

THE DOCTRINE OF REVELATION Chapter 9

THE HOLY BIBLE IS UNIQUE

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Transcript

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Chapter 9

THE HOLY BIBLE IS UNIQUE

We come now to our 7th point—its uniqueness. Viewed simply as a book, the Bible stands far apart from all others. Amid the writings of the ancients or the productions of our modems there is nothing which, for a moment, bears comparison with it. The Bible not only occupies a prominent place in literature, but an unrivalled one. Consider its amazing circulation. The number of its editions is to be counted not by the dozen or even the hundreds, but literally by the thousands. And not merely tens or hundreds of thousands of copies have been printed, but hundreds of millions! That at once separates it by an immeasurable distance from everything penned by man. Consider its unequalled translation. It has been rendered into almost all the multitudinous dialects of the earth. Those of nearly every nation now have the Bible in their own tongue. It has been printed in more than 600 languages! That too, is without any parallel. The most famous and popular compositions of men have not been translated into one tenth as many tongues. Consider its by-products: countless works have been devoted to its exposition, millions of sermons preached and published on portions of it. That also is without any precedent. Consider further the laborious indexes which have been made upon its contents. There are voluminous concordances which not only list every word used in the Scriptures, but all the occurrences of them—in many cases scores, and in not a few, hundreds of references. Now we do not possess complete concordances of any of the writings of the most renowned human author, wherein is collated every occurrence of each word he used. And why? Because no such nicety, no such significance, pertains to his language as makes the sense of a passage or the force of an argument turn upon a single word. Much less has the ablest of human authors employed all his terms with exact consistency and correspondence throughout the whole of his writings. Yet such is the case with the Bible—wherein no less than forty different men were used as its scribes! The Concordance loudly proclaims the uniqueness of the Bible. It tacitly declares that not simply this or that term, but every word from Genesis to Revelation is God-breathed, and that every occurrence of each word was directed by His unerring wisdom. The perpetuity of their text is unique. The Sacred Scriptures were written originally in Hebrew and Greek, which are the only languages that, dating back of all tradition, are still recognized as living vehicles of thought. The language spoken in the streets of modern Athens is identically the same, to its very accents, as that used by Plato and Socrates, yea, of Homer's Iliad, which

was composed almost 3,000 years ago. In like manner, the Hebrew of the Talmud is the Hebrew of the book of Genesis. What a remarkable survival, or rather a miracle, of Divine power! That becomes more apparent when we contrast how other ancient tongues have long since passed away. The Egyptian language used by the builders of the pyramids has perished. The Syrian used by Rabshakeh is no more. The dialect spoken by the original Britons is now unknown. Yet the Hebrew employed by Moses is spoken by the Jewish rabbi today, and the Greek used by the Apostle Paul is heard in Salonica at this hour. Here, then, is a striking and unparalleled fact: that the languages in which God wrote His Word have outlived all their contemporaries and have remained unchanged throughout the centuries! Even on its surface the Bible differs from all other books. That appears in the style of its writings. Two languages were used which are quite diverse in their manner of inscription. The Hebrew is written and read from right to left, whereas the Greek (and all modern languages) is written and read from left to right. The Scriptures make no comment upon that arresting and striking contrast, but leaves the reader to interpret the fact in the light of their contents. Once attention be focused upon the same, its significance is at once apparent: in the singular reversal of its text the Bible teaches us the two most fundamental and radical facts in human history: man's apostasy from God, and his restoration. The "right hand" is that of dignity and privilege (Ps. 110:1), the "left hand" is that of disgrace and condemnation (Matthew 25:41). The Old Testament, written in Hebrew, is an amplification of that statement, "man being in honour abideth not" (Ps. 49:12), being a record of his departure from God, with all its evil consequences. The New Testament, written in Greek, has for its leading theme how the wanderer is restored to God, how the prodigal returns to the Father's house. As another has pointed out, the uniqueness of the Bible appears (again) in that its conjugation of the Hebrew verb puts man in his proper place. "In all Occidental languages the verb is conjugated from the first person to the third—'I,' 'Thou,' 'He.' The Hebrew, in reversal of the human thought, is conjugated from the third down and backward to the first: beginning with God, then my neighbor, then myself last—'He,' 'Thou,' 'I.' This is the Divine order: self-obliterating and beautiful." That peculiarity is very much more than an interesting detail in philology: it embodies and expresses a profound spiritual truth. It accords God His due pre-eminence, and thereby teaches us that all right thinking must start with Him and work downward to man. For that very reason the Scriptures open with the words, "In the beginning GOD." No theology can be sound unless it makes that Truth its foundation and starting point. The initiative is ever with God: "we love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Once God is accorded His rightful place in our affections, man is automatically put where he belongs—but which, apart from Divine revelation and Divine grace, he never takes! Our 8th point—Its delineation of God. The portrayal of Deity supplied by the Bible is so very different from and so vastly superior to that furnished by all other sources—we are forced to conclude it cannot be of human invention. Beginning with the Old Testament, let us single out two statements which were penned by Moses. "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4). That is a startling, yea, a unique declaration, at complete variance with the conceptions of all His contemporaries. Polytheism, or a belief in and worship of a plurality of gods, prevailed universally among the heathen. Whence then did Moses obtain his knowledge of the true God, who is one in His essence? Certainly not from the Egyptians, for their king confessed, "I know not the LORD" (Ex. 5:2). "The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty"—who continue impenitent and despise an atoning sacrifice (Ex. 34:6, 7). Such a conception of the Divine perfections is as far beyond the reach of man's mind as Heaven is above the earth. Search the philosophers, the mystics, and religious teachers of the ancients, and nothing can be found which in the least resembles such a blessed conception of God as that. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a

