seventy weeks suppose, that Israel will after them be fully blessed. This shows us the great importance of attending to the prophecy itself; not merely looking at the events, but interpreting the events by the prophecy. "From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince [without defining what time], shall be" — not seventy weeks — but "seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks"; that is, sixty-nine weeks. There at once I learn that, for a reason unexplained at the beginning of the prophecy, sixty-nine weeks out of the

seventy are rent from the last week. The chain is broken: one week is severed from the rest. I am told that, from the word to restore and build Jerusalem (which is here made the starting-point, or the time from which we begin to reckon the seventy weeks), there are seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks — somewhat separate periods, but making in all sixty-nine weeks to the Messiah, the Prince. There evidently we have a very notable fact. And why, we may ask, are the seven weeks separated from the sixty-two weeks? The next words show: "The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times" The seven weeks, I apprehend, were to be occupied with reconstituting the city of Jerusalem. In the lapse of seven weeks, or forty-nine years (for I suppose no reader will doubt that they are weeks of years), from the point of departure, the building that was begun would be finished. The street was to be built again, and the walls, even in troublous times. Now the accounts of these times of difficulty and strait we have in the Book of Nehemiah, who gives us the latest date that Old Testament history records. Then, taking up the other period, after not only the seven weeks, but the sixty-two weeks, "shall Messiah be cut off."

Before proceeding, I may observe, that there are several little inaccuracies. It is "after *the* threescore and two weeks." The article is left out in verse 26, where it ought to be inserted, and put, where it ought not to appear, in verse 27. "After the threescore and two weeks" — that is, in addition to the seven weeks spent in building the city of Jerusalem — "shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself." The proper meaning of that last expression, no one can doubt, is "and shall have nothing." The margin is here more correct than the text, and gives it so. The idea is, that Messiah, instead of being received by His people, and bringing in the blessing promised at the end of the seventy weeks, should, after sixty-nine weeks, be cut off, and have nothing. The entire rejection of the Messiah, by His own people, is intimated in these words. And here is the consequence. The key comes in now, and explains the difficulty, stated at the beginning, why the sixty-nine weeks are severed from the seventieth. The death of Christ rent the chain, and broke off the relations of the people of Israel with God. Hence, the Jews having rejected their own Messiah, the last week is for a time set aside. This week terminates in full blessing; but the Jews are themselves rejected for their sin against their own Messiah. That is the reason why we read, after this, "And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." He had said before, that seventy weeks were determined to make an end of sins, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, etc.; that is, at the end of this appointed time, full blessing should be brought in. Whereas now we find that, so far from the blessing coming in, they have cut off their Messiah, who has nothing; and the consequence is, that the city and sanctuary are not blessed, but on the contrary, "the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary," etc. There will be nothing but wars and desolations upon the Jewish people. The interruption of the seventy weeks takes place after the death of Christ, and the next events related are no accomplishment of that series at all.

None can deny, that a long period elapsed between the death of Christ and the taking of Jerusalem. Until Christ are sixty-nine weeks, and then events occur which the prophecy clearly reveals, but as clearly reveals that they are after the sixty-nine weeks, and before the seventieth. We have another people, belonging to a prince quite different from the already rejected Messiah, and this people come and destroy the city and the sanctuary. It was the Romans who came, spite of the dreadful expedient of Caiaphas — nay, because of it. They came and destroyed the city and the sanctuary. But thus was brought the accomplishment of this part of the prophecy. The Messiah was cut off, and the Romans, whom they had so desired to propitiate, swept them away from off the face of the earth, and there has been nothing but misery in their city up to the present time. Jerusalem was thenceforward to be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. There is a period still

going on. Since then Jerusalem has only been changing one master for another. In our day we have seen a war undertaken about that very city and sanctuary, and none can say how soon there may not be another. The objects of that war have been anything but gained and at rest. The same elements of strife and combustion still exist. It is an unsettled question. Like Jonah in the ship, such will Israel prove to the Gentiles by-and-bye. There will be no rest for them — nothing but storms, if they meddle with that people with whom the Lord has a controversy. The Jewish people are in a miserable state; they are suffering the consequences of their own sin. But those Gentiles will find their danger who mix up with that city and sanctuary, which God does not destine yet to be cleansed. If we are not arrived at that period of blessing yet, it must be granted, that the seventieth week is not yet accomplished. On the arrival of that week, full blessing comes in for Israel and Jerusalem. But no such blessing is realized; and therefore we may be quite sure, that the last of the seventy weeks has not been fulfilled.

The prophecy itself ought to prepare us for this. There is a regular chain up to the close of the sixty-ninth week, and then comes a great gap. The death of Christ broke the bond of connection between God and His people, and there was now no living link between them. They cut off their own Messiah, and have since lost, for a time, their national place. A deluge of trouble broke upon them. "The king sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city." The last part of verse 26 shows us the continuous desolation which has befallen their city and race, and this subsequent to the cross of the Messiah: and, as none can pretend that anything like this occurred within the seven years subsequent to the crucifixion, a gap, more or less extended, must necessarily be allowed between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks.

Mark the accuracy of Scripture. It is not said, that the coming prince was to destroy the city and sanctuary, but that his "people" should. Messiah the Prince had already come, and been cut off. Now we hear of another and future prince, a Roman prince; for all know, that it was the Romans who came and took away both the place and nation of the Jews. It is simply said, "The people of the prince that shall come," implying, that the people should come before a certain prince who was yet in the future. This I hold to be very important. No doubt there was a prince that led the Roman people to the conquest of Jerusalem, but Titus Vespasianus is not the personage alluded to here. If the people come first, and the prince here intended was to follow at some future epoch, nothing more simple. "The end thereof will be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." A long period of enmity and desolation is intimated. This is exactly where Israel are now. They have been turned out of that city and sanctuary, and have never had it since. It is true, they have made a remarkable footing for themselves in most countries of the earth; their influence extends into every court and cabinet of the world; but they have never obtained the smallest power in their own land and city — they are of all persons the most proscribed there. And there we see these desolations going on.

In verse 27 comes the closing scene. "And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week." The margin gives it correctly. It is not "*the*" covenant. The little word "the" has misled many. It is "a," or rather the idea is general, meaning to "confirm covenant." If you read it "the covenant," the reader is at once apt to infer, that "the prince" means the Messiah, and that He was going to confirm His covenant. But the passage runs, "He shall confirm covenant [or a covenant] with the many for one week." No doubt the Messiah brought in the blood of the new covenant; but is that meant here? It supposes the desolations going on all this while, after which comes the end of the age, which includes, or occurs in, the seventieth week. The death of the Messiah took place long ago; the destruction of Jerusalem thirty or forty years after. After that followed a long period of desolations and wars in connection with Jerusalem. After all this, again, we have a covenant spoken of. Thus, we must examine the passage to see who it is that makes this covenant. There are two persons mentioned. In verse 25

there is Messiah the Prince; but He has come and been cut off. In verse 26 there is "the people of the prince that shall come." It is to this future Roman prince that verse 27 alludes. He it is that shall confirm covenant with many, or rather with "the many," *i.e.* the mass' or majority. The remnant will not have any part in it. Observe that now it is, for the first time, that the seventieth week comes forward. "And he shall confirm covenant with the mass for one week."

Now I ask those who contend for the supposition that Christ was meant, what sense does it give here? One week can mean nothing but a period of seven years. Was the new covenant ever made for seven years? Such a thought involves mere nonsense. Is it not quite plain, that the idea of interpreting this to be the covenant of Christ carries absurdity upon the face of it? For Christ's is an everlasting covenant — this is only made for seven years. When and how did Christ make a covenant for seven years? "And he shall confirm a covenant with the many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." I am aware that persons apply this also to the death of Christ. But we have had Christ's death long ago — before the seventieth week began; then the desolations of Israel flood in after that; and subsequently another prince comes, who confirms a covenant for one week. He, not Christ, makes it with them for seven years. But, in the midst of the term, he puts an end to their worship. They have got sacrifice and oblation again at this time, and he causes all to cease.

But have we not other light upon this passage? Is it only here that we read of such a covenant, and of the sudden termination of Jewish rites and ceremonies by a certain foreign prince? As to the covenant, if we refer to Isaiah 28, it is said, in verse 15, "Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us." And in verse 18, "And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it." I have no question that this is the covenant referred to here. And the meaning of it is confirmed by another thing: that is to say, that in consequence of this Roman prince having made a wicked covenant with the Jewish people, and then interrupted their sacrifices and brought in idolatry (or what is called in Scripture, "the abomination of desolation"), he will stop the Jewish ritual, and set up an idol, and himself to be worshipped there. When open idolatry is in connection with the sanctuary, God sends a dreadful scourge upon them. They had hoped to escape by making a covenant with this prince they fondly thought, as it is said in Isaiah, to be thus delivered from the overflowing scourge, *i.e.*, I suppose, the king of the north that becomes the great head of the eastern powers of the world arrayed against the western. The mass of the Jews will make a covenant with the great prince of the west, who will then be nominally their friend. And when the half of the time is expired, this personage will introduce idolatry, and force it upon them. Then will come the final catastrophe for Israel.

The stopping of the Jewish ceremonies, be it remarked, does not depend upon this scripture only. In Daniel 7 the little horn is the emperor of the west or "the prince that shall come." Of him it is said that "he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times, and the dividing of times." Mark the analogy between that statement and what we have here. What is meant by "a time and times, and the dividing of time"? Three and a half years, to be sure. And what is meant by half a week? Exactly the same period. In the midst of the term for which the covenant was made with Israel, he will arrest their worship, and will take all their Jewish ceremonials into his own hands. Nor will he allow them to keep their feasts. "They shall be given into his hand" — that is, the Jewish times and laws. God will not own Jewish worship then; and therefore He will not preserve them in it. He will

let this man have his own way; who, although he has made a covenant with Israel as a friend, will break it and substitute idolatry. Then will come the overflowing scourge. "In the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease."

But I am obliged to claim another and more correct representation of the words that follow. The English translators were very doubtful of its true meaning. There are different ways of taking it, but the literal version is this: "And for [or, on account of] the wing of abominations, a desolator." That is, because of his taking idols under his protection, there shall be a desolator, namely, the overflowing scourge, or the Assyrian. "The prince that shall come" does not desolate Jerusalem. At this time he has made a covenant with them; and, although he breaks his covenant, still, being their head and patron, and having his minion, the false prophet, who will have his seat there as the great arch-priest of that day, he will carry on, with the aid of this false prophet, the worship of his image in the temple of God. Compare the abomination of desolation in the holy place. (Matt. 24: 15) In consequence of this, the king of the north shall come down as a desolator. There will thus be two enemies at that time for the righteous Jews. The desolator, or the Assyrian, is the enemy from without. The enemy from within is the Antichrist, or their wilful king, that corrupts them in connection with the Roman prince. Thus, the true meaning of this text is: "Because of the protection of abominations [there shall be] a desolator, even until the consummation, and that determined, shall be poured upon the desolate." Jerusalem is meant by "the desolate." And the whole consummation, or what God has decreed against the Jews, must take its course. "That generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled." These will be the last representatives of the Christ-rejecting portion of Israel, and God will allow all His judgments to come down upon them. They will be swept away, and then will remain the holy seed, the godly remnant, whom God will constitute the great nucleus of blessing to the whole world under the reign of the Lord Jesus.

Daniel 10, 11.

It is plain that chapters 10, 11, 12 are one continuous subject, and show us the circumstances in which Daniel received this last, and in some respects most remarkable of all his prophecies. For, in the whole compass of divine writ, there is no such circumstantial and minute statement of historical facts, and that, too, running down from the Persian monarchy, under which Daniel saw the vision, till the time when all the powers of this world shall be obliged to bow to the name of the Lord. Not that the prophecy runs on from the time of the Persian Empire to the reign of Christ without a single break: that would indeed be contrary to the analogy of all the rest of God's word. But we have, first of all, a concise, and, at the same time, clear, statement of the facts, until we come to a remarkable personage, who was the type of the great and notorious leader of the opposition to God's people at the close of the present age. Having brought us up to this, the prophecy breaks off, and then at once spans over the interval, and gives us "the time of the end"; so that we can understand how it is that there is that gap. For the present I must close where the break comes in. Upon a future occasion, I hope, the Lord willing, to take up the antitypical crisis at the close, which begins with Dan. 11: 36. We shall find that it is not confined to any particular evil one; but that in the end of the chapter we have the conflicts of the leaders of that day in and round the Holy Land. And then Dan. 12 shows us the dealings of God with His own people, until they and Daniel himself shall stand in their lot at the end of the days: this last — that is to say, the blessing of God's people, or at least of the godly remnant — being the great object of the close.

