

The Davidic Covenant

by A.W. Pink

The Davidic Covenant was a divinely ordained event that was overruled to disclose new aspects of God's purpose toward our fallen world, despite the sinful origin and disastrous effects of the institution of the monarchy in Israel.

Scripture: 2 Samuel 7:11

Topics: "Covenant Theology", "The Kingship of Christ"

Description

A.W. Pink explores the Davidic Covenant, emphasizing its significance in the unfolding of God's redemptive plan. He connects the Davidic Covenant to the previous Sinaitic Covenant, illustrating how each covenant reveals aspects of God's mercy and purpose for humanity. Pink highlights the transition from a theocracy to a monarchy in Israel, detailing the people's demand for a king and God's response, which ultimately led to the establishment of David's lineage. He underscores that while the covenant promised an everlasting kingdom through David's descendants, its ultimate fulfillment is found in Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Pink concludes by affirming that the covenant serves as a profound revelation of God's grace and the future hope of His people.

Transcript

In this chapter we shall attempt little more than to point out the connecting links between the Sinaitic and the Davidic covenants. The various covenants recorded in the Old Testament, as we have previously stated, mark the principal stages in the development of God's purpose of mercy toward our fallen race. Each one brought to light some further aspect of truth, and that, in keeping with particular incidents in the circumstances of God's people on earth. The covenants and the history are so intimately related that some knowledge of the one is indispensable to an understanding of the other, for each throws light upon the other. Only when the divine covenants and the sacred history connected with them are mutually studied, can we be in a position to trace the divine wisdom in those epoch-making transactions. But in order not to extend this study unto too great a length, our review of the history must necessarily be brief and incomplete.

The statutes and ordinances given for the regulation of Israel, the covenant people, assumed a definite form sometime before the death of Moses, who, on account of his sin, was not allowed to lead the people into the promised land. In view of his removal, he was divinely instructed to select Joshua as his successor, to whose leadership the nation was entrusted in the great enterprise which lay before them.

The previous life of this eminent man had supplied a suitable training for the work which was assigned to him, and his future conduct manifested qualities which evidenced him to be equal to all the exigencies of his high service. Under his administration, the conquest of Canaan was, to a large extent, successfully accomplished, and the land was divided by lot to the several tribes. On the eve of his decease he was able to say, "Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts . . . that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, not one thing hath failed thereof" (Josh. 23:14).

The above language (like much in Scripture) is not to be taken absolutely, as though the entire conquest of Canaan was now complete and the inheritance fully secured-the fact was otherwise. No, it is to be understood as affirming that up to this time no assistance had been withheld which their project required or that had been promised to them, and it was designed to strengthen their faith and encourage their hearts in regard to further success in its future prosecutions. Joshua had no successor, nor was any needed. Though Israel was a single nation, with common laws, under one King, yet each tribe had its own rulers, sufficient for orderly self-government and to take possession of that portion of the inheritance which had been allotted them. In some cases the land had yet to be acquired, and the tribes whose property it was were obligated to effect its conquest, whether by their own efforts or with the aid of their fellows. All of this is sufficiently apparent from the facts of the sacred history.

After the death of Joshua, Judah, assisted by the tribe of Simeon, was the first to go up, under divine direction, to fight against the Canaanites. For a time success attended their efforts, but soon they fell into the awful sin of idolatry (Judg. 2:11-13), and divine punishment quickly followed. Jehovah sold them into the hands of their enemies, until in pity for their affliction, He interposed for their relief. The historical account of their condition during a lengthy period is but fragmentary. The Book of judges does not give us a continuous and connected narrative, but merely relates the principal disasters in which, at different times, their transgressions involved them, and of the various means which God graciously employed for their deliverance. If the reader will consult Judges 2:12-18 he will discover that the remainder of that book is but a series of illustrations of what is there stated.