contrite and humble spirit." "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that ye build unto Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things hath Mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit" (Isa. 57:15; 66:1, 2). The majesty of such language at once distinguishes it from all human compositions and evinces it was not fabricated by the brain of man. But suppose for the sake of argument that the mind of man had soared to such an elevated conception of Deity as is portrayed in the first part of those passages, it had certainly not conceived of what follows in the second part. Therein God is presented not only in the greatness of His infinite excellence above all creatures, but also in His amazing condescension unto the meanest of men. Those verses not only exhibit the transcendence of the Creator, but make known the marvels of His grace, "which He accounts His own glory" (Eph. 1:6). Turning to the New Testament, we will confine ourselves to three brief statements: "God is spirit" (John 4:24), "God is light" (1 John 1:5), "God is love" (1 John 4:8). Those three descriptions of Deity furnish us with a truer and more elevated view of Him than could the most elaborate definitions of human eloquence and genius. They announce the spirituality, the purity, and the benevolence of God. The first purports to be a record of words spoken by Christ during His earthly ministry; the second and third to be inspired declarations given by the Holy Spirit through a human instrument. If their Divine origin be denied, then the skeptic is faced with this problem: all three were penned by an unlettered fisherman! Whence did he derive such conceptions?—conceptions before which philosophy is abashed. The sublimity and the comprehensiveness of those brief expressions are without any peer, or even parallel. If they originated from one unlearned, it would be a much greater marvel and miracle than that he wrote them under Divine dictation. Much more might be added by entering into a detailed enumeration of all the wondrous attributes of God, but sufficient has been pointed out to establish how immeasurably grander is the Bible's delineation of God than anything found in the writings of men. Our 9th point—Its representation of man. The account which the Bible gives of man is radically different from that supplied by all human compositions. That sin and misery exist, yea, abound in the world, is a patent fact, however unpleasant it may be. The daily newspapers report it, the police courts illustrate it, the prisons witness thereto. Nor is this fearful moral disease confined to any one nation, or even limited to any particular strata of society, but is common to all. It is no new epidemic, for it has prevailed in all periods of history. Every human attempt to banish or even curb it has failed. Legislation, education, increased wages and improved environments have produced no change for the better. Sin is too deeply rooted and widely spread in human nature for the remedial efforts of social reformers to extirpate it. The wisest men who reject the Divine explanation of this tragic mystery are completely in the dark as to the real nature and origin of the malady. The Bible is the only book in existence which truly describes the sinful condition of man, accurately diagnoses his case, and ascribes it to an adequate cause. It teaches that as a result of his defection from God at the beginning of human history, he is a fallen, ruined, guilty, lost creature. The picture which the Scripture gives of man is a deeply humiliating one, radically different from all drawn by human pencils. It is so because human writers describe how man views himself and how he appears in the eyes of his fellows—the Bible alone informs us what man is in the sight of God! His unerring Word affirms, "There is none righteous: no, not one" (Rom. 3:10)—not a single member of our race who is conformed to the Divine Rule. That Word solemnly asserts, "There is none that doeth good" (Rom. 3:12) according to the Divine Standard of conduct: not one in his natural condition whose actions proceed from a holy principle, acts out of love to God, or with an eye only to His glory. Such statements as those are much too unpalatable to proud human nature to have been made by any who sought to palm off an alleged communication from Heaven designed for universal acceptance. The Bible also shows why we cannot meet the just requirements of our Maker: each of us is "shapen in iniquity" and conceived in sin (Ps. 51:5). Depravity is