"In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar," etc. Daniel, we find, had not taken advantage of the decree of Cyrus, which went

out two years before, leaving the Israelites at liberty to return to their own land, according to prophecy. Daniel was still in the scene of the captivity of the Jews. But more than that, the Spirit of God draws attention to the state of the prophet's soul. He was not enjoying himself in a stranger-land, but mourning and fasting; and this, in circumstances where he had all, of course, at his command. He was found, as it is said, eating no pleasant bread, "neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled." Now surely it is not for nothing that the Spirit of God has shown us Daniel, not only before the decree of Cyrus was issued, but afterwards, in such an attitude before the Lord. We can all understand, when the moment approached for the little remnant to leave Babylon and return to the land of their fathers, that he should be found chastening his own soul before God, and passing in review the sin that had occasioned so fearful a chastening upon the people from the Lord — although he was even then doing exactly the contrary of what the flesh would have sought under these circumstances. For when some great outward mercy is vouchsafed, then is the time when man naturally is apt to give rather a loose rein to his enjoyment. In Daniel we see the contrary of this. He took the place of confession; and of confessing the sins, not merely of Israel, but his own. All was before him. None but a holy man could have so deep a sense of sin. But the same energy of the Holy Spirit, which gives real self-abasement, enables one also in love to take in the sad and abject condition of God's people. Such thoughts as these seem to have filled the soul of Daniel when he found out, by the prophecy of Jeremiah, that deliverance was just at hand for Israel. There was no kind of exultation over a fallen enemy — no shouts of triumph because the people were to go free; although Cyrus himself considered it a high honour that God had made him to be the instrument of both. Well might a man of God ponder over what sin had wrought, when the Lord could not even speak of Israel as His people, although faith in Daniel only the more led him to plead that they *were*.

Here the decree had gone forth according to his expectation. The Persian conqueror had opened the door for the prisoners of hope to leave Babylon, and those who pleased had gone back to their own land. Daniel was not among these. Instead of now anticipating nothing but bright visions of immediate glory, he is still found, and found more than ever, in a posture of humiliation before God. When the reason of this prolonged term of fasting comes out, we are let into the connection of the world that is seen with that which is unseen. The veil is not merely raised from the future, for all prophecy does this; but the statement of the vision here given us discloses, in an interesting light, what is around us now, but unseen. Daniel was permitted to hear it, in order that we might know it, and might also have the consciousness for ourselves, that, beside the things that are seen, there are things invisible, far more important to the people of God than all man looks upon.

If there are conflicts upon earth, they flow from higher conflicts — the angels contending with these evil beings, the instruments of Satan, who constantly seek to thwart the counsels of God with regard to the earth. This comes out remarkably here. We know that angels have to do with the saints of God; but we may not have discerned so clearly, that they have to do also with the outward events of this world. The light of God here shines upon the subject, so that we are enabled to understand, that there is not a movement of the world but what is connected with the providential dealings of God. And angels are the instruments of executing His will; they are expressly said to do His pleasure. On the other hand, there are those that oppose God constantly: evil angels are not found wanting. Those who are not alive to this certainly lose something, because it gives us a far stronger view of the necessity of having God as our strength. Were it a mere question between man and man, we could understand that one person, in the consciousness of his strength or his wisdom, or other resources, might not fear another. But if it is a fact, that we have to contend with powers that are immensely superior to us in everything of outward intelligence and might (for angels "excel in strength," as we are told), it is clear that we are thrown, if we are to be conquerors, upon the support of Another, who is mightier than all

that can be against us. The faith that thus counts on God is a deliverance from anxiety about all that is taking place in the world. For although there are wicked spirits, and men are only as the pieces that are moved by them in the game of this life, yet, in fact, there is a supreme hand and mind that leads to the moves, behind the scene and unknown to the persons acting. This gives a much more solemn character to our thoughts of all that occurs here below.

Besides these angels, another appears on the scene: "a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz." He, of whom we have so magnificent a description in verse 6, and whom Daniel alone sees, does not appear to have been a mere angel. He may have been seen in some features of angelic glory; but I conceive this is One, who often appears both in New and Old Testament history — the Lord of glory Himself. He appears now as a man — as One, who had the deepest sympathy with His servant upon the earth. All others had fled to hide themselves, Daniel abode: nevertheless, there remained no strength in him his comeliness was turned into corruption. Even a beloved man and faithful saint of God must prove that all his past wisdom was unavailing; for he was now a very aged man, and had been singularly faithful to the Lord. At this very time he was the one who best realized the true condition of Israel. For he saw well that a long time must elapse before the Messiah must come, and the revealing angel had announced that the Messiah should be cut off and have nothing. No wonder, then, that he was mourning. Others might be full of their bright hopes, that the Messiah would soon appear and exalt them as a nation in the world. But Daniel was found mourning and fasting; and now the vision passes before him, and this blessed Person reveals Himself to him. Yet, spite of all the love that rested upon him — spite of his familiar knowledge of God's ways, and the favour that had been shown him in previous visions, Daniel is made thoroughly conscious of his own utter weakness. All his strength crumbled into dust before the Lord of glory. And this has a moral for us of no little moment. However much may be the value of what a saint has learnt, the past alone does not enable us to understand the new lesson of God. God Himself is necessary for this — not merely what we have learnt already. I think that this is a weighty truth, and most practical. We all know the tendency in prudent men to lay up a store for the time to come. I do not deny the value of spiritual knowledge in various ways — whether in helping others, or in ourselves forming a right and holy opinion of circumstances that are passing round. But where the Lord brings out something not previously learnt, then Daniel, spite of all that he had known before, is utterly powerless. He is most of all prostrated in this last vision, and realizes more than ever the nothingness of everything within him. He is thrown entirely upon God for power to stand up, and enter into what the Lord was about to make known to him. The same thing appears as to John, who had lain in the Saviour's bosom while on earth, and of all the disciples had most entered into His thoughts. Yet, let that Saviour stand before him in His glory, to make known to him His mind about the future, and what was even the apostle John? The Lord has to lay His hand upon him, bidding him fear not. He has to encourage him by what He was himself — the Living One, who had died but was alive again, and had the keys of death and hades. Therefore it was that he was to listen with the most perfect confidence, because this was what Christ is. There was no power but must fail before Him.

Here Daniel, in his measure, enters into this. The death of the flesh must always be realized before the life of God can be enjoyed. This is important, practically. In the grace that brings salvation, it is not that death must be learnt first, and life afterwards. Life in Christ comes to me as a sinner, and that life exposes the death in which I lay. If I must realize my death in order for that life to come to me, it would be evidently man set into his true place, as a preparation for his blessing from God. This is not grace. "That which was from the beginning . . . which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life." That is to say, it is the person of Christ Himself, who comes and brings the blessing. After that, the soul learns that "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." It learns

that if we say we have light, or fellowship with Him who is light, and yet walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. All the practical learning of what God is, and what we are, follows the manifestation of life to us in the person of Christ. If you speak of the order as to a sinner, it is sovereign grace which gives life in Another; but if of the order of progress in the believer, it is not so. The believer, having already got life, must mortify all that pertains to him merely in nature, in order that the life should be manifested and strengthened. This is all-important for the saint, as the other is for the sinner. Man in his natural state does not believe that he is dead, but he is labouring to get life. He wants life; he has none. It is Another alone that brings and gives it to him in perfect grace — seeing only evil in him, but coming with nothing but good, and bringing it in love. This is Christ. But in the believer's case, having already found life in Him, there must be the judgment of the evil, in order that the new and divine life should be developed and grow. So that, while to the one it is life, exposing the death, and meeting the man in death, and delivering him from it, to the other it is the practical putting to death everything that has already existence naturally in him. All this must have the sentence of death put upon it, in order that the life be unhindered in its growth and manifestation.

Daniel was proving this, as the practical means of entering into, and being made the suited witness of, the wonders that the Spirit of God was about to bring before him. Hence, whatever might have been the favour in which he stood — and he was "a man greatly beloved" — nevertheless, death must be realized by his soul. "And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words." And then we have an intimation conveyed to him how it was that there had been such a delay. "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one-and-twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia." Here, I apprehend, we have another person speaking. Not the first and glorious One that Daniel had seen, but one used as a servant — an angel, in fact, that the other employed. The last chapter will prove clearly that there was more than one person sent: and it is plain, from the language of the speaker, that he is subordinate. Daniel is encouraged by learning that, from the first day that he had set his heart to understand and to chasten himself before God, his words were heard. He did not receive the answer the first day nor the second. Not until one-and-twenty days after did the answer arrive, and yet it was sent from God the very first day. Of course, He could at once have given it. But what then? First of all, the terrible struggle, that is always raging between the instruments of God and the emissaries of Satan, would not have been so clearly understood. Then, again, faith and patience would not have had their perfect work.

I am not forgetting, that the Holy Ghost is sent down now to dwell in the hearts of believers in a way not known then. For, although the Spirit of God was always at work in the holy prophets and in holy men, yet the abiding indwelling of the Holy Ghost was that which was not, and could not be, till Jesus was glorified, and the great work of redemption was wrought, in virtue of which the Holy Ghost was sent down from heaven to take His abode in the hearts of those that believe, the seal of the blessing which is theirs in Christ. So that, besides the outward providential care of God, so beautifully brought out here, we have that blessed Divine Person constituting our bodies the temple of God. Yet the outward struggles go on. The same thing, that hindered Daniel from having the manifest answer to his prayer, may hinder us from having the answer of circumstances. The answer of faith we ought always to reckon on at once; the answer of circumstances, governed of God, so as to bring out a manifest answer, we may have to wait for. Daniel had to wait, and the reason is given us. From verse 13 we learn, that although God had sent the answer from the very first day, the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood for twenty-one days — exactly the time that Daniel was kept in mourning and fasting before God. "But, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the

kings of Persia." Plainly it is an angel that speaks. It would be derogatory to the Lord to suppose, that He was the One who needed help from one of His own angels. But Michael was mentioned here, because he was well known to be the archangel, who took a special guardian care over the nation of Israel. So that, however people may make a mock at the truth of the interposition and guardianship of angels, yet Scripture is quite clear about it. Romanism, as we know, has made them objects of adoration. But the truth itself is of special interest.

That angels are employed of God in particular services is plain from the word of God. Nor was this merely a new truth. We find that Jude mentions, as a well-known circumstance, the contention of Michael the archangel with the devil about the body of Moses. The same truth comes out again in this. It was Michael's care over the Jewish people. He knew their tendency to idolatry, and that the man, whom they had rebelled against during life, they would make an idol of after his death. And thus, Michael, as the instrument of blessing on God's part to Israel, contends with Satan, so that the body of Moses was not found; the Lord is said to have buried it, though the instrument that the Lord employed was Michael. Now here we have this interesting ray of light cast upon earthly circumstances. The powers of this world may be governing, but angels have not given up their functions. There are the devil and his angels, and Michael and the holy angels with him, brought forward again in the last book of the Bible. The facts of Christ having come, and of the Holy Ghost having been given, do not supersede this. On the contrary, we know that there will be one most tremendous conflict at the close between the holy angels and the wicked ones, when the heavens shall be for ever cleared of those evil powers, which had for so long defiled them. This is most interesting, as showing the perfect patience of God. Because we know, that with a word He could put down the devil and all his host. But he does not. He allows Satan even to venture into the lower heavens — nay, still to have possession of them. Therefore it is that he is called "the prince of the power of the air," as he is called elsewhere "the prince" and "the god of this world." But I believe it is only there that he is prince. We never read of such a thing as Satan being prince in hell. It is a favourite dream of great poets, and of small ones too; but we never read of it in Scripture. The Bible shows us, that his real power now is either in the heavens or on the earth; but that when he is broken, both in his heavenly usurpation first, and then in his earthly power, he is cast down to hell; and that, instead of being a king in hell, he will be the most miserable object of the vengeance of God. The solemn thing is, that he is reigning here now, and people do not feel it. His worst reign is that which he acquired — not that which he had before. The death of Christ, although it is the ground on which he will eventually lose all his power, was, nevertheless, the means by which he became the great usurping power, opposing God in all His thoughts about this world. But here is a thought that is of importance for us. If God permits such a thing as this — if He allows the presence of this evil one, the enemy of His Son in heaven itself — if, instead of the crucifixion of Christ leading God to deprive Satan of all his power, we find him after this displaying His greatest long-suffering, what a lesson it all is for us not to trouble ourselves about circumstances! No man has ever trodden these unknown regions; there has been none to tell us about them except the word of God, which lays it bare before us. We do not know all, of course; but we know enough to see that there is this tremendous power of evil opposed to God, and that the power of God is always and infinitely mightier than the power of evil. Evil is but an accident, which has got into the world through the rebellion of the creature against God. By "accident," I mean that it was only the creature's interrupting for a time the purposes of God; while in truth it but served to bring them out with brighter lustre. To bless heaven and earth was the plan of God, and this will stand. Evil will be banished from the scene, and evil men will suffer the awful consequences of having rejected the only good and blessed One in Christ, the Lord.