The judges were extraordinary officers raised up by God, occasionally, by special designation, yet always acting with the free concurrence of the people. While their rule in most instances extended over the whole nation, in some it seems to have been confined to particular tribes only; but so far as their commission reached, they had under God supreme authority. Usually, they were the leaders in the military operations undertaken against the oppressors of Israel; though in some instances they were appointed for the suppression of disorders prevailing among the tribes themselves. Special circumstances alone determined their appointment. Their power was real; yet so far as the inspired record informs us, their habits continued simple. They had no external badge of distinction, received no emolument for their services, and enjoyed no exclusive privileges that were capable of being transmitted to the members of their several families.

The Book of judges is mainly limited to giving us a summary statement of the official acts of these men. There are considerable intervals in respect to which we have no information-possibly because those particular periods were marked by comparative peace and prosperity, during which the worship of Jehovah was maintained and His blessing enjoyed. Of that state of things the Book of Ruth supplies a pleasing illustration. Throughout the whole of this period, the Levitical institutions supplied the people with all the instruction which was necessary for their direction in divine worship and the maintenance of that fellowship with God to which they had been admitted. Nothing in the form of addition was made to the truth

which through the instrumentality of Moses had been disclosed and placed on permanent record. Some were raised up endowed with the gift of prophecy, but they appear to have been few in number, appearing only on rare occasions, their utterances being confined to what concerned the present duty of the people.

Though no new truth was given, nor even any amplification of what had been previously revealed, yet even so, Israel then supplied a striking type of the kingdom of God as it is now revealed under the gospel. They were a people under the immediate government of God, subject to His authority alone, bound together by ties which their relation to Him created, and enjoying the privilege of access to His mercy-seat (through their high priest) for counsel and aid in every emergency. Is it not thus, though in a truer and higher sense, with the saints of this dispensation? The Lord is enthroned in their hearts, His yoke they have freely taken upon them, and whatever distinctions in other respects may exist among them, they are one in fealty to Him and unite in the practical homage which He requires. But Israel understood not their position and appreciated not their advantages. They were discontented, distrustful, stiff-necked, ever forsaking their own mercies.

In one particular respect their outward condition remained defective: they had not yet acquired the full and peaceful possession of their inheritance. Their enemies were still powerful and involved them in perpetual trouble. This, however, was the effect of their own unfaithfulness. Had they resolutely obeyed the voice of the Lord and continued in the task to which He had called them, had they in humble dependence on His power and promised grace fulfilled their instructions, they would soon have realized a state of prosperity equal to all they were warranted to expect (Ps. 81:13-16). But their indolence and unbelief deprived them of blessings which were within their reach. They were unsettled. Their very worship was in a degree as yet provisional-indicated by the removal of the ark of the covenant from place to place. They were content that it should be so, being too carnal minded to really value the peculiar constitution which it was their privilege to enjoy.

Samuel was the last of the judges, and from his time the stream of history flows on in a more continuous course. Received in answer to prayer, he was from his birth consecrated to God. That consecration was graciously accepted, and while yet a child he became the subject of divine communications. Thus early did the Lord indicate the nature of that service in which his life was to be spent. Samuel, we are told, "grew, and the Lord was with him, and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord" (1 Sam. 3:19, 20). At what time he publicly assumed the office of judge we are not directly informed: probably while yet a youth he was understood to be designed thereto, but only in mature life acknowledged in that capacity by the tribes assembled at Mizpeh (1 Sam. 7:6).

Since Moses, no one exercised a more beneficial influence upon Israel, in every respect, than did Samuel. His administration was singularly able and prosperous. When the infirmities of age came upon him, he associated his sons with him in the office, doubtless with the concurrence of the people; but, as so often follows in such a case, the arrangement did not work well. The young men were very different in character from their aged parent, and they acted accordingly: "And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment" (1 Sam. 8:3). The evil course they pursued seems to have been systematic and open, and was publicly felt to be all the more intolerable because of its marked contrast from the integrity which had uniformly marked the official conduct of Samuel himself.

Such scandalous conduct on the part of Samuel's sons caused the people to be loud in their expression of dissatisfaction, which was followed by a demand for which the aged servant of God was not prepared:

"Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah. And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (1 Sam. 8:4, 5). Various considerations incline us to form the conclusion that this proposal was far from being a sudden one on the part of the people. Although Samuel was neither slow nor unsuccessful in repelling the attacks of their enemies, yet his government was, on the whole, a pacific one, such as the condition of the people then called for. While much yet remained to be done for the complete conquest of their inheritance, they were enfeebled by unbelief and all its consequences, and therefore practically unfitted for the work assigned to them.