transmitted from parent to child: each one enters this world with a defiled nature, with a bent toward evil. Since the fountain is polluted, all the streams issuing therefrom are foul. Fallen Adam "begat a son in his own [moral] likeness, after his [sinful] image" (Gen. 5:3), and thus it has been with each succeeding generation. "Man is born like a wild ass's colt" (Job 11:12)—thoroughly intractable, hating restraint, wanting to have his own way. Think you, my reader, such a description of human nature as that was invented by man? "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies" (Ps. 58:3). Entering this world "alienated from the life of God" (Eph. 4:18), that which is bred in the bone quickly comes out in the flesh. No child requires to be taught to tell lies—it is natural for him to do so, and the more he is left free to "develop his own personality" without "inhibitions," the more will his delinquency appear. "Man at his best estate is altogether vanity" (Ps. 39:5)—an empty bubble, yea, as vain as a peacock. He is as unsubstantial as the wind. "Men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance they are altogether lighter than vanity" (Ps. 62:9). Man, who so glories in himself, would never originate such an estimate of himself. Instead of making Satan the author of all our iniquities, the Holy Bible teaches, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23). External temptations would have no power unless there were something within us to which they could appeal: a lighted match is a menace to a barrel of gunpowder, but not so to one filled with water! That explains why all the efforts of statesmen, educators, and social reformers are unavailing to effect any improvement of man—they are incapable of reaching the seat of his moral disease; at most, they can but place outward restraints on him. It is vain to move the hands of a watch or polish its case if the mainspring be broken. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9), is another concept which would never originate in the human mind, for it is quite contrary to our ideas and too abasing for our acceptance. Such a pride-withering delineation of human nature as the Bible furnishes could have been supplied by none other than God Himself. The Bible not only paints human nature in the colors of truth and reality, but it also reveals how it has come to be what it now is. The existence of moral evil has been acknowledged in every age, for it was far too palpable and potent to be denied, but whence it came and how it originated proved to be a problem which the wisest, without Divine revelation, were unable to solve. To ascribe it to the malignity of matter (as some of the ancients did) is a manifest absurdity, for matter possesses no moral qualities, and could not corrupt the heart and mind, however closely it were placed in connection with them. The Scriptures inform us that, "Man being in honour abideth not" (Ps. 49:12). The Hebrew word for man, there, is Adam, and that verse informs us that the father of our race continued not in the state of purity in which God created him. He disobeyed his Maker, lost his innocence by his own fault, and having corrupted himself, has communicated his depravity unto all his descendants. "By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). The root was vitiated, and therefore every part of the tree springing from it is tainted. We now come to point 10—Its teaching on sin. As might well be expected, the teaching of Holy Writ thereon is as different from that of fallen man's as is light from darkness. So long as it breaks not forth in open crime, to the injury of their own interests, those of this world regard sin lightly and minimize its seriousness. In many quarters sin is regarded as being merely a species of ignorance, and the sinner is looked upon as more to be pitied than blamed. The various terms which are commonly used as substitutes for sin indicate how inadequate and low is the popular conception: infirmities, mistakes, shortcomings, youthful follies they speak of—rather than iniquities, transgressions, disobedience, wickedness. In the Bible sin is never palliated or extenuated, but from first to last its heinousness and enormity are insisted upon. The Word of Truth declares that "sin is very grievous" (Gen. 18:20), that "abominable thing" which the Lord "hates" (Jer.