But while the certainty of all has been made known to faith before the execution of the thoughts

of God, we have the view opened to us of the grave conflict meanwhile that is unseen. This puts faith to the test. Daniel had to go on waiting, mourning, praying, spreading out all before God. We see in him the perseverance of faith — praying always. And how was not his faith rewarded! For when the angel does come, he makes known this at the bidding of the glorious One, who had first appeared to Daniel. It was the prince of the kingdom of Persia who had withstood him one-and-twenty days; but Michael had come to his help.

I may also observe, that we have an important hint, in the next verse, of the main objects to which God had an eye in this prophecy. Only persons who have read much know the torture the chapter has suffered through men bringing their own thoughts to explain it by. The pope, of course, has been very prominently introduced into it. And then the daring soldier of the early days of this century was found in it too: I allude, of course, to Napoleon. In short, whatever has been going on in the world of extraordinary interest persons have tried to find in Daniel 11. Dan. 10: 14 puts to the rout all such thoughts. "I am come," says the angel, "to make thee understand what shall befall *thy people in the latter days*. for yet the vision is for many days." Nothing can be plainer. It is put as a sort of frontispiece to the prophecy to show, that the great thought of God for the earth is the Jewish people, and the main design of this prophecy is what must befall them in the latter days. We have the series of the history almost from the day in which Daniel lived, but the latter days are the point of it. Prophecy in general may afford to give a little earnest close at hand, but we never see the full drift of it, save in the latter day; and then the thoughts and plans of God always have, as their earthly centre, the Jews and their Messiah. I do not mean to deny that the Church is a far higher thing than the Jews, and the relations of Christ to the Church nearer and deeper than His relations to the Jews. But you do not lose Christ and the Church, because you believe in His link with Israel Nay, if you believe not this, you confound them with your own relations to Christ; and both are lost, as far as definite knowledge and full enjoyment go. This is for want of looking at Scripture as a whole. If Dan. 10 had been read as an introduction to Dan. 11, such a mistake might not have been made. But some read Scripture very much as others preach it. A few words are taken, and are made the motto of a discourse, which perhaps has no real connection with the scope of that passage — perhaps not with any other in the Bible. The thoughts may be true enough abstractedly, but what we want is a help to understand the word of God as a whole, as well as the details. If you were to take a letter from a friend, and were merely to fasten upon a sentence or a part of one, in the middle of it, and dislocate it from the rest, how could you understand it? And yet Scripture has infinitely larger connections than anything that could be written on our part; and therefore there ought to be far stronger reasons for taking Scripture in its connection than the little effusions of our own mind. This is a great key to the mistakes which many estimable people make in the interpretation of Scripture. They may be men of faith too; but still it is difficult to rise above their ordinary habits. The prophecy before us shows the importance of the principle I have been insisting on. Take the ordinary books on this prophecy — no matter when, where, or by whom written, and you will find that the great effort is to make a centre of their own days, etc. Here is the answer to all. Neither Rome, nor the papacy, nor Napoleon, is the object of the prophecy, but "what shall befall *my people* [Daniel's people, the Jews] in the latter days."

We then find Daniel expressing in humbleness of mind his unfitness for receiving such communications. First, one like the similitude of the sons of men touches his lips, and he is instructed to speak unto the Lord. He confesses his weakness — that there was no strength left in him. But "there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, and said, O man, greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong." Men, until they are thoroughly established in peace, until their hearts know the real source of strength, are not capable of profiting by prophecy. Here we find Daniel set upon his feet, his mouth opened, his fears hushed,

before the Lord can open out the future to him. His heart must be in perfect peace in the strength of the Lord, and in the presence of his God. Anxiety of spirit, the want of settled peace, has more to do than people think with the little progress that they make in understanding many parts of God's word. It is not enough that a man have life and the Spirit of God; but there must be the breaking down of the flesh and the simple, peaceful resting in the Lord. Daniel must go through this scene, in order to fit him for what he is to learn; and so must we in our measure. We must realize that same peace and strength in the Lord. If I am in terror of the Lord's coming, because I am not sure how I shall stand before Him, how can I honestly rejoice that it is so near? There will be a hindrance in my spirit to the clear understanding of the mind of God on that subject. The reason of this lack of competence is not want of learning, but of being thoroughly established in grace — the want of knowing what we are in Christ Jesus. No matter what other things there may be — nothing will repair this sad deficiency. I speak now of Christian men. As for mere scholars dabbling in these things, it is as completely out of their sphere as a horse would be in being set to judge of the mechanism of a watch. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It is only a scribe of this age meddling with what belongs to another world, of which he knows nothing.

We have a rapid survey of what was about to befall Israel in the latter days. It is the same speaker here as in Dan. 10. "Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. And now will I show thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia." There we have the succession of Persian monarchs from Cyrus. Scripture does show us who these were, although their names are not mentioned here. I would refer you to Ezra 4, where will be found these very three kings mentioned. In Ezra 4 the occasion arose out of the attempt of the enemies of Israel to stop the building of the temple; and these hired "counsellors against them to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus, king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius, king of Persia." Now in order to understand that chapter, you must bear in mind that, from the sixth verse down to the end of verse 23, is a parenthesis. The beginning and end of the chapter refer to events during the reign of Darius. But the Spirit of God goes back to show that these adversaries had been working from the days of Cyrus till the days of Darius. Consequently, in the parenthesis, from verse 6-23 inclusively, you have the various monarchs that had come between Cyrus and Darius, whose minds the adversaries had been trying to work upon. "In the reign of Ahasuerus" (*i.e.* the successor of Cyrus, called in profane history Cambyses), "in the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem." Then we have the next king. "And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam," etc. This is a different person from the Artaxerxes mentioned in Nehemiah, who lived at a later epoch, and is called in profane history Smerdis the magician, who by wicked means acquired the crown for a time, and lent an ear to the accusations against the Jews. This usurper was put to death through a conspiracy headed by Darius, not the Mede of Daniel, but the Persian spoken of in the Book of Ezra. Darius Hystaspes was his historical name. He follows immediately. Hence we have these three kings enumerated in Ezra 4, exactly answering to the three in Daniel 11: 2. Thus we find one part of Scripture throwing light upon another, without the need of going into the territories of man at all. "Behold there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia." These came after Cyrus, and were called in Scripture, as we have seen, Ahasuerus, Artaxerxes, and Darius; and in profane history Cambyses, Smerdis the magician, and Darius Hystaspes. "And the fourth shall be far richer than they all; and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia." It is the celebrated Xerxes, who stirred up all against Greece. This confirms an idea thrown out on a former occasion, that the reason why the he-goat rushed with such fury against Persia was in return for the Persian assault upon Greece. Xerxes was the man who made that great attempt. His riches are proverbially known, and no event made so profound an impression on the world then as that expedition against Greece and its consequences.

In verse 3, Persia, the ram of Dan. 8, is dropped, and we find the he-goat of that chapter, or rather its horn. "A mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will." This is Alexander. "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven." That was true at his death: the Greek Empire was then shivered into fragments. "And not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides those." It was not to be a single head getting rid of the family of Alexander, and taking possession of all. His kingdom was to be divided into a number of parts, four more particularly; and out of these four divisions two acquire an immense importance. But what constitutes their chief importance here? When God speaks of things upon the earth, He always measures from Israel; because Israel is His earthly centre.

Hence it is, that the powers which meddle with Israel are those that in God's view are important. This is the reason why the other kingdoms are not noticed; only those of the north and of the south. And why are they so described? Palestine is the place from which God reckons. The king of the north means north of the land that His eyes were upon: and the southern power means south of that same land. These are the countries commonly called Syria and Egypt. They are the two referred to throughout the chapter, the other divisions of Alexander's empire being put aside. Only those are looked at which had to do with Israel. Now we are told that "the king of the south shall be strong" — he is the person well known as one of the Ptolemies or Lagidae — "and one of his princes" (*i.e.* of the chiefs of Alexander); "and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion." This is another person, the first king of the north, who rises in strength above Ptolemy. In profane history he is called Seleucus. The descendants of both these and their strife are often spoken of in the history of the Maccabees. There minute accounts are given of the transactions predicted in this chapter; and of the two, what God says in few words is infinitely more to the point than man's elaborate detail.

Put let us look a little at some of these events. "And in the end of years they [*i.e.* the kings of the north and of the south] shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement." One remark before going further. In this chapter it is not the same king of the north, nor the same king of the south, that we have all the way through, but a great many that succeed each other. The same official title runs throughout. As people say in law, The king, or the queen never dies. That is just the way we are to fool; at it here. This sixth verse is an instance. "In the end of years they shall join themselves together." They are not the same kings of the north and south, who had been spoken of in verse 5, but their descendants. "In the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement." They made, not only an alliance, but a marriage between their families. "But she shall not retain the power of the arm." The attempt to make a cordial understanding between Syria and Egypt, by marriage, would be a failure. Of course, this was exactly verified in history. There was such a marriage, and the king of the north even got rid of his former wife in order to marry the daughter of the king of the south. But it only made matters a great deal worse. They had hoped to terminate their bloody wars, but it really laid the foundation of an incomparably deeper grudge between them. As it is said here, "Neither shall he stand, nor his arm; but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times. But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and prevail." It was not her seed, but her brother — out of the same parental stock. She was one branch, and he another. The brother of this Bernice, daughter of the Egyptian king, comes up to avenge the murder of his sister, and prevails against the king of the north. Here we have the explanation confirmed of what the kingdom of the south is. "He shall also carry

captives into *Egypt* their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north. So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land." There we see Egypt triumphant for a time; but the tide was soon to turn. "His sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come [the other disappeared], and overflow and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress. And the king of the south shall he moved with choler." Now comes another war at a subsequent date; and this time it is the south returning the blow of the north. "The king of the south. . . shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand." There the Spirit of God refers to several notable facts. The two principal actors are the kings of Syria and Egypt. *The land of Israel, that lay between them*, was a sort of burdensome stone to these kings who made it their battle-field, which ever went to the conqueror. If the king of the north was victorious, Palestine fell under Syria; and in the same way if the king of Egypt got the better. But God never allowed rest to those who took His land. They might intermarry and contract alliances; but it only proved the prelude to graver outbreaks — brothers, sons, grandsons, etc., taking up the quarrels of their kindred. "The Scripture cannot be broken." All was distinctly laid down beforehand.

"And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it." Then we find that the king of the north returns and "sets forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision." Allow me to call attention to these words. It at once settles the question that might be asked — How do you know that Daniel's people do not mean God's people in a spiritual sense? The answer is given here — "the robbers of thy people." This at once puts aside the plea for a spiritual sense. We could hardly talk about "robbers" in that case. This confirms what ought not to have needed further evidence — that Daniel's people mean the Jewish people, and nothing else. Here we find that some of the Jews form a connection with one of these contending monarchs of the north. These are called here "the robbers of thy people," and take the part of Antiochus, the king of the north, against Ptolemy Philopater, or rather his son; but all came to nought. The Syrian king might hope that, by bringing in this new element, by getting the countenance of the Jews, perhaps God would be with him. But no. They were the robbers of the people — unfaithful to God, and not holding fast their separation from the Gentiles. They, too, might think to establish the vision, "but they shall fall."

"So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand. But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will [that is, the king of the north], and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed." Another remarkable thing that we see here is, that the Spirit of God still holds to the importance of that little strip of land — the territory of Palestine. It was God's gift to God's people. Whatever might be its deplorable condition, it is the glorious land still. God repents not of His purposes: "He will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land." And if, when it is a question of God's earthly purposes, He thus holds to them, spite of every hindrance, what will He not do for His heavenly people? Who can doubt that He will bring them to heavenly glory with Christ?

"He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him." This is another attempt at marriage; only it is the converse. It is

not now the king's daughter of the south coming to the king of the north; but the king of the north gives his daughter Cleopatra to the king of the south, hoping that she will maintain Syrian influence at the court of Egypt That is what is called here "corrupting her"; because it was plainly contrary to the very essence of the marriage-tie: it was an attempt to use her in order to serve his political purposes "But she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him." The reasons of state — the innermost secrets of their hearts, alike come out here.

There is another disgrace, which is not only known to God, but is made known to His servants. "After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him." That is, Antiochus meddles with Greece, and takes many of the isles; but this other prince, for his own behalf, takes up the contest against the king of the north. Here we have the entrance upon the scene of a new power — the first allusion to the Romans. A Roman consul is meant by the prince that comes on his own behalf against the king of the north. He will not allow Greece to be touched. It was one of the Scipios who interfered. "Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, — and not be found." He is obliged to return to Syria, but he shall stumble and fall.

"Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom. The Romans, who defeated the father, obliged his son to raise a heavy annual tribute. That was all that the poor man did during his life. "Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes.... but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle." He was killed by one of his own sons. "And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant. And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people." This is the man who typifies the last king of the north. Called in profane history Antiochus Epiphanes, he was morally abominable, but most notorious for his interference with the Jews; first by flattery and corruption, and afterwards by violence. This is the man the Spirit of God dwells most on, because he most meddled with Israel, the glorious land, and the sanctuary. He it was who enforced idolatry in the temple itself, setting up an image to be worshipped even in the Holy of Holies. Therefore it is that he acquires importance. Otherwise he was a man little known, except for daring wickedness. Nothing can be more simple. His history consists of intrigues, first against the king of the south, and shell against the Jews; and of various expeditions, in some of which he was successful at first but afterwards entirely defeated. "He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers.... And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand." These kings meet and plan against each other, but all is vain. "Both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed. Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land [ie. in the north]. At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter." Then we have further details.

"For the ships of Chittim shall come against him." There are these indefatigable Romans that come in again. They had dealt with his father when he had made an attack upon Greece; and now that the son had his hand over the throat of his prey, the Roman consul came, and at once forbade his doing

anything further. He even drew a circle round him, as is well known, when the artful king wished to gain time to evade. The answer was demanded before he stepped out of the circle, and he was obliged to give it. This was a death-blow to all his policy. He went home a miserable, defeated man, with a heart vexed and infuriate, though putting on a humble appearance before the Romans. What should hinder him from wreaking out the anger of his heart upon the Jews? As it is said here, "Therefore shall he be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant." Poor as the Jews were, they were witnesses for God upon the earth; and Antiochus hastens to pour out his fury upon whatever bore a testimony to God among them. This was his ruin, and brought God's vengeance upon him. "He shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant," *i.e.* with the apostates of the Jews. "And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate." He will put an end to the Jewish service, and will set up an idol, "the abomination that maketh desolate," in the temple of Jerusalem. It is a mistake to suppose that this refers to the last days. It is only a type of what will take place then. The latter part of the chapter, and the next chapter, do refer to the latter day in the full sense of the word. But here is the step of transition from what is past to the future.

We come down in regular historical order to Antiochus Epiphanes, and then meet with a great break. Scripture itself intimates as much. But Antiochus did on a small scale what the great northern king of the latter day will do on a larger one. It is said (verse 35).... "even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed." There God stops. He says, as it were, I have come to the man that shows you in type what is to befall you in the latter days; and so He dwells emphatically upon this king, laying before them the extreme wickedness of his heart and conduct. The Spirit then cuts short the course of the history, and plunges at once into the last scene. This, however, must be reserved for another occasion. What we have seen shows us that whatever may be the general outline of events elsewhere, God can be, and sometimes is, singularly minute in the details of a prophecy, and nowhere more so than in this very chapter. And what is the main objection raised by infidels against it? That it must have been written after the events had taken place! Certain it is, that there is no historian since these times who gives us such an admirable account as we have in these few verses. If I want to know the history of these two contending monarchies, Syria and Egypt, I must look here. How entirely we can confide in the word of God about everything! It may be an exception to His general rule to dwell upon the kings of the north and of the south, but He does so at times. The great thing on which He bestows care is the souls of His people. May our hearts answer to the interest He takes in us!

From the twenty-first verse we have had the account of the king of the north, known in profane history as Antiochus Epiphanes. The Spirit of God has entered into much fuller detail in speaking of his history, because his conduct, specially at the close, in meddling with the Jews, and their city, and their sanctuary, furnished the occasion for a type of the last king of the north, who will be found following in his predecessors' wake, save that his guilt will be incomparably graver in the sight of God — so flagrant indeed, that His judgment can tarry no longer. This accounts for a circumstance that has often perplexed the students of Daniel's prophecy. We read of an "abomination that maketh desolate" in the predicted account of Antiochus (Dan. 11: 31); and it has been commonly supposed that our Lord refers to this in Matthew 24: 15. Those who looked for the future fulfilment of this abomination have sought to reconcile it with the facts by the assumption that the Spirit of God must have branched off to the future personage that Antiochus represented. But in my judgment there is no need for anything so unnatural. Antiochus Epiphanes was only a type, and verse 31 does not go beyond his history, save as a foreshadowing.

In other words, to the end of verse 31 all is strictly historical — typical, of course, of the future, but nothing more. And therefore the answer to the difficulty that some find in our Lord's quoting, as they suppose, Daniel 11: 31, is really as plain as possible. He does not quote *this* verse. The passage He refers to is in Dan. 12. In Dan. 12: 11, you will find an expression similar to this. "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety Jays." There we have a defined date, which connects this last setting up of the desolating abomination with the deliverance our Lord predicts in Matthew 24; for Jacob's most fiery trial is that which just precedes his deliverance.

Now there are more reasons than one for believing this passage in Daniel 12 to be what our Lord cites. Some of them depend upon considerations more fit for the study than for public ministry. But the sum of the matter is, that the expressions the Holy Ghost employs, in Dan. 11: 31 and in Dan. 12: 11, differ. In Dan. 11: 31 it means the abomination of him that desolates, or of the desolator. Whereas, in Dan. 12: 11, the true meaning is that which is given in our Lord's words — not the abomination of him that maketh desolate, but the "abomination of desolation"; which is, I suppose, what is meant in the English version by the words, "that maketh desolate." Thus the two phrases are distinct. Although there is a resemblance between them, there is also a difference; and that difference is enough to show that our Lord spoke not of the abomination set up by Antiochus, but of that mentioned in Dan. 12. Consequently, there is, in fact, no difficulty to be removed; because the desolation spoken of in Dan. 11 is past, and the desolation of Dan. 12, that our Lord draws attention to, is future.

That this is so, will appear from other considerations also. Thus, in the verses that follow, we have a state of things distinct from what will be in the future tribulation of Israel. "Such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits." Now we find from the Revelation, and other parts of Scripture which speak about the future of Israel, that the godly remnant could hardly be said to do exploits. They will suffer; but I do not think that deeds of power thus characterize the blessed ones who are to pass through the dreadful crisis of the future. In the days of Antiochus, it was not so much suffering, but being "strong," and doing "exploits" — exactly what was true of the Maccabees and others, who undoubtedly were not so much a band of martyrs as a set of men who roused the spirit of Israel, and resisted the cruel and profane scourge of that day. Again, we read, "And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days." There is a long period, observe, of sorrow and trouble, that follows the outbursts of courage and prowess against the desolator, and this is still continued in the following verses. "Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed." Clearly, then, these trials are before the time of the end. The Spirit of God is here referring to what has already taken place. Accordingly we have a picture of terrible disaster that goes on, as it is said, "to the time of the end."

From all this, I infer, then, that the Spirit of God singles out the desolation which then befell the people of Israel, and the defiling of the sanctuary under Antiochus or his generals. This brought vividly out the circumstances of the last days; but, along with them, certain other circumstances were added, which ought not to be expected in those days. In other words, we arrive at what may be called the long and dreary blank that severs the past history of Israel, and the struggles in their land against neighbouring aggressors, from the great crisis of the last days. This is where the true break occurs. Certain disasters were to go on "to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed." There is no place in the chapter where the interruption of the history so well fits in as after verse 35.

But now, in verse 36, we have another person abruptly introduced into the scene. We are not told who he was, or whence he came; but the character that is given of him, the scene that he occupies, the history that the Spirit of God enters into in connection with him — all declare, too plainly, that it is the terrible king who will set himself up in the land of Israel in personal antagonism to the Messiah of Israel, the Lord Jesus. He it was of whom our Lord spoke, when He said that, if they refused Him who had come in His Father's name, they would receive another coming in his own name. Nor is this the only passage of Scripture, where this same false Christ, or rather Antichrist (for there is a difference between the terms), is described as "the king." Not only are there different references to him under other epithets, but in the greatest and most comprehensive prophecy of Scripture, Isaiah, like Daniel, introduces "the king," as if he must be known at once. In Isa. 30 we have an enemy of Israel, called the Assyrian. Doubtless, looking at past history, Sennacherib was their great head in that day. But he only furnished the opportunity to the Spirit of God to bring out the future and final adversary of Israel. His fall is here brought before us. "For through the voice of the Lord, shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod. And in every place where the grounded star shall pass, which the Lord shall lay upon him, it shall he with tabrets and harps: and in battles of shaking will He fight with it." After the end of that victory there will be exceeding joy for Israel; instead of the train of sorrow, which most victories bring, there follows unfeigned gladness before the Lord. "It shall be with tabrets and harps." For the enemy there will be proportionate misery. Something still more awful and unending than temporal destruction falls upon the proud foe. "For Tophet is ordained of old: yea, for the king it is prepared; He hath made it deep and large: the pile therefore is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." In our version there is a singular obscurity' remarked by another, in this verse At first sight it might appear that the Assyrian and "the king" were the same person. The true rendering is, "For the king also it is prepared" — that is, Tophet is prepared for the Assyrian, but besides, for THE KING *also*. Just as in our passage in Daniel, we have the Assyrian or king of the north on the one hand, and "the king" on the other. The same frightful end awaits them both. But I only refer to this now for the purpose of showing, that the expression, "the king," is not unprecedented in Scripture, and that it applies to a notorious personage the Jews were taught in prophecy to expect. God, in judicial retribution for their rejection of the true Christ, would give them up to receive the Antichrist. This is "the king." He would arrogate to himself the royal rights of the true King, the Anointed of God. Tophet was prepared for the king of the north, and also for "the king."

But this is not all. In Isaiah 57 we have him introduced quite as unexpectedly. In Isaiah 55 are shown the moral qualities that God will produce in His people. In Isaiah 57 He shows us the fearfully iniquitous state then also found in Israel. And in that day God will no longer endure anything but reality. Forms of piety, covering uncleanness and ungodliness, will have passed away. There "the king" is suddenly introduced to us. (v. 9) "Thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off; and didst debase thyself even unto hell." To have to do with him was to debase oneself unto hell. No wonder that for "the king also" Tophet was prepared. This shows that, before the mind of Israel from the first, there was one that the Spirit of God led them to expect to reign over the land in the last days, who is called "the king."

Thus at once is furnished a most important clue to Daniel 11. We are come to the time of the end. The blank is closed — the long dark night of Israel's dispersion is well-nigh over. The Jews are in the land. In what condition" Are they under Christ? Alas! there is another and a terrible scene that must first be enacted there. "The king" that we have read of is there, and the course he pursues is just what we might expect from the landmarks of the Holy Ghost. "The king shall do according to his will." Ah! are any of us sufficiently aware what a fearful thing it is to be the doers of our own will? Here is the end of it. It was the first great characteristic of sin from the beginning. It is what Adam did, and the fall

of the world was the immediate result. Here is one who at that day may seem to be the loftiest and most influential of Adam's sons. But he does "according to his will." And nothing worse. Are we to read such a history as this without moral profit to our own souls? To forget what an evil thing it is ever to be the doers of our own will? Let none suppose that, because they may be in a position to rule, they are therefore outside the danger. Alas! it is not so: no one thing so unfits a person for righteous rule as the inability to obey. It is good first to know what it is to be subject. Oh! may it strike deep into all our hearts, that "the king," the Antichrist, is first stamped as one doing his own will. May it test us how far we are seeking ours! — how far, under any circumstances, we are doing, or allowing anything, that we would not wish every soul in this world to see — perhaps even those that are nearest to us. Alas! one knows, from experience and observation, the difficulty and danger in these things from one's own heart. Yet there is no one thing more contrary to that Christ whom we have learnt. We are sanctified "unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." It is not only to the blessing, in the sprinkling of the blood, but to the *obedience* of Jesus Christ — to the same spirit and principle of obedience; for that is the meaning of the expression. We are not like the Jews who were put under the law, and whose obedience had the character of obligation to do such and such things under penalty of death. We are already alive unto God, conscious of the blessedness in which we stand, and awakened to see the beauty of the will of God; for His will it is which has saved and sanctified us. This is our calling, and our practical work here below. Christians have no other business, properly speaking, than to do the will of Another. We have to do God's will according to the character of the obedience of Christ — as sons delighting in the will of the Father. It does not matter what we may have to do. It may be one's natural daily occupation. But do not make two individuals of yourselves — with one principle in your business or family, and another for the Church and worship of God. Never allow such a thought. We have Christ for everything and every day. Christ is not a blessing for us merely when we meet together or are called to die; but if we have Christ, we have Him for ever, and from the first moment we are emancipated from doing our own will. This we learn is death; but it is gone now in Christ's death. We are delivered, for we are alive in Him risen. But what are we delivered for? To do the will of God. We are sanctified unto the obedience of Jesus Christ.

