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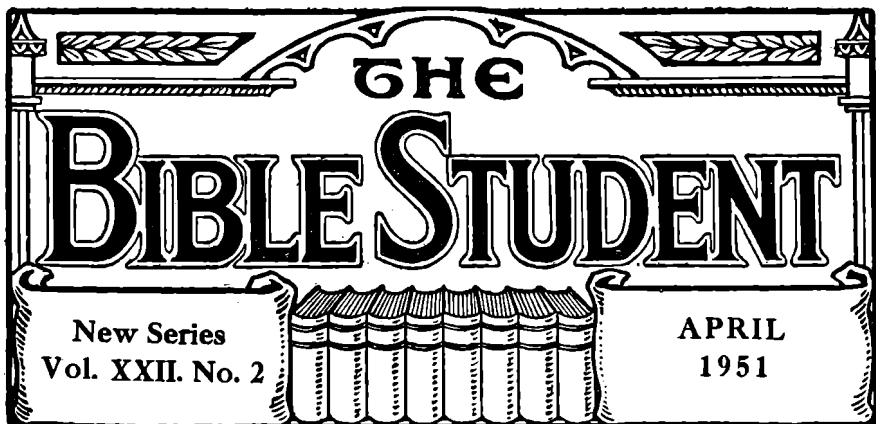
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*“The Entrance of THY WORDS Giveth Light”*

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*Editor: A. McDONALD REDWOOD*

# THE PROMISED DELIVERER\*

An Outline of Scripture Teaching

By C. F. HOGG

In the largest sense prophecy is any message from God to man spoken through a man. In its narrower sense it is a foretelling of some future event. The former is illustrated in Num. 11:25-29, for example, the latter in Deut. 18:22.

The divine utterance of Gen. 3:15 is unique in this respect that the words were spoken by God to Satan in the hearing of Adam and Eve. Man, created in the image and after the likeness of God, had deliberately disobeyed Him to whom he owed his being and the very powers that made disobedience possible. Nevertheless the purpose of God that there should be an order of His creatures who would freely choose fellowship with Him, and so fulfil the end for which they were brought into existence, was neither defeated nor deflected by this defection. Yet man's self-will meant that the consummation must be long delayed, and that suffering alike to God and to man must mark the way thither.

I. The fifteenth verse of the third chapter of Genesis is the fountain-head of all prophecy, the source of the ever-increasing stream of testimony to the promised Deliverer which flows through the pages of Holy Writ. In it are illustrated most, if not all, of the principles on which the prophetic word must be interpreted. In *four* separate statements are forecast the issues, immediate and remote, of the "one trespass" (Rom. 5:18) which had involved Adam and his posterity in spiritual, moral and physical ruin. These are:—

"I (God) will put enmity between  
thee (Satan) and [the woman,  
And between thy seed and her seed;  
It shall bruise thy head,  
And thou shalt bruise His heel."

Of these prophetic words the first took immediate effect; the false friend stood revealed as an enemy. Henceforth the enmity

\* The above article, supplied by the late esteemed author primarily for our pages, is taken from our issue of May 1932. Its ever-fresh theme, apropos to our other articles on prophetic subjects (see the July and current issues), has suggested its reproduction here as being further helpful to the studies as a whole.—Ed.

was reciprocated on the part of the woman and of her "seed", the whole human race. The "seed" of the Devil cannot, of course, refer to the whole race, for that would involve the absurdity of making all mankind to be at enmity with all mankind! The "seed" of Satan are those from among the human race who, as he did, deliberately choose to rebel against God. It was not to the Jews generally, but to those of them who sought to kill Him, the Lord said, "Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father *it is your will to do*" (John 8:44; cp. Matt. 13:43, 1 John 3:8, 12).

Seed, however, may be singular as well as plural as in 1 Chron. 17:11, for example. In the latter part of our verse "it" and "His" have "seed" for antecedent; no longer multitudes but an individual is in view; He who is to be the Deliverer of the self-ruined race. It is significant that whereas the plural idea, that of a multitude of descendants, is always its meaning from Gen. 12:3 to 17:17; but as soon as Abraham receives Isaac from the dead "in a parable" the singular is introduced (v. 18), as Paul points out in Gal. 3:16.

The next element in the prophecy to be fulfilled, is the bruising of the heel of the Seed of the woman. A wound inflicted upon a heel is suited to represent an injury that while it may be serious, is not fatal but is merely temporary, from which recovery is assured. It is thus fitted to symbolize the Crucifixion of the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Deliverer promised in these words.