44:4). It regards sin as being "red like crimson" (Isa. 1:18), and declares it to be "exceeding sinful" (Rom. 7:13). It likens sin to "the poison of asps," to the "scum" of a seething pot, to the loathsome disease of leprosy. The Bible declares "the thought of foolishness is sin" (Prov. 24:9)—what human mind devised such a standard as that?! It teaches that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23), so that unbelief and doubting are reprobate. It insists that, "to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17), so that sins of omission, equally with those of commission, are condemned. Yea, sins of ignorance are culpable (Lev. 5:17), for with God's Word in our hands ignorance is inexcusable. Holy Writ teaches that sin is more than an act, namely, an attitude which precedes and produces the action. "Sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4 R.V.), spiritual anarchy, a state of rebellion against the Lawgiver Himself. It insists that we are sinners by nature before we are sinners by practice. It does not restrict its indictments to any particular class, but declares that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Now a book which uniformly depicts sin as a vile and hideous thing, which strips man of every excuse, which declares that "every imagination of the heart of man is only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5), and which brings in "all the world guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19) could not have been created by fallen creatures, but must have come from the thrice Holy One. The same applies with equal force to the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the punishment of sin. A defective view of sin necessarily leads to an inadequate conception of what is due unto it. Man looks at sin and its deserts solely from the human viewpoint, but the Bible exhibits its malignity in the light of God's broken Law, and shows it to be one of infinite enormity and guilt, which—where the atoning sacrifice of Christ be rejected—demands and receives eternal punishment. The Word of Truth reveals that all who die in their sins will be consciously tormented forever and ever in "Hell fire," and there will not be a drop of water to relieve the sufferer. The sphere of their anguish is described as "the blackness of darkness forever," for not a ray of hope ever enters there, and where there is "wailing and gnashing of teeth." None but the Holy One, who alone is capable of determining what is due to rebels against Himself, could have lifted the veil and given us a glimpse of the terrible character of sin's wages. The fact that this solemn truth is so distasteful to all and so widely rejected, and yet occupies a place of so much prominence in the Bible, is one of the many proofs that it is not of human origin. Let us proceed to the 11th point—Its historical parts. Much of the Bible consists of historical narratives, yet both their contents and the style in which they are written at once distinguish them from all others. They cover a period of no less than 4,000 years! The Old Testament contains the oldest records of the world, dating far back of the chronicles of men, yea, of the dimmest traditions of all nations, save the Jewish, and therefore the Scriptures of the Old Testament are many centuries older than any other historical records. Herodotus, who has been styled "the Father of History," was born a thousand years after Moses!—the penman employed by God in writing the Pentateuch. They not only impart information which none of the writings of antiquity contain, but are in striking contrast with the legendary fables of early Greece and Rome. The Bible alone supplies us with any knowledge of the affairs of this world during its first 15 centuries. Antedating all human historians, God Himself has made known to us how the earth came into existence, how the nations originated, and has given a brief but succinct account of the antediluvian era which terminated in the Flood—all of which matters are entirely beyond our imagination. The opening verses of Genesis stand in a class entirely by themselves. Their teaching upon the creation of the universe out of nothing is quite peculiar to Holy Writ. Such an idea is not to be found in the most rational and refined systems of secular writers. Even where an intelligent Architect was conceived of, as in the speculations of Plato and Aristotle, yet he was portrayed as working upon existing material, on eternal matter. While the hypothesis favored by the earlier Egyptians and Babylonians was that everything, including the stars and this earth, has developed from the inherent power of the sun. For reconditeness of theme and yet simplicity of language, for comprehensiveness of scope and yet brevity of description, for scientific