As for "the king," you have in him the awful principle of sin which has always been at work, but which here exceeds all bounds. The moment has come when God will remove the providential checks which, up to that time, He will have put upon men, when Satan will be allowed to bring about all his plans; and that, too, in the very land whereon the eyes of God rest continually.

"The king shall do according to his will, and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself" — not only above every man, but "above every god." And it is not only that he takes his place above these so-called gods, but "he shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods." And strange to say (if one did not know the perfect wisdom of God, and could not wait for His counsels to be matured), in spite of his fearful profanity, "he shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that that is determined shall be done." This clause contains a word that gives us the key to the passage. For some have found immense difficulties in this portion of the word of God. Many have transported into this verse the Pope of Rome, others Mahomet, or Buonaparte. But here we find that "the king" is to prosper till the *indignation* be accomplished. What, or about whom? Has God indignation against His Church? Never. This is the time, too, of God's patience with man — not of His indignation. With whom, then, is it connected? The word of God is perfectly plain. It is when dealing with Israel that God speaks of indignation: I have already shown this fully from Isaiah 5, 10, 14, and other passages, as it is entirely confirmed by the whole nature of the revelation here. For we read of one that would be the king of Israel — not in Constantinople or Rome, but in Palestine. And the time is a future outburst of indignation against Israel in the promised land. He (the false king) shall prosper till the indignation be

accomplished. "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women." The expression, "the desire of women," clearly, to my mind, refers to Christ — the One to whom all Jews were looking forward, and whose birth must have been above all things desired by Jewish women. It is plain from the connection that such is the true meaning. For it occurs between "the God of his fathers" (Jehovah) and "any god." Nothing is less likely than, if it had merely referred to natural relationships, that it would have been thus placed. It was, probably, from the wish to apply this to the pope that such an interpretation has found currency. But let us only understand that the prophecy concerns Israel and their land, and all is plain. He shall not "regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women." Christ is distinguished from "the God of his fathers," perhaps, because the Son was to become incarnate. But Christ is regarded no more than the God of his fathers — an expression, by the way, which implies that he himself is a Jew. It is "the God of his fathers." "For he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the god of forces." It is not that he goes forward as Antiochus did, trying to force Jupiter Olympus upon the Jews; but he adopts a new superstition. This also disproves the reference to the Syrian king, who was a Gentile. Here it is a Jew, who will take the place of the Christ, and who, of course, regards neither the true Christ nor Jehovah. It is a self-exalting personage who opposes the true God, *i.e.* who equally sets aside the superstitions of men and the faith of God's people. Self-exaltation is his marked feature.

But this is not all. The Antichrist will be infidel, but not merely infidel. He will have rejected the God of Israel, and the Messiah. Nor will he honour any of the gods of the Gentiles. But even this man, although he sets himself up as the true God upon the earth, will, for all that, have some one to whom he bows and causes others to bow along with himself. The human heart, even in Antichrist, cannot do without an object of idolatry. So, in ver. 38, there is this apparent inconsistency that comes out in the Antichrist. "But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces." He makes a god, as well as setting himself up to be God. "A god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things." It is entirely an invention of his own. More than that. He will divide the land among his adherents. "He shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain." Such, then, is God's account of the king that will be found in Palestine in the last days. And it is plain that this last verse is a most conclusive proof that he is in Palestine reigning. It is "*the land*." The Spirit of God never so speaks of any other country. It was that land which was nearest to God — a sort of centre for all others.

Then we have a change in the history. "And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him." This confirms what was said before — that "the king" is found "at the time of the end." Then "shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships." The Spirit of God had long before spoken about the kings of the north and of the south. It was important to show, that at the time of the end these powers will have successors, who will make their push at "the king" in the Holy Land. "The king of the south" — that is, Egypt — and the "king of the north" — that is, the holder of the present Syrian possessions of the Sultan — these two persons shall make a movement against "the king" Not that they have a common policy: on the contrary, they seem bitter enemies one of another. But "the king" so exalts himself, arrogating to himself such pretensions in the Holy Land, that God permits the final catastrophe to arrive. The king of the south comes first, and then the king of the north, who it appears will be the great military and naval leader of the east in those days. "The king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land." This can be no other land than that of Israel. The king is there. The northern king is a totally different person, an antagonist of "the king," as well as the king of the south. The Spirit of God having

introduced "the king," without telling us whence he came, now drops that personage without telling us what became of him. His frightful destiny is shown us fully in other scriptures. But it was important to introduce him as an episode in Dan. 11, for the purpose of showing the last great conflict between the kings of the north and of the south. Accordingly he drops "the king," and the rest of the chapter is occupied with the king of the north. He not only enters the glorious land, but he goes on with conquests elsewhere. "Many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon." We find from Isaiah 11 that this is a very notable fact. These borderers lived on the outskirts of the Holy Land. God so orders that, if they escape the king of the north, they are to be ravaged by the triumphant Israelites. God will not permit that the early and bitter enemies of Israel should meet with their righteous retribution from the hands of any but the people whom they had so sought to oppose and injure. Accordingly, it would appear from Isaiah, that, a very little after, the Israelites execute God's judgment on them.

"He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps." From this we learn, that the king of the north is not acting as a colleague with the king of the south. He proceeds down to the south, where, it would appear (ver. 43), there will be a great development of material prosperity, whether from the resources of the land itself, or more probably from its becoming the great emporium of western and eastern commerce in that part of the world. "But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him" It is when he is down in the south, beyond Palestine, that he hears these rumours of perplexity in the north and east. He had come himself from the north, and was the conqueror over the east also; and now he has tidings from these quarters which agitate him. He hastens back from the land of Egypt and reaches Palestine. "And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas [that is between the Mediterranean and the Dead seas] in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." This is the doom of the once victorious king of the north — not of "the king" who was introduced by the way to show us the occasion of the final struggle between the north and south.

I would now desire to inquire whether there be not other scriptures of interest to connect with what we have just been looking at. In the close of Zechariah, we shall find information of great interest. Just a word or two first on Zech. 11: 16. The Spirit of God there says, "Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock!" This I conceive is clearly the Antichrist — "the king." For, looking at verse 16, we learn that this idol shepherd is in the land. "Lo, I will raise up a shepherd *in the land*, which shall not visit them that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces." This utter selfishness, and self-exaltation, and spoiling the flock, instead of feeding it and carrying the lambs in his bosom, is in frightful contrast with Christ, the Good Shepherd. Thus the false shepherd, Antichrist, is to be raised up in the land of Israel, and there he does not spare the flock of God.

But in Zech. 12 we have another power. It is said, in verse 2, "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem." There are nations gathering against Jerusalem: just as in Daniel 11, the king of the north comes down, and the king of the south. Nations assemble against Jerusalem while this idol shepherd is there. Jerusalem and the Jews are the object of attack. "And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." Victory seems to incline to the assailants of Israel. But none can then harden themselves against them and prosper, because the Lord will have identified Himself with them in that day. "In that day, saith the Lord, I will smite every horse

with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah"; and then we have the way in which the Lord will defend His people in that day. But what may make it still plainer is that which we read in Zech. 14: 2, "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." Here we have additional disclosures that you would not have gathered from Zech. 12. Thus we learn that "the city shall be taken and half of the city shall go forth into captivity"; evidently distinguishing this future siege from the past. When the Chaldeans took the city, they carried all away captive. When the Romans took it, all they spared were made prisoners. Here we have another siege, in which half will be taken and the other half not. And if anything can more clearly mark off the future from the past, it is that the nations, having taken half of the city, will not pursue their victory farther. Why? "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east." Who can pretend that *this* has ever been accomplished? Who can say that the Lord has thus come and stood upon the Mount of Olives? How can you reconcile the past with such a statement as this? The Lord has never been on Jerusalem's soil as a conqueror since that day. Was it thus when Titus besieged it? Do you try to explain it away as merely a providential deliverance? But, I ask, Were they delivered then? They were taken captive. Jerusalem' to this day, remains trodden down of the Gentiles, and must, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. But the passage indicates the times of the Gentiles closing in, the end of Gentile oppression. When this day is verified, and the Lord goes forth to fight against those nations, His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives. And, as a mark that this is not to be allegorized, we find that the Spirit adds, that the Mount of Olives is to split in twain — an outward physical proof that the Lord God has planted His feet there. "The Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south." "Ye shall flee to the valley of the mountain," — that is, it will form a valley between the two — "for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee." There, again, we find a most clear proof that there is a future siege of Jerusalem, and that this siege will be characterized by two attacks. The first attack will be successful against Israel: half the city will be taken, and all the miseries of a frightful siege will follow, as far as half the city is concerned; but the other half is reserved for the Lord, who will bring the third part through the fire. He will put Himself at their head, and crush all the nations of the earth that come together against Jerusalem. Thus the second attack will be to the ruin of those that make it. If we connect this with Daniel, how plain is the additional light that we get! The king of the north first comes down when the king of the south is pushing at "the king" in the Holy Land. There is a simultaneous assault made upon Israel, to destroy the people in the land, who, alas! deserve it. But in the midst of evil there will be a godly seed. God will employ these assailants to do the work of the executioner. The wicked will be taken away; and, when God has purged those that remain, there will come another scene. The king of the north, having been successful in his first attack, pursues his way towards Egypt, against the king of the south. He comes there, but tidings from the north and east trouble him, and he returns to his own destruction.

Meanwhile, we may ask, what is become of "the king"? Has he been destroyed in the collision between the kings of the north and of the south, that had taken place in the land? No. What then is become of him? How does he fall? "By the brightness of the appearing" of the Lord from heaven. He is reserved for the hand of God Himself. He will be cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. "For the king also it is prepared." Thus we have the Old Testament and the New giving us one concurrent testimony. It will be by no ordinary doom of ruined man that he will perish. It is God

departing from all His ordinary ways of dealing with the wicked. Men have been from time to time taken up in the grace of God from this world without passing through death; and there are men for whom it is destined of God to be sent down alive into hell — the terrible contrast of those, who are alive when Christ comes, waiting to be taken up to heaven. It will be so with that wicked one, the idol shepherd — "the king" — and not with him only. The king of the north is a bolder enemy still. "The king" has set himself up in the land, corrupting and apostatizing the people of Israel. He has met with his doom. If only the slightest word of the judgment that had been executed in the land were to reach the king of the north, we can understand how he would be troubled. Whether that is the cause of his hasty return to Palestine, or because the ten tribes were in movement, I do not pretend to say. We are not told. But he comes up to the Holy Land again; and, this time, it is to fall under the immediate hand of God — not with the sword of a mighty man, nor with the sword of a mean man. Not man, but God, will execute the vengeance upon him. Here we find the reason why there were two attacks. After his first assault on Jerusalem, he has gone down into the south, and has pursued certain conquests there. Excited by the tidings referred to, he hastens to return, hoping now to have it all his own way. "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle."

But I must also ask you to look, before closing, at one or two other passages. Take Isaiah 28 and 29, where you will find abundant confirmation of all that I have touched upon in this closing scene. In Isaiah 28 you will observe that there are two great powers of evil connected with the land of that day — one "the king," who is in relation with the people, and in the land; the other the king of the north, who comes down as an antagonistic power.* We shall find both these in this chapter. First, Ephraim is mentioned, and the Lord pronounces woe upon "the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower.... Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand." There, I apprehend, you have the inroad of the Assyrian as the dreadful storm from the north, that would break forth upon Ephraim. If we look at the middle of the chapter, we shall find another thing. We have seen what was the condition of Ephraim, who dwelt in the outskirts of the country. But what was the destiny of Jerusalem, the capital? "Because ye have said" (ver. 15), "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement." There we have evidently what is connected with "the king" who will be in Jerusalem, and who will form a compact with "the beast," the great imperial power of that day, to whom Satan will have given his throne. There is full harmony between what we have in Isaiah and Revelation and Daniel. "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us." Mark that. The overflowing scourge is the king of the north, the outside power that is coming down upon them. They of Jerusalem have made a covenant with death and with hell (that is, with instruments of Satan) in that day: and they hope by this means to escape the king of the north. I have already shown that "the beast," the great power of the west, will be in connection with "the king" at Jerusalem — that the western parts will be the great seat of the beast — that he will command all Europe that properly belonged to the Roman Empire. When that empire is reorganized, he will be the main instrument of using its strength. "The king" will have made a covenant with him; or, as it is said in Dan. 9, he, that is, the Roman prince, will make a covenant with the mass of the Jews. At the close, both are found in Jerusalem, fighting against the Lord and His saints coming from heaven. They will find their supposed strength in this covenant, but it will not stand. The overflowing scourge (the Assyrian) sweeps on, and half the city of Jerusalem is taken. How marvelously does Scripture hang together! Then (Isaiah 28: 16) comes in the reference to the Lord's laying a foundation stone in Zion, which is evidently a word for the faithful remnant of that day, however true for us who believe now.