The bruising of a head on the other hand is a symbol well adapted to denote destruction from which there is no recovery. The words of the apostle in Rom. 16:20 look to an event even yet future for this consummation, which is described in Rev. 20:7-10. Moreover, if the Seed alone endures the bruising He is not alone in His triumph, for the plural is used, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under *your* feet shortly." In the day in which God puts all things under His feet He is to be surrounded by the "many brethren" among whom He is the Firstborn. "The creation waiteth for the revealing of the *sons* (not only for the Son) of God." For then will be fulfilled a later word of prophecy, "He shall see His seed" (Rom. 8:19, 29; Isa. 53:10).

The question arises why, in the *prophecy*, does the bruising of the head of Satan precede the bruising of the heel of Messiah if, in the *event* the order is reversed? The answer seems to be that throughout Scripture the prophecies of the glories of Messiah

*precede* those of His sufferings. Many illustrations of this principle might be adduced, as, for example, in the order of the 2nd and 22nd Psalms, and in the precedence of chapters 6 and 53 of Isaiah's prophecies. It is to be regretted that three verses at the close of Isa. 52 have been cut off from chapter 53 to which they belong, of which, indeed, they are an integral part. It is not too much to say that chapter 53 should never be read without these three verses, for in them the glories to follow have precedence of the story of His sufferings. Thus it is clear that the order of any prophecy is not necessarily the order of its fulfilment.

Yet another principle of prophetic interpretation is illustrated in Gen. 3:15. It is that the time element is frequently ignored. There is no indication that four thousand years must elapse ere the Messiah would suffer, or that nineteen hundred years, and we know not how many more, must intervene between the sufferings and the glory that must follow them. Words spoken in the same breath, written in the same sentence, may refer to events lying millennia apart in their accomplishment. Of this principle we may find an example in Isa. 9:8. The Child was born nearly two thousand years ago, the Son, upon whose shoulder the government is to rest, is not yet "given" nor will be until God "again bringeth the Firstborn into the inhabited earth" (Heb. 1:6). Still more evident is the instance in Isa. 11; there is no mark of any interval between the description of the Lord "in the days of His flesh" in verses 1-4, and that in verses 4-9 of His *appearing* in glory and for judgment and peace, which is still future as is clear from the quotation of the latter part of verse 4 in 2 Thess. 2:8.

In this comprehensive prophecy, then, are included the *beginning* and the *end* of the Divine activities having in view the re-establishing of the rule of God in the earth. It reaches out to "the restoration of all things whereof God spake" when, once more, God shall be "all in all" in a Universe brought into being so that *in* it, and *through* it, His glories might be displayed (Acts 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:28). It is pregnant, too, for in it are to be discerned the features that characterize succeeding prophecies, the recognition of which is necessary to their interpretation. These are:—

1. 'Seed' is used sometimes as a singular, sometimes as a plural, noun.
2. The prophecies of the triumph of the Deliverer usually, if not always, precede those of His sufferings.

3. Where the prophecies of the sufferings and of the triumphs of the Deliverer are found together there may be no indication of an interval in fulfilment; yet the prophecies of His sufferings were all fulfilled well-nigh two thousand years ago, whereas no word concerning His glory has been realized, even until to-day.

4. In other prophecies, not directly Messianic, the time element may also be ignored without any indication being given that this is the case.

So far as is recorded this word of prophecy was all that was given to sustain the faith of men through seven long generations. Then to Enoch the assurance of the final victory of the Deliverer was renewed, but here there is no reference to the sufferings that must precede them (Jude 14:15). Indeed there is little that is directly Messianic in Genesis until the dying Jacob forecasts the history of the descendants of each of his sons. Concerning Judah he said, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the obedience of the people be" (Gen. 49:10).

II. The next passage calling for remark is Balaam's last parable in which he described what he saw when his eyes were opened, "I see Him, but not now: I behold Him, but not nigh: there shall come forth a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall arise out of Israel . . . and out of Jacob shall One have dominion" (Num. 24:15-19).

This passage is a pointer to the prophetic ministry of Messiah to come.

In Deut. 18:18 there is a reference to the Messiah's function as prophet, which was fulfilled in "the days of His flesh", but which does not suggest that suffering was to be associated therewith. Indeed the prophecies of "the sufferings (that were appointed) unto Christ" (1 Pet. 1:11, see margin) only begin to appear as late as the time of the Psalmist; reference has already been made to Ps. 22 and to Isa. 52 and 53. It will not be necessary for our present purpose to consider other examples in the Old Testament as later prophecies conform to this type.