exactitude and yet the absence of technical terms, nothing can be found in all literature which for a moment compares with the opening chapter of the Bible. Its Divine revelation stands out in marked separation, not only from the meaningless cosmogonies of the ancients and the senseless mythologies of the heathen, but equally from the laborious jargon of our moderns who essay to write upon the origin of things, and which are out of date almost as soon as published. Again—the historical portions of the Bible, alone, supply us with a satisfactory explanation of the present state of the world. As was pointed out earlier, the earth exhibits numerous marks of intelligence and benignity, yet they are neither of unvaried orderliness nor of unmixed benevolence. If on the one hand we behold the fertile fields and beauties of nature, on the other there are icy wastes, vast deserts, death-dealing volcanoes. It is apparent that this earth has experienced some fearful convulsion, by which its original structure has been deranged. It is still subject to earthquakes, devastating tornadoes and tidal waves. Man and this earth are manifestly adapted to each other; nevertheless there are many examples of such discrepancy. Why is this? Certainly not because of any imperfection in the Creator. Then why? The Bible alone accounts for these abnormalities, and it does so in a way without the wisdom and power of the Creator being impeached. It reveals that, as the result of sin, God is now dealing in justice and holiness with His refractory subjects, as well as in goodness and mercy with the creatures of His hand. The uniqueness of Scripture history appears not only in the disclosures which are made, but also in its style and omissions. Its method of chronicling events is radically different from all other histories. It only just touches upon, and often entirely ignores, matters which had been of most interest to men of the world, whereas it frequently treats at length of things which they had deemed of no importance. How amazingly brief is the account given the creating and furnishing of this earth! Man had never restricted that to a single chapter, and then have devoted more than 10 others to the tabernacle and its erection. No indeed: the wisdom of this world would have regarded the grand edifice of the universe as worthy of a much fuller description than that of a religious tent! Nothing is told us of the "seven wonders" of the ancient world. Men of renown are passed by in silence, while the pastoral lives of insignificant individuals are narrated. The great empires of antiquity are scarcely alluded to, and then only as they touch the interests of Israel. A principle of selection obtains such as no secular historians adopt, and the events singled out are set down as a plain record of facts, without any attempt of the writers to mingle their own reflections with them. The design of sacred history is entirely different from that of all others. Its aim is not simply to preserve the memory of certain occurrences, but to teach us the knowledge of God and His salvation, and to show us our deep need of the same. Its purpose is not merely to narrate bare facts, but rather impart important moral instruction. It does very much more than convey us a knowledge of events, an account of which is nowhere else obtainable—the agency of God in connection with those events is constantly brought out. That which uninspired historians either overlook or deliberately ignore is made prominent, namely, the Divine displeasure against sin. The historical portions of Scripture display to us throughout, the excellence of the Divine character, and set before us His governing of this world. Sacred history is very much more than an authentic record of human affairs: it exhibits the perversity and folly, the instability and unbelief of human nature, and reveals the springs from which our actions proceed. In its narratives the thoughts and secret motives of men are discovered, and that in a manner and to an extent which none but the great Searcher of hearts was capable of doing. The real character of man is unveiled as in no other writings. "The Bible describes, in action and exhibition, the perfections of Jehovah as fully as the proclamation in which He declares Himself to be longsuffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. It delineates the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart, as forcibly and distinctly as the annunciation's of the Prophets, when they aloud and spare not" (Robert Haldane). It emphasizes the providential interposition of God in human affairs and His ways with men. Therein we are shown what a mad and bitter thing it is for either an individual or a