* Mr. Elliott (*Horae Apoc.*, 5th ed., vol. iv., p. 735, note 4,) makes it to be an essential part(!) of

the futurist theory that the Antichrist is, during part of the last three and a half years to be occupied in besieging Jerusalem from without. That some writers, ancient and modern, have fallen into this stupendous mistake, is plain enough. but Mr. E's assertion is *totally* unfounded. The truth is (and Mr E. ought to know it well), that very many authors, both historical and futurist, have been guilty of confounding "the king" with "the king of the north," at the close of Daniel 11, and elsewhere, but it is false that the error is essential to futurism more than to the Protestant school. Not a few beside myself had seen and avoided this confusion before Mr. E's book was written.

Isaiah 29 is the last portion to which I wish to refer. There we have the closing desolation of the city. "Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt! . . . Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel. And I will camp against thee round about and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee." This is the siege spoken of in Zechariah. "And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground," etc. That is their condition when they are desolated. But mark, in verse 5: "Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust.... Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of Hosts with thunder, and with earthquake And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision." The Lord has gone forth and fought with those nations as when He fought in the day of battle. Sufficient evidence is thus brought from various parts of the word of God, which entirely falls in with, and throws light upon, the very interesting portion of Daniel now before us. All concur in showing most clearly that there is a terrible future for the apostate Jews and their western associates; and no less terrible for their confederate eastern adversaries. The covenant with hell will not stand. When the great powers of the world will have, apparently, swept all before them, and have gathered for the last great struggle before Jerusalem, God will take that opportunity for dealing with them after His long term of patience. It will be the closing scene. They will think that universal monarchy is to be in their hands; but it will be God's day for summoning them to judgment. Here I speak of a judgment of nations and of kings — not of the dead before the great white throne. (Rev. 20: 11-15)

God is about to deal with the earth — with men in the midst of all their plans. The regeneration of the world will be the great day when the Lord, having weeded out of Israel the transgressors, and used "the king" himself, and the judgment that fell upon him, to separate the true ones of Judah from the wicked, will cause the hour to chime when the account must be settled with the nations. This appears to me to be the simple, straightforward statement of the truth of God that we have here. We are not to suppose it is merely a question of one great power only. There will be different principles at work. And it is an awful thing to think that these lands, where we enjoy such privileges, are to be then overspread with the deepest darkness. The covenant with death and with hell will be because of an alliance made with the highly civilized western world. What a humbling thing for the pride of man! Civilization in a day that is past did not keep the mightiest minds from degrading idolatry and filthiness. Alas! we shall have a still worse scene at the close. Christendom will end in restored idolatry, in novel false gods, in man himself worshipped as God. Such, I believe, is the predicted future of this age. But love can keep the heart the same from being entangled with all that leads to it — Christ Himself. May we be occupied with Him, not building upon men's foundations, not hoping their hope, not trusting to progress, or even to religion, so called! If Christ is my object in everything, safety is found there, and nowhere else.

Daniel 12.

The trouble, of which the prophet speaks, at the beginning of this chapter, is not a thing long after

and distinct from the conflicts described at the end of the preceding one, but, as he says himself, "at that time." So that we have now really come, in looking at the closing events of Dan. 11, to the latest period that Daniel brings before us. For it has been often remarked, that Daniel never enters upon the reign of glory, but just brings us up to that point. He shows us that which will introduce it, gives us the execution of judgment previous to it, without furnishing many details, and tells us of the kingdom of heaven, that is to fill the whole earth, but he does not describe it. The "people of the saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7: 27), as he calls the Jews, shall have the whole kingdom under heaven. The truth is, that the Spirit of God had already by others most fully entered into the reign of the Messiah over Israel, and the blessedness of their portion; and He was about to predict the same subject by others subsequent to the captivity. And this last was of importance. Because He well knew that many would suppose that the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity was the accomplishment of the prophecy. Therefore great pains were taken in some of the latest prophecies, to show that nothing was farther from the fact, and that the blessing of Israel was yet future. They are described as being in a miserable condition after they return from Babylon; and the Spirit of God launches out into a distant future as the period when Israel are to be really delivered and blessed according to God's mind. The past return was only a pledge of the full restoration which God intended for them. But Daniel does not enter into this time of blessedness. He brings you up to the moment, and then closes. His peculiar object was "the times of the Gentiles." This accounts for the remarkable character of his prophecy. He is simply a prophet of the captivity, and of its end.

In Dan. 12, we have what takes place between the judgment of the Gentiles and the ushering of the Jews into their blessing. We have seen "the king" and his wickedness in the Holy Land, and have also heard of the kings from the north and from the south. Whatever may have appeared to be the temporary power of the great leader of the north against the Holy Land, "yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." Such was his miserable close.

But now comes an interesting question — What will be the condition of Israel at that time? The answer is given in these first verses: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people." This was the people that Daniel was concerned about. He had no idea of what we call now *a Christian people* — no notion that there was a time coming, already settled in the counsels of God, when there should no longer be any distinction between Jews and Gentiles, and when both would be formed, by the faith of a crucified Christ, into one body by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. All this was unknown to Daniel, and the Lord never even gives him to anticipate such a state. Not one prophecy in Daniel, nor in any other, reveals it, though many intimate certain particulars which are now realized in it, as we see in Romans 9, 10, etc. "Thy people" means, simply and solely, the Jewish people. Daniel was rightly and deeply interested in them, as a true Israelite of God should be, that felt for the glory of God connected with His people. Accordingly, the Spirit of God communicates to him, that at that time there should be a turning-point in Israel's history. Instead of mere providential control — Michael resisting this prince or that, he will stand up for them, undertaking their case and putting down definitely their adversaries ; but, even then, not without a fearful struggle. Their defence was his habitual task. But now he shall stand up to complete the great earthly purposes of God in the deliverance of the Jews.

"And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." There we have the important information that at once distinguishes this standing up of Michael from all times that had ever been. So far from deliverance as yet, the trouble that fell upon the Jews under Titus was more terrible than that which had befallen them under Nebuchadnezzar. What follows

then? That this time of trouble is yet to come. The Spirit of God is here describing that which, having had no answer in the past, must await the future. And, in fact, we have only to look at Jerusalem, and at the present condition of the Jews, to see that this is so. Are they delivered? On the contrary, there is not a country under the sun but what bears its witness, in one way or another, that they are degraded, and out of the land of their glory, where the Lord's eyes rest continually. But their misery ought to tell him who has ears to hear, that Jerusalem must yet be called the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem; when Gentiles shall walk no more after the stubbornness of their evil heart; and the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, both settled and united in peace and love in the land given of God for an inheritance to their fathers.

There are those who regard what is spoken of here as future, but who say, that it must be taken spiritually, and be interpreted of the Church, or God's people now. But, first, it is enough to answer that we have had a long prophecy which was ushered in by the angel to Daniel with the positive announcement that it was what should befall his people in the latter days. This excludes such ideas. Next, observe throughout the prophecy that none but Jews are spoken of as the objects of God's interest up to this time. The Holy Land was in question, and the conflicts of the north and south around it. Under Christianity, there is no such thing as a holy land. It is mere Judaism or heathenism to regard one place as more sacred than another, now that the full light of Christianity has come in. But if there be a land that is in God's purpose glorious, it is Israel's. Only it loses that character during the Gentile calling. There is the revelation of heavenly things now — not of earthly. And therefore, whatever was holy before, in a mere earthly point of view, is passed away for the present, being eclipsed by something brighter. God has other counsels now in view. The ancient people proved themselves to be false and unholy in rejecting their own Messiah. And until they are brought as a nation to Jesus, or, in the words of the Revelation, to "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" — until a remnant has got some sort of divine knowledge of Christ, God will not own them. Meanwhile, He has turned to another work, that of forming the Church, which is not referred to here. It is a blessed truth that God has gone out in rich mercy to the Gentiles; but what comfort would this be as to what lay so heavily upon the heart of the prophet? Whereas all is suitable and clear, if we see that his own people are described, and their passage through the terrible scene spoken of here, the eve of their deliverance, and this of God. "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered," etc.

I will show that this is not the testimony of one sacred writer only, but of several. Take the sorrowing prophet Jeremiah, Jer. 30. There we have a clear reference to Jacob's great trouble, followed by his mighty deliverance. "These are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah." Who will contest the meaning of that? "Thus saith the Lord, We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?" It is a state of things beyond all that is ordinarily reasonable. Men filled with the deepest anguish, depicted even in their faces, and their courage fled in presence of fearful trouble. The seventh verse explains it. "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it." As in Daniel, it is a time unprecedented. "It is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." Jacob, "that worm Jacob," is the name used for the people regarded in their weakness, as Israel is their name of power. It is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. So far it is the same train of thought, in the mind of the Spirit, as we have in Daniel. We have Israel and Judah in question, called by the name that expresses their weakness as exposed to every kind of calamity from without. It is a day of unparalleled trouble, and the Israel of that day are to be delivered out of it.

If I were to look through Isaiah, I might show, from the beginning to the end of the book, the same thing, only more diffused. I need not dwell upon passages so well known. (Isa. 1, 2, 10, 14, 17, 22, 24-35, 49-66)

But it may be asked, if there be anything from the New Testament to bring forward. I have been producing passages from the Old Testament. Can I show you something from the New, giving the increased and full light of God through His beloved Son? The thought might arise, as it has indeed, that Christianity sets aside the Jews altogether, not merely during the present economy, but for ever; so that we are to read "the people" *merely* as the type of those whom God is now forming for His praise. Our Lord Himself decides that question in Matthew 24. He shows us that there is a destiny of Israel which Daniel brings before us and which is not to be applied to any other people under the sun. It is their own portion, both in its sorrows and deliverances. The disciples had said (verse 3), "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the age?" Observe here that the end of "the age" is the only proper meaning. It has no reference to the last catastrophe of the world as a material system, but to a certain dispensation running out its course in the world, from which the term *aeon* is totally distinct. The Lord warns them that they were in danger of being deceived; that persons were to come pretending to be Christ; that there were to be outward troubles; that His testimony was in no way to change the ordinary current of human affairs, for nation is to rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and, as regarded the physical state of the world, there would be famines and pestilences, and earthquakes. He is there only preparing them for a fearful crisis that was coming. "All these are the beginning of sorrows." "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake." Up to verse 15, we have general statements. Then He at once narrows the scene to Jerusalem and to the land of Judæa. He does not continue the account of the gospel of the kingdom traversing the whole world, but shuts up His view to that strip of ground, where God's people dwelt, and to that city near which He then pronounced this very prophecy. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand)," etc. Here we have positive direction to look at the very book that we are examining. The Lord in this part of His discourse was speaking about the same things that Daniel predicted in his prophecy. "Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains."

I ask, Can there be a question as to the meaning of these verses? Does any one doubt what "the holy place" means? Is it ever used in any other sense than the sanctuary of God at Jerusalem? The holy place, as a spot on earth, is invariably, in Scripture, the Jewish centre for worshipping God. "The abomination of desolation" means an idol which should bring in desolation upon the Jews. When this, then, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stands in the temple, those who heed Christ are to flee. There is not a word about Gentiles here — not a hint about the Church of God as such. Godly people, but Jews, in their own city, are warned, when they see this idol, to flee to the mountains of Judea in the vicinity. "And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day." It is not at all a Christian, but a Jewish scene. The Lord's day is that which Christians observe. It is the great symbol of our recognition of Christ risen, and of our blessing in Him; but the Sabbath was a sign between God and Israel.

"For then" (our Lord says) "shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Many, I am aware, apply this to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and to the great calamities that then broke up the Jews. But there is one essential point of difference that ought not to be overlooked. The Jewish people were *not* delivered then. Whereas, when Daniel's prophecy is accomplished, they are, and must be, delivered — not at a subsequent epoch, but

at *that* time. If Daniel is a true prophet (and no one who reveres the Lord, and rightly weighs His words, will question it), it is not that his prophecy failed, but that it remains to be fulfilled. Our Lord distinctly and positively quotes from that prophecy, and from the very chapter (Dan. 12) we are considering. And what does He connect with Israel's deliverance? His own coming as the Son of man from heaven. Who can say that this has been? The Romans, instead of being broken down in the time of Titus, were allowed to enslave the Jews. These were not then delivered, nor, up to the present moment, have they ever been the masters of their own temple, nor allowed to be in their own land, even as ordinary men. If there is one race more peculiarly proscribed in the Holy Land, it is the Jewish. The Turks, the present possessors of it, have held it for many a long year; and all, whether Crusaders or Saracens, have agreed to shut out the Jews. So that there has been nothing like the Son of man coming to deliver Israel. Michael has *not* stood up for them in that sense yet.