The Lord Jesus had been exercising His prophetic ministry for a considerable time before He spoke to His disciples about His death. One day he asked them who they supposed He was? Peter's reply, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," He declared was a communication to him from His Father.

"From that time began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed, and the third day be raised up." Here Peter interrupted Him with an expostulation, charging Him with a mistaken notion of His mission. But the Lord, who had recognized His impetuous follower as the mouthpiece of God but a moment before, now stigmatizes him as the mouthpiece of Satan! Until the last the disciples were never able to accept the testimony of the Lord, and that of their own Scriptures, as to the end of His ministry. They preferred their own ideas of what it should be, rather than accept what God had declared it would be. After His resurrection this was His rebuke to them, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into His glory?" (Luke 24:25, 26). They had presumed to choose some of the prophetic words for belief and had allowed these to fill their minds to the exclusion of the rest. But the words concerning the sufferings of Messiah were as much the word of the Lord as were those concerning His glory. It is indeed folly to be satisfied with less than the whole testimony of God concerning His Son, however difficult it may be to reconcile some parts of it with others and with our preconceptions.

After this interlude, in which the Lord rebuked Peter, He went on to tell them the sequel to His resurrection, "the *Son of Man* shall come in *the glory* of His Father with His angels; and then shall He render *to every man* according to his doing" (Matt. 16:13-27).

In this word are to be noted three features of the Lord concerning His Return, as characteristic of those recorded in the Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark and Luke.

(1) The third person is used. He speaks of himself as "the Son of Man" and of those affected by His appearing as "every man" (i.e., all men); with which should be compared "all the tribes of the earth" in Matt. 24:30, and "they" in Luke 21:26, 27, for example.

(2) He comes for judgment; "then shall He render to every man according to his doing", "before Him shall be gathered all the nations . . . and He shall separate them" (Matt. 16:37; 25:31-33).

(3) He appears in glory, His own and His Father's, and is accompanied by angelic hosts, Mark 13:26, for example.

There is little about the Coming of the Lord in Acts; Peter refers to Joel's prophecy concerning "the Day of the Lord" in his address at Pentecost (2:20). The same apostle refers, in ch. 3:20, to the purpose of God to send Messiah. In ch. 13:41 Paul warns the "Men of Israel" in words drawn from the warning of the prophet Habakkuk to his contemporaries, but which, as the Apostle uses them, refer to the judgments that are to accompany the Coming of the Lord. Later Paul addressing the Athenians declared that God "hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world (the inhabited earth) in righteousness by the Man whom He hath ordained" (17:31).

Immediately before the address at Athens Paul had taught the converts at Thessalonica to "wait for His (God's) Son from Heaven . . . Jesus, which delivereth us from the wrath to come". It is to be regretted that the English Revisers did not translate here, as they did in Rom. 11:26 (the only other N.T. occurrence of the word) by the present tense, 'Our Deliverer', for the reference is not to what He accomplished for them at Calvary, but to what He will be to His redeemed when He returns (1 Thess. 1:10).

III. At this point we must revert to the Gospels to ascertain what John records of the Lord's words concerning His return. While not the first in order of time, those spoken to the disciples in the privacy of the upper room are so simple and direct that they claim priority of attention here: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3). In contrast with the words recorded in the Synoptic Gospels the absence of reference to judgment, to any manifestation of glory, or to accompanying angels, is noteworthy. Moreover in those spoken in public the Lord used the third person, in these He uses the first and second. All others are excluded; *He speaks to and of His own alone.*

In John 6:39, 40, 44, 54 the Lord gives a fourfold description of those whom He will raise up "in the last day". This "day" is evidently a period extending to more than one thousand years, for those who reject Him are also to come forth out of the tombs therein, and we know that at least that interval separates the two Resurrections (John 5:29; Rev. 20:4, 5). The phrase



is not found elsewhere in Scripture save in the words of Martha when the Lord came to Bethany after the death of Lazarus, "I know that he shall rise again in the Resurrection in the last day"; it is clear then that she had His words in mind when she thus spoke. He replied, "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die" (John 11:25, 26). In so saying the Lord committed to Martha a mystery, the interpretation of which had to await Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians, some twenty years later.