nation to forsake the living God—and, contrariwise, what blessings attend those who walk in subjection and fellowship with Him. Consequently its narratives are of great practical value: not only in a general way by showing how God punishes sin and rewards righteousness, but by specific and personal illustrations of the same. Vital ethical and spiritual lessons are thereby inculcated, and from the lives of different individuals we are taught what examples are worthy of our emulation and what evils and dangers it will be our wisdom and profit to avoid. Thus those sacred narratives afford us scope for constant meditation. Into the inspired history is most wondrously interwoven all the doctrines and duties promulgated by Christ and His Apostles. But the grand design of the Old Testament was to make manifest the need for, the nature of, and the various preparations made unto the redemptive work of Christ. Everything else was subordinated unto an anticipation of the all-important advent of God's Son to this earth and the inauguration of the Christian era. As there is one central object in the heavens which far surpasses in glory all other planets, so the Person and mission of the Lord Jesus Christ is accorded the place of pre-eminence in the Sacred Volume. That was what regulated the principle of selection as to what should or should not be recorded in the Bible. Hence it is that the history of Adam and his posterity during the first 2,000 years is condensed into but eleven chapters, and why very little indeed is said about them—special attention being directed only unto those individuals from which the promised Messiah was to spring. For the same reason, from Genesis 12 onwards we are occupied almost entirely with the history of Abraham and his descendants. The lives of the Patriarchs are described in much more detail, that we may perceive the sovereignty and grace of God in His choice of and dealings with them; and that we may obtain a better view of the stock from which Christ, according to His humanity, was to issue. Most of the Old Testament is a history of the nation of Israel, and it, too, is written in a manner quite different from all others, for as one has well said, "It is recorded by the unerring hand of Truth." No effort is made to magnify the virtues of Israel, nor is there the least attempt to hide their vices. Had those records been composed by uninspired Jews, then obviously they would have laboured to present the most attractive picture possible of their own people, and therefore no reference would had been made unto their base ingratitude and hard-heartedness. Particularly would a forgery have sought to impress other nations with the might, valor, and military genius of the Jews. But so far from that, their faint-heartedness and defeats are frequently recorded. The capture of Jericho and the conquest of Canaan are not attributed to the brilliance of Joshua and the bravery of his men, but to the Lord's showing Himself strong in their behalf. Nor did the victories granted them proceed from partiality or caprice, for only while they walked in obedience to God's Law did He crown their efforts with success. It is noteworthy that the sacred history of the Old Testament ends at the point where credible secular history begins, for the occupation of Palestine by the Persians, Greeks and Romans is recorded by Xenophon and his successors. And finally, point 12—Its typical teachings. Since the incarnation of His Son, with the attendant blessings of redemption, was the grand object contemplated by God from the dawn of human history, He ordered everything in the early ages of the world to pave the way for the same, particularly in the educating of His people concerning it. It pleased God to first preach the Gospel to them by means of parables, by symbolical instruction and typical occurrences which foreshadowed the Person and work of the future Redeemer. Therein lies the key which opens many a chapter of the Old Testament, which to those lacking, it appears not only of little interest but unworthy of a place in a Divine revelation. But once their scope and significance be recognized, we perceive in those ancient institutions and religious rites such a wondrous anticipation of and perfect correspondence with what is set forth more openly in the New Testament as no human wisdom could have devised. There is a pre-arranged harmony between type and antitype as no mortal could invent; a prophetic meaning in them which only God could have given. The fitness of the types and the agreement of the antitypes lie not so much in their external resemblance as in the essential oneness of the ideas they embody and express and

their relations to each other. The types are so many outward emblems and visible signs appointed by God to portray spiritual objects. They were so constructed and arranged as to express in symbolical form the great truths and principles which are common alike to all dispensations, such as the holiness of God and its requirements, the sinfulness of sin and its polluting effects, the necessity for a Mediator. Under the Levitical ceremonies there was set forth a palpable exhibition of sin and salvation, the purification of the heart, and the dedication of the person and life unto God. His method of revelation was first to portray heavenly things by means of earthly, to make known eternal realities through temporal events, to exhibit to the physical senses what was later presented more directly to the mind. Thereby was indicated on a lower plane what was to be accomplished on a far higher one. Visible things were made to image and prepare the way for the disclosure of the more spiritual mysteries of Christ's kingdom. In that way the earlier dispensations were made the servants for getting ready the stage of things to come. God so modeled the institutions of Israel's worship as to set before their eyes the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, the one being a stepping-stone to the other. During the immaturity of God's family celestial things were more easily grasped when set forth in a corporate form than by abstract statements about them. The events recorded in the Old Testament were actual occurrences, yet they also presaged the more excellent things which were promised. Divine Providence so molded human history that in many instances there was made a typical representation of the work of redemption. That was set forth, in its broad outlines, in the days of Noah. The fearful flood which God sent upon the world of the ungodly made known His intense hatred of sin and the punishment which it entails. Yet before that judgment fell, merciful warning was made and time given for repentance; but the wicked repented not. In the ark we behold the gracious provision which God made for those who feared Him. Noah and his family sought refuge therein, and accordingly they were preserved from the overflowing scourge. That ark was the only place of deliverance. It was therefore a prophetic sign of Christ as the sole Saviour of sinners, and the security of those who sheltered therein shadowed forth the deliverance from the wrath to come of those who flee to Christ. There was room in the ark for all who availed themselves of it, and the Redeemer has promised to receive and cast out none who come to Him. The dove sent forth by Noah was an emblem of the Holy Spirit, and her return to the ark with an olive leaf in her mouth spoke of that assurance which believers have that God is now at peace with them. The whole history of Israel was a typical one and was made to adumbrate the experience of God's people in the days of their unregeneracy, the provisions made by God for their deliverance, and the complete salvation which He effects for them. The cruel bondage suffered by the Hebrews in Egypt under the merciless oppression of Pharaoh supplies a vivid picture of our natural servitude unto sin and Satan. Their crying in the brick kilns and their groaning under the whips of their taskmasters spoke of those smiting of conscience and sorrows of heart when God convicts us of our rebellion against Him and when He makes sin to become exceedingly burdensome and bitter to our souls. The utter inability of those Israelite slaves to free themselves from the galling yoke of their masters portrayed the helplessness of the natural man, his complete impotence to deliver himself from the dominion of sin. The sovereign grace of God in raising up a deliverer in the person of Moses pointed forward to the Redeemer emancipating His people. The appointment of the lamb and the efficacy of its sprinkled blood to shelter from the angel of death on the Passover night revealed yet more clearly what is now proclaimed by the Gospel. While the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts at the Red Sea, and Israel's sight of the "Egyptians dead upon the sea shore" (Ex. 14:30), told of the completeness of the Christian's salvation—the putting away of his sins from before the face of God. The subsequent history of Israel after their miraculous exodus from Egypt while on their way to Canaan foreshadowed, in a remarkable and unmistakable manner, the experiences of Christians from the time they are born again until their entrance into Heaven. Israel's long journey across the wilderness supplies a graphic picture of the believer's passage through this world. Once the