Thus, what I have shown from the Old Testament is amply confirmed by the New. Prophet after prophet, all distinctly furnish the same outline, *i.e.* a time of trouble, such as never was before, followed immediately by a deliverance such as Israel has never yet enjoyed. It is perfectly plain, as we all believe, that these prophecies are of God, that it is only a question of waiting God's time for Himself to accomplish them to the very letter. As our Lord says in this same chap. 24 of Matthew, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." It is not only that the general strain is true, but not one jot nor one tittle shall pass till all be fulfilled. The notion that God has cast away His people, Israel, because He is now in mercy filling up the blank season of their rebellion against the Lord Jesus and the gospel, is distinctly treated in Romans 11, as the offspring of Gentile conceit. For not only is God able to graft the natural branches into their own olive tree, but when the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, all Israel shall be saved according to clear prophecy. They are to become objects of divine saving mercy at the end, as we now; only in their case it will be in their land. "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion," etc.

If this be so, we have an important key to the prophecy of Daniel. Although the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans was so near, yet the Lord distinctly looks onward to another time. And what makes it the more remarkable is, that one evangelist does give us the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, but also *distinguishes it from this future time of trouble*. In Luke 21 is the chief reference of a positively prophetic kind to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. And mark the difference of the language: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed about with armies." Not a word about the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place. Luke passes over this entirely, and introduces what Matthew does not mention — Jerusalem encompassed with armies. "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out," etc. That is, the Lord prescribes exactly the same course to be taken by the Jews in Jerusalem, whether at the approaching sack of the city by the Romans (as in Luke), or at the future desolation that should fall upon it (as in Matthew). So far there was an analogy between the two things: the godly were to flee away; they were not to trust to vain hopes of deliverance through some pretended Messiah, but were to know from the lips of the Lord Himself, that Jerusalem was to fall under the hand of the Gentiles. If any wanted to escape, it must be outside Jerusalem. "And let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto." No matter what people may say of the necessity of any keeping their feast, their path of safety is to avoid Jerusalem. There is no deliverance for Israel yet. "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."

Luke, it will be observed, does not say, This is the time of trouble, such as was not since the beginning of the world. There is the most surprising perfectness of expression. Luke takes up first the

destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and Matthew nothing but the last siege, before the Jews are delivered. "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations." This was *not*, therefore, the time of Jacob's trouble, when he should be delivered. At the time spoken of by Luke, instead of deliverance, they only fell into the trouble of a captivity, after the trouble of the war. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." That is accomplishing to the present hour. "The times of the Gentiles" are going on still. The Gentiles have always lorded it as yet. The Jews have not got a land or a city that they can call their own on the face of the earth. Who has their city and their land? The Gentiles. "The times of the Gentiles" are not expired. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." They are its masters, and, as such, they will tread it down till the allotted times are fulfilled — not for ever. Nowhere is it said that this is to go on till the end of time. On the contrary, Gentile dominion over the Jews is soon to close. We have this in the next verse.

We have already seen a most regular, orderly setting forth of the troubles that were to befall Jerusalem. And the times of the Gentiles have been running on ever since the days of Titus to the present moment. But in verse 25 begins the closing scene, which is the only thing mentioned in Matthew 24, from verse 15 and onwards — and this, because of the question put by the disciples, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the age?" But in Luke they simply ask, "What sign will there be when these things [*i.e.* the overthrow of the temple] come to pass?" Accordingly, the Lord gives them the coming up of the Romans; and then He goes on, down the Gentile stream of time, till the end. But Matthew confines himself to the close in answer to the question which *he* records. This is the simple reason, and nothing can be more beautiful than the way in which the truth comes out. *After this* in Luke we have the great events when the times of the Gentiles close. "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." All this is kept distinct from the past siege.

People who apply Matthew 24 in a figurative way to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, are obliged to make out that the coming of the Son of man from heaven is a mere figure, representing the providential acting of God through Titus to put down the Jews. But Luke 21 gives a complete refutation to this idea. For here the Spirit of God shows that Jerusalem has been taken, and the Gentile times run on: when they are about to expire, the Son of man comes in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory — hundreds of years after Titus. The closing scene is brought in as finishing up, or consequent on, the times of the Gentiles.

But there is more. "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." And then, a little further on (verse 32), we find this remarkable expression, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." It is a misuse of this term which has led to a good deal of the confusion on the subject. When does the phrase "this generation" come in? *After* the Son of man has already come in power and glory — *not* when they saw Jerusalem compassed with armies. That is an important point to help in determining its true meaning. If "this generation" really meant a man's lifetime, such a place in the prophecy would be incongruous. The vulgar notion might have been reasonable if the phrase occurred just at the compassing of Jerusalem with armies. But it has no sense if put in after the times of the Gentiles are

accomplished. So that "this generation," *if* taken temporally, must plainly embrace a scope of eighteen centuries at the least. What then, is its true force? It means — what it does very often in Scripture — this Christ-rejecting race of Israel, and not a mere period of time. It is used in a moral sense to describe a race acting after a particular way, good or evil. Moses, reproaching them, says, "They have corrupted themselves they are a perverse and crooked generation. And He said, I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation." (Deut. 32) Here, most clearly, their *moral condition* as a people is meant, and not the *time* in which this was manifested. In the Psalms we have a further key to the proper meaning. Thus, in Psalm 12, "Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." If by "generation" were merely meant a term of thirty or forty years, what sense would there be in the words "for ever"? *This* refers, not at all to a course of a few years, but to the moral state of a people, and that of the people of Israel. In like manner, the force of the words in Luke is quite plain. "This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." The race of Israel still going on in unbelief and rejection of Christ is what the Lord means. He is saying, as it were, I will prepare you for the terrible truth, that this Christ-rejecting generation is to continue till all these things are fulfilled. Apart from prophecy, how could such an issue have been anticipated? For it might have been supposed that, while Christianity was going over the whole earth, and making conquests everywhere, if one nation more than another was to be brought under the power of Christ, it must be Israel loved for the fathers' sake. But no. The Jews are to proceed in the same unbelief. There might be a line of faithful ones among them, but the wicked generation which Christ then denounced shall not pass away till all is fulfilled. And what will follow? Even as the Psalms say, "the generation to come." Israel will be born again — will have a new heart given them. Then are they to be the people that shall praise the Lord.

This, I must add, entirely falls in with the rest of Scripture. For the Lord; under the figure of a fruitless fig-tree, had set forth the then Israel. On that tree He consequently pronounced a curse. When it is said in one of the Gospels that the time of figs was not yet, it means the season of their ripeness or of their ingathering was not yet arrived. Hence the figs could not have been taken from the tree. Had it borne any, they must have been there. It was merely when the figs were still unripe, that our Lord came to seek fruit; but there was not *one*. There was plentiful profession — leaves, but no fruit. Therefore said He, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever!" Such, in figure, is "this generation." But how is that to be reconciled with Israel's being to the praise of the Lord by-and-bye? Israel must be born again. "This generation" will never produce fruit for the Lord. It is to be destroyed under the judgment of God; and a new race will be born. The type of the past makes room for a striking figure of the future.

From these prophecies that we have looked at, two out of the Old and two out of the New Testament, it is clear that the time of trouble of which Daniel speaks, is entirely future; and that Luke distinguishes expressly the time of great distress just about to fall, and which, in fact, has fallen on Jerusalem, from a closing time of far more intense trouble which is yet to come. We now return to Daniel, with the clear light of other scriptures from both Testaments, showing God's word to be positive and precise, that Israel must pass through an unheard-of sea of trouble, but out of that they are to be delivered. It is, in fact, the precursor of their great salvation from God.

Still there was another question unanswered. However important Daniel might feel it to know that his countrymen would infallibly be delivered, yet there was another question: What will be the condition of the Jews who are not in the land? What will become of those not in Jerusalem or in Judaea, who consequently are not the immediate objects of the great deliverance wrought there? The second verse of this chapter answers it. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall

awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." The verse is constantly applied to the resurrection of the body; and it is true that the Spirit finds the figure, which is here used to foreshadow the revival of Israel, upon that resurrection. But it can be shown that it has not the least reference to a bodily resurrection either of us or of Israel. As this may seem difficult to some, I am bound to produce evidence from Scripture that the Holy Spirit uses resurrection as a figure of a blessed restoration from ruin.

In Isaiah 26 you have what I suppose will not be questioned: an account of Israel's trouble — their trouble under Gentile lords. In verse 13, it is said, "O Lord our God, other lords beside Thee have had dominion over us: but by Thee only will we make mention of Thy name." That is not said by or about the Church, though it may be applied to us ever so frequently. We have not got other lords over us — the Jews have. They have had masters over them for thousands of years, and they have still. "But by Thee only will we make mention of Thy name. They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise." These lords who had dominion over them are gone: they are dead — they shall not rise. *Can* these words be about literal resurrection? If *it* were meant, they must rise like others. It is clearly said of their perishing in this world. That is, the figure of the resurrection is applied. They are gone and shall not be lords over Israel any more. "Therefore hast Thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish. Thou hast increased the nation, O Lord, Thou hast increased the nation: Thou art glorified." Who can doubt that the passage speaks of Israel only? "Thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth." Could that be said about the Church? When the gospel extends itself all over the world, it is the power of love in men — the activity of God's grace going out everywhere. Not so with Israel. They have a central city, where, had they been faithful, God would have maintained them; — so that their removal to the ends of the earth was a divine judgment upon them, not a mission of love. "Lord, in trouble have they visited Thee, they poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them." That was the effect of it. Israel humbles himself. He that had waxed fat and kicked, was now penitent; and the Lord listens to his confession, and looks on his anguish. "Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in Thy sight, O Lord." And then in verse 19, the Lord answers. "Thy dead men shall live, my dead body shall they arise." He claims them as His own, even though they had so sinned and were in that deplorable, degraded condition. "My dead body shall they arise." Mark that expression as connected with Daniel. "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

Can it be questioned by any one who has followed the reasons already advanced, that the Spirit is not speaking about the Church there, but about Israel, in contrast with their Gentile lords now prostrate, never to domineer again? Israel, on the contrary, though in the most dismal condition, was only as the dead body which the Lord claims as His own, and as pertaining to Him they shall arise. The resurrection of the body, of the dead, is a blessed and fundamental truth which underlies and is assumed in the prophetic imagery. But the passage speaks of the nation as yet to arise according to God spiritually, but withal as a nation, too, as the next chapter (Isaiah 27), which is the conclusion of the strain, makes yet more evident. Use, enjoy, apply this scripture as you will, but deny not its strict and primary force.

Turning to Daniel, now, see what a light is thrown upon the passage. Not only will there be deliverance for the Jews in the Holy Land, who have witnessed all the conflicts between Antichrist and the king of the north, but for many that sleep (that is, many who had not yet come forward, who had been apart from the troubles of their nation, who had been in total obscurity, as it were sleeping in the dust of the earth). "Many of them. . . shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and

everlasting contempt." The text shows plainly that it is not the resurrection of the just; because when this takes place, nobody rises to shame and everlasting contempt. The passage has no direct reference to a bodily resurrection, which simply furnishes a figure for the national revival of Israel, who are described as sleeping in the dust, to express the greatness of their degradation. Now they were to awake and sing, according to Isaiah.

But we must turn to another passage — the clearest, perhaps, of any upon the subject. It is in the prophecy of Ezekiel, where, in a most plain prediction of the restoration of Israel, the same figure is used. Isaiah called them a dead body, and spoke of them as dwelling in the dust, from which they were to awake. Daniel also called it an awaking out of their sleep in the dust. Ezekiel goes yet farther, and speaks of them as not only dead, but buried in their graves. Now, if it can be proved that this does not refer to a literal bodily resurrection, but to a national restoration of Israel, the chain of evidence will be complete. That it is so, I doubt not; for in this prophecy we are not left to gather from the context what the meaning is, but there is a divine interpretation. We have not only the prophecy, but the prophecy explained. And the explanation of the prophecy given to and by Ezekiel shuts out every other thought save the one I have been endeavouring to set before you. In the beginning of Ezekiel 37 we find an open valley full of dry bones. "And He said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, Thou knowest. Again He said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them." Can any one seriously think this is the way in which the Church will rise from the dead? Is there a soul so deluded as to take this for a description of the order in which our bodies are to be raised? Bones coming together first; then the flesh and skin covering; and then breath put into them? Can it be with sobriety maintained that this is primarily intended as a figure of the work of the gospel in giving life to souls? If so, what is the meaning of the bones first, etc.?