From the outset the apostle had instructed the converts there in the distinctive hope of the Christian, as well as in faith and love. But nothing, apparently, had yet been revealed of the manner in which he had assured them that they would be delivered from the Day of the Lord. A charge of treason had been laid against him and he had taken a hurried departure, after his friends had given to the authorities an undertaking that he would not return to the City. After his departure (his stay in Thessalonica cannot have exceeded two months at the utmost) there had been further trouble for the newly formed church, such trouble, indeed, that some of the brethren had lost their lives and the survivors had concluded that the Day of the Lord had already set in (2 Thess. 2:2 where the true reading is "day of the Lord," not "day of Christ"). Timothy had brought him "glad tidings of (their) faith and love" (1 Thess. 2:6) which had not wavered, though as to their hope they were perplexed. For their comfort (and ours) God was pleased to carry the revelation of His purpose a step further. The words of the apostle "this we say unto you by (a) word of the Lord" does not here introduce a quotation from the Old Testament, nor from any of the words of the Lord recorded in the Gospels, what he had to say was a *new* revelation altogether, something that had never been declared before. It is that all believers are to be "caught up" (literally, 'raptured') together at the Lord's descent from Heaven into "the air" there to meet them, that thenceforth they might be with Him for ever.

Returning now to John 11; when the Lord came to Bethany His people there were divided into two classes; Lazarus, who was dead, and Martha and Mary who were alive. This is a picture in miniature of the conditions in the world in the 'day' of which the

Apostle wrote to the Thessalonians. The solution of the mystery of the Lord's words to Martha is thus at last made known. In His words to Martha He had the same two classes in view. To elicit their meaning let them be written thus:—

- (a) I am the Resurrection,
- (b) and the Life:
- (b) he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live:
- (a) and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die.

It is essential to notice that the true rendering of the Greek words is "though he die", not "though he were dead". Physical death alone is in view throughout. Christ is the Resurrection, therefore should the believer die he will be raised. Christ is the Life, therefore the believer that is alive when He descends from Heaven shall not die at all. Since the Greek word *parousia* means not an arrival but a being present its translation by 'coming' is confusing. *Parousia* is a technical term to denote that period during which the Lord and His redeemed will be together "in the air", and which is elsewhere in Scripture called "the Day of Christ," for which the following passages may be consulted: 1 Cor. 1:8; 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14; Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16. In none of the places where these words are found is there a suggestion that any but the redeemed will be present. And in most, if not in all, the context makes plain that during this period the Judgment-seat of Christ takes place, at which again only believers will be present (2 Cor. 5:10, note the first person used from verse 1 onward).

The Rapture of the saints is not the Second Coming of the Lord, but is the indispensable preliminary thereto. For if the saints are to be manifested with Him in His glory, as Scripture abundantly testifies (Rom. 8:19 and 29; Col. 3:4, for example) then it is clear that they must go to be with Him ere that glory bursts upon an astonished world. Then they will be seen in His likeness, the present body of humiliation having been conformed to the Body of His glory, "according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself". Then He shall "be glorified in His saints," and "be marvelled at in all them that believed"\* (1 John 3:2, 3; Phil. 3:21; 2 Thess. 1:10).

\* A full consideration of these verses and many others dealing with the subject will be found in *Notes on The Epistles to the Thessalonians* by W. E. Vine, M.A., and the writer of this article.

The deliverance of Israel will come otherwise; for the nation must endure that distress which the Lord declared is unequalled in the history of "the creation which God created". "Alas! that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it" (Jer. 30:7; Mark 13:9; cp. Dan. 12:1). This, "the Great Tribulation" appears to synchronize on the earth with the *parousia* or "Day of Christ", which has its venue "in the air", and with which the Christian alone is concerned, and to fall within the interval between the Rapture of "the church which is His (Christ's) Body", and "the manifestation of the *parousia*", "the revelation of the Lord Jesus from Heaven." Then shall the Lawless One be destroyed and Israel be delivered. Then shall the Day of the Lord begin and the Millennial Reign which, like the vestibule of a temple, opens into "the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 17:28; Rev. 20:4; 2 Pet. 1:11).

It is not the purpose of this brief paper to elaborate details or to attempt more than an outline of what appears to the writer to be the teaching of Scripture concerning the hope that sustained the people of God in the age before the First Advent of the Deliverer, and that is intended to sustain them even now as they wait for His Second Advent when "the Lord shall go forth . . . and His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives" and when "the Kingdom of this world" shall "become the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ: and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Tit. 2:15; Zech. 14:4; Rev. 11:15).

To assure ourselves that the subject is of immediate importance to all who "love the Lord Jesus Christ in uncorruptness" it is only necessary to remember the words of the beloved apostle, "Every one that hath this hope set on Him (Christ) purifieth himself even as he is pure" (Eph. 6:24; 1 John 3:3).

In the abounding grace of our God this outline may serve to stimulate further enquiry, and may even provide some guidance therein.