heart has been really captivated and won by the loveliness of Christ, the things of time and sense lose their charm and this world becomes a dreary desert to him. As the wilderness, with its sterile sands and waterless wastes, was a place of trials unto the Hebrews, so this world is made the place of testing unto the graces of the saints. But as God ministered unto Israel of old, so He has made full provision to meet our every need. They had the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night to direct their course, and we have the Word of God as a lamp unto our feet and the Holy Spirit to interpret it for us. As God furnished them with manna from on high, so He has given us "exceeding great and precious promises" to feed upon. As He caused water to flow from the smitten rock for Israel, so He now revives the souls of the contrite. As He enabled them to overcome Amalek, so His grace is sufficient for us. That remarkable feature of the Old Testament Scriptures which we are now dealing with is a very comprehensive one, and a large volume might readily be written thereon. The whole of the Mosaic ritual possessed a typical and spiritual significance. The tabernacle in which they worshipped was an emblematic representation of Christ and His Church, and by ordaining that more than a dozen chapters should be devoted to an account of its structure, its furniture, and its setting up, while but a single chapter describes the creating and peopling of this earth! This tells us that in the Divine estimation, the latter is of infinitely more importance than the former. The world was made for Christ (Col. 1:16) and His people (2 Cor. 4:15), as a platform upon which the celestial hierarchies "might be known by [or rather "through"—dia] the Church, the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10). The tabernacle was God's dwelling-place in the midst of Israel. Its holy courts, its sacred vessels, the priesthood which ministered there: the sacrifices they offered, were, to their minutest detail, all, so many object lessons brought down to our finite capacity, setting forth the grand truths of Divine revelation, without which we could not so fully understand what is set forth in the New Testament. Many of the outstanding characters of the Old Testament adumbrated Christ in the varied relations He sustained. Adam presaged His federal headship (Rom. 5:14), Moses His prophetic office (Deut. 18:18), Melchizedek His priestly (Ps. 110:4), David His kingly (Rev. 5:5). The checkered experiences through which Joseph passed foreshadowed Christ both in His humiliation and His exaltation. Joshua typified Him as the Securer of the inheritance. The miraculous birth of Isaac prefigured the supernatural incarnation; the murder of Abel, His death; the budding of Aaron's rod, His resurrection. Every perfection of Christ's character, each office that He sustained, all the aspects of His redemptive work—Godwards, manwards, and sin-ward—were indicated by or through one and another of the historical persons of the Patriarchal and Mosaic eras. That so very much in the Jewish Scriptures should be adapted to image the Person and history of the Saviour cannot be accounted for on any other hypothesis than that God Himself is the Author of them. The spiritual instruction conveyed by the Old Testament narratives, their deeper and hidden meanings, the great number and variety of the types, their anticipations of and perfect accord with what is taught in the New Testament, clearly demonstrate that Judaism and Christianity—so dissimilar in their externals, so opposite in their incidentals, yet uniting in their essentials—both belong to the same Lord.

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