"Then said He unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then He said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel." What more simple than the explanation God gives of the vision? He applies it to the whole house of Israel, though, no doubt, it was the vision of a resurrection. Ezekiel saw the bones live, and the men stand on their feet. But, then, we have God giving us the real meaning and proper application of it. The resurrection of the body we have most fully elsewhere, as in the New Testament, and in Job also. In the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles, and the Revelation, we have the resurrection, both of the just and of the unjust — a blessed resurrection for the one, and another resurrection that will have awful consequences of sorrow for those involved. But here we have the same God, using the figure of resurrection to describe the blessing that He is to confer upon the people of Israel. Similarly the figure is applied in Luke 15 to the conversion of the prodigal son: "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." Paul gives us the blessing that will result to the world by-and-bye through the restoration of Israel under the same figure: "What shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (Rom. 11: 15) I maintain, then, that no other interpretation of this passage bears the stamp of the Spirit of God. People may preach the gospel from it, or apply it figuratively: I am not objecting to such an employment of it. But the word of God gives us both the

vision and the interpretation. And I have no more reason to believe the one than the other. God says it means the house of Israel; therefore it does not mean the resurrection of the body. When men are raised from the dead in proper physical sense, there will be no such thing as the house of Israel among those so raised. Resurrection terminates all relations of time and the world. Hence, what we have here is simply a figure taken from resurrection, and applied to the future blessing of Israel — then to be a holy nation, but a nation still.

"These bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O My people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." Nothing can be plainer. All the evidence of the chapter confirms the same thing. But more than that: "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put My Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." The next portion throws yet more light upon it. We have another vision connected with this. Two sticks are taken and joined in one, presenting another aspect of the blessing in store for Israel. If all Israel were to be brought out of their graves, the twelve tribes might still have formed two separate parties as in earlier days. But now comes in a new condition, to show that, when the resuscitation of Israel takes place, their once-divided interests will coalesce. That does not refer to the Church, nor to our condition when raised from the dead. We shall not be planted in the land of Israel under David as our king. Even if we take David as a type of Christ, yet this is not our relationship. We are Christ's body and bride — not a people merely, reigned over by a king.

Thus, by comparing these different portions of the word of God, we have strong proof that the passage in Daniel refers solely to Israel. And as the first verse shows us the deliverance of the Jews in their land at the time of their sorest trouble, the second verse shows us that which is the key to so many of the prophecies — the coming out of the race of Israel from their hiding-places and deep degradation, set forth under the figure of sleeping in the dust, and being raised up out of it. But whether it be those in the land or those who come out of the dust of the earth, or from among the Gentiles, none will be *delivered* except those that are the objects of the counsels of God, *i.e.* "found written in the book." Some of them may awake, as the figure expresses it, to take their part in the great struggle at the close; but not being registered in God's book, they shall be abandoned to shame and everlasting contempt. For the rest it is not a mere national deliverance, but much more. Those that are delivered will be truly born of God. A spiritual character will attach to their rise, as well as a national one.

But let us pursue the rest of the chapter briefly. The Spirit of God shows us that some among them will have a remarkable maturity. They are those who are said to be "wise." "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament." These have been distinguished in a time of trouble among the Jews. "And they that instruct the many in righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." We are obliged thus to change the version, because the expression that is used here — "turn many to righteousness" — is unhappy. The real sense is "they that teach righteousness to *the* many." It is not a question of their success — whether they actually turn them to righteousness, or not, is not the point; but "they that instruct the many," or the mass of the Jews, are thus promised the blessing. They might, perhaps, have scanty results; but the question is, whether they are labouring for God, and maintaining the authority of His truth. The same Hebrew word is used in other parts of the Scripture, where it no doubt means to *justify*. The English translators — judging, with good reason, that "justify" would not suit in a clause which describes the action of men, whereas justification certainly belongs to God —

have changed it into "turn to righteousness." But I take the liberty of preferring the version already mentioned — "instructing in righteousness." Thus it would appear, that there are certain of the Jews that will have shown comparatively a great degree of intelligence in the mind of God. They are called "the wise." But besides the intelligent, others go out in spiritual energy, as we have seen, to teach the mass of the Jews, who then were, or afterwards fell under the power of Antichrist. "The many" is a technical phrase in Daniel for the faithless mass or those that are lost. They that instruct the many in righteousness are to shine as the stars for ever and ever.

And, further, I must take the opportunity of saying that this is the true meaning of a verse in Isaiah 53, that has amazingly perplexed the critics: "By His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many." No doubt many Christians have connected it with "*by His obedience shall many be made righteous.*" But there is no connection whatever between the two thoughts. Take it as has been suggested in the passage before us, and all is plain. Nor have I the least doubt that such is its true meaning. It is to instruct in righteousness; justification is not the point there. In the Lord's case the instruction of course will be perfect; but even there the object is "many" (not "the many," as in Daniel). Here we find that these godly souls among the Jews have a certain knowledge of divine truth, and they instruct the mass in righteousness. It will not be a question of showing and preaching grace at that day. They will instruct them in righteousness. They may bring out the blessed thoughts of God in connection with Israel; but it will be instruction in righteousness. The sense of "justify" would not be true, if we look either at the subjects or the objects of the action. We could understand, perhaps, that of the Lord in Isaiah 53. But even so; ask any person, what is the meaning of His justifying many through His knowledge, and he will have to travel far enough for a probable answer. Some advocates for it may try to understand, "by the knowledge of Him," but that will not stand. The true meaning is that the Lord would use His knowledge as the means of instructing many. In Isaiah and Daniel, it refers to instructing in righteousness, not justifying nor turning to righteousness.

In the next verse comes an important principle, upon which a few words must be said, "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Daniel is here informed that the things which he had seen, and the communications which he had heard, though they were, no doubt, of God, were not to be turned to use for the present. All was to be a sealed book until a distant day; in a word, until the time of the end. In a later verse, Daniel puts the question, "What shall be the end of these things!" And the answer is, "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." Thus clearly are we shown that the understanding of the words of God is a spiritual thing, and not a matter of mere intellect. If it were so, then the wicked might understand as much as the righteous. It is expressly said, that "none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." That is, these intelligent ones, of whom we have heard before. Mark the importance of this. In the last chapter of the Apocalypse, we have the prophet John addressed at the close of his prophecy. The contrast is most striking. In the last of Daniel, he is told that all is to be closed up and sealed until the time of the end. In the last chapter of the Revelation, John is told not to seal "the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand." In other words, there is an exact contrast between the injunction given to the two prophets. To the Jewish prophet all is sealed till the time of the end. To the Christian prophet nothing is sealed: all is open. How comes this? The answer is, that the Church — the Christian — is always supposed to be at the time of the end. The gift of the Holy Ghost has changed everything. From that time nothing has been sealed to the Christian. All the mind, the affections, the counsels of God, yea, and His secrets about the world, in the Scriptures of truth, are opened to him by the power of God.

The Christian, even if you take the weak and ignorant, has the Holy Ghost dwelling in him. Therefore, in writing to the babes, does John say, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." All the learning in the world can never make a man understand the Bible; whereas, if a soul is born of God, he is capable of understanding anything that God reveals: he only requires to be led on, and more perfectly instructed. The apostle is not speaking of the actual requirements of the babe, which might be very slight. In whom, then, do we boast, and ought we to boast? In God, who has given us such an amazing privilege. Whoever has the Spirit of God, has therein a divine capacity of entering into the things of God. He only wants to be in proper circumstances, dependent on God, and valuing His word, and what is of God will be manifest and proved to be divine. This is connected with the fact, that the Spirit of God is given to the Church, in a special sense, which not even the prophets knew. For although they had the Spirit to inspire them, as we, of course, have not, yet we have the Holy Ghost always dwelling in us; one consequence of which is, that we have spiritual intelligence, "the mind of Christ," which they had not. And therefore, as you may remember, the Spirit of God in 1 Peter 1 contrasts the condition of the Christian now with that of the saints, yea, of the prophets themselves, under the Old Testament. He shows us that they were "searching what and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed that, not unto themselves, *but unto us*, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." That is, we stand in the present knowledge and enjoyment of things which, *they* were told, did not concern them but us of the New Testament. This is very important. They had the promise, and it was salvation to them. But we have much more: we have positive, accomplished blessing — redemption not merely promised, but effected. And the Christian now, relieved by grace from all question about his sins, is free to enter into the blessed things of God.

God accordingly says now, You are not to seal the book. The time of the end is that in which we are contemplated, the end morally being come. And therefore we are waiting for the Lord to come at any time. Where the Jewish thought prevails, people are always looking out for an antecedent time of great trouble. They do not see that God has a purpose about Israel, as well as about the Church; that, when He has removed us to our own proper place in heavenly glory, He will again take up the Jews; and that they, not we, must go through the great tribulation, and see the appointed signs which herald the approach of the Son of man to the earth.

This also serves to explain how it is that we can understand these prophecies. Daniel could not: as he says here, "And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." Then comes in Christianity, and not one of the words is sealed — not one shut up. They are all open. To us the end is always nigh; we are said to be in the end of the world: as it is written in 1 Corinthians 10: 11, "These things were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the age are come." And it is always so. "Christ is said. to have appeared once in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." The Church is ever supposed to be in the end, and, by virtue of the Spirit, anticipating the godly, intelligent remnant. Indeed, the Church began with a remnant of Jews that had faith in their Messiah. Thus Pentecost began with that which will be true again after we are removed to heaven. For when God has translated the saints, and the time of the end is literally come, there will once more be a remnant of faithful Jews. "But the wise shall understand." The Church is always supposed to be standing in these privileges, and is essentially above the mere discoveries or progress of the age.

As to the "days" spoken of in the close of the chapter, what is their meaning? In verse 11, it is said, "From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." It had been previously said in verse 7, by the man clothed in linen, that it should be "for a time, times, and an half" — that is, for 1260 days. Verse 11 adds thirty days, or one month more, to the 1260 days. Then, in verse 12, we find a further epoch: "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." That is, a month and a half are added still. So that we have, first of all, 1260 days; then 1290 days; then 1335 days. What, we may ask, is the meaning of this? and from what time are we to reckon these days? The answer is, "From the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up."

And now I would make a remark of some importance, as linking together all which had been said, and yielding a conclusive proof of the true interpretation of this prophecy. It is the very verse that our Lord quoted in Matthew 24: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand!) then let them which are in Judea flee into the mountains." The question is, Where does Daniel speak of this? I answer, in verse 11 of this chapter. It is the only verse that properly answers to the one in Matthew.

We are told that from that time there are to be 1290 days; next, a further period of 45 days, and then full blessing. Has that been the case? If you apply it to anything past, as for instance, to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; when you reckon 1335 days from the time when the Romans took Jerusalem, is the blessing really come? It matters little how you take the days. Let them be conceived to be 1335 years from that destruction of Jerusalem: still have you got the blessing of the Jews and the saint's blessing according to the word of God here? Nothing of the sort. What then follows? That you have dated it from a wrong epoch. "The abomination that maketh desolate" is not yet come; when it does come, in the sense of which our Lord speaks, 1335 days follow, and then will be the full blessing.

But now another word as to these differences: first the 1260, then the 1290, and then, lastly, the 1335 days. I think the reason is, because the blessing of Israel will not be brought in at once. The first great turning-point will be the destruction of "the king." That takes place when the 1260 days expire. But as we saw in Daniel 11, the king of the north has to be disposed of, after "the king." Accordingly, there is another period of delay. But whether that will coincide with the thirty days more (or 1290), or with the subsequent 45 days (1335), I am not prepared to say. Of this, however, we may be assured, that the last of them bring us down to the accomplishment of the whole work: and I am inclined to think that the destruction of the king of the north is rather one of the latest, if not the last, of these acts of judgment before the epoch of blessing begins. In Isaiah 10: 12, it is said, "When the Lord hath performed His whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." Does not this seem to indicate that it is the last act of the Lord in judgment connected with the blessing of Israel? Thus we have a brief interval or two after the destruction of Antichrist, during which the Lord is still putting down His and Israel's enemies. "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

I now close the book, praying the Lord to make it of real profit as well as interest. One of the most important points of profit will have been this — to deliver God's children from the idea that the Church is everything. That is not a true system. It is to fall into the same sort of mistake that the old astronomers used to make, when they viewed the world as the centre of the solar system, because it was the place where they were living. This always spoils man. He makes himself the centre of everything. The same error is made in theology. The Church, because we are in it, has been made the centre of Scripture, whereas Christ is the true one. He is the centre of heavenly blessedness, and the Church

circles around Him; He is the centre of Jewish blessing, and the Jews circle around Him. Therefore, whether in heaven or earth, Christ is the kernel of all God's thoughts of blessing. And when our hearts are fixed in Him, there is peace, progress, and blessing. The reason why souls very often have not peace, is because they are occupied with themselves; for they do not find what they think ought to be in a Christian. Whereas, if I am looking at Christ, there is no difficulty. The question then becomes: Does Christ deserve that such a one as I am should be saved? Can I deny it? The effect of this is that I am happy, and God can use me in His service. But if I am troubled about the salvation of my own soul, how can I be occupied in the service of others? The great question of self never will be settled till Christ is the centre of everything to us. May it be so! He is the centre for all God's thoughts of love and righteousness as well as of glory.