Time and training were required for their restoration to that state of efficiency on which, humanly speaking, their success depended. This was the result at which the administration of Samuel aimed. But there is reason to believe that his wise policy was anything but agreeable to them. However ill qualified for it, the passion for conquest had sprung up amongst the people. They had become dissatisfied with the occasional military efforts of the judges and, enamored with the regal pomp of the surrounding nations, they formed extravagant expectations of what a vast improvement in their condition the settled rule of a race of kings would produce. This, we take it, is what led up to and lies behind the demand which they made upon Samuel in the present instance.

But the demand involved a marked departure from the constitution which God had established amongst them. Jehovah Himself was their King, and He had given no outward intimation that things should not continue in the observance of those simple arrangements under which their political condition had been settled, with the assurance that the Lord was ever present with them, ready to afford them the counsel and aid which they needed. Their past history, notwithstanding their deep unworthiness, had abundantly proved how promptly and graciously that assurance had been made good. But this state of privilege the people were too earthly to value. In the intention of the mass of the people, the request made to Samuel was a practical renunciation of the theocracy. The demand itself, then, was wrong; and in spirit and purpose it was still more reprehensible.

The demand presented to Samuel indicated an unreasonable dissatisfaction with the divine goodness, and a rejection of the divine claims. In this light it was regarded by God Himself. The Lord said unto Samuel, "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Sam. 8:7). That the change now desired would be ultimately sought was foreseen from the first. An intimation to that effect was given through Moses and accompanied with instructions for the guidance of the people when that event occurred. "When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt," etc. (Deut. 17:14-20).

It is to be duly noted that the terms of the above passage simply anticipated what would assuredly happen: they neither ordered the change itself, nor expressed approval of it. The request made by Israel to Samuel was indeed granted, yet in such a way as to demonstrate the fallacy of the expectations which they had entertained, and to bring with it chastisement for their sin. God gave them their own desire, but mocked their vain hopes. The regal dignity was first conferred on Saul, one possessing the very qualifications which Israel desired: a man after their own heart. He was comely in person, commanding in appearance, just such a one as to suit their carnal tastes. To his appointment some dissatisfaction was at

first shown, but this was speedily silenced by the success of his early actions, and subsequently his election was confirmed at Gilgal with the general concurrence of Israel (1 Sam. 11:15).

But the reign of Saul was a disastrous one. He was grievously defective in those moral and spiritual qualities indispensable to the requirements of his high position. The defects of his character soon became apparent: he proved himself to be rash, self-willed, jealous, and disobedient to the divine command. His administration was marked by injustice and cruelty; disorder and feebleness increased toward the close of his reign, and, forsaken of God, he ultimately perished on the battlefield, where the armies of Israel suffered an ignominious defeat. Sorely wounded, he put an end to his miserable existence by taking his own life. Fearfully humiliating, then, was Israel's punishment for their presumptuous sin. To this sad episode the words of the prophet applied, when through him God said, "I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath" (Hos. 13:11).

II.

How mysterious and yet how perfect are the ways and works of "the Lord God omnipotent" (Rev. 19:6)! He makes all things subservient to His own glory, so directing the affairs of earth as to promote His own gracious designs. Though He be in no sense chargeable with the sins of the creature, yet He maketh "the wrath of man" to praise Him (Ps. 76:10). A striking, solemn, and yet blessed illustration of this appears in that incident of Israel's history which we are now considering—namely, their discontent at having Jehovah Himself for their King, and their demand for a human monarch, that they might be like the heathen nations surrounding them (1 Sam. 8:5). This was most evil and wicked on their part, and as such, highly displeasing unto the Lord, who bade Samuel "protest solemnly unto them" (1 Sam. 8:9). This was followed by God's chastening them by appointing Saul, whose reign was a most disastrous one for Israel.

So much for the human side; but what of the divine? The change now produced in the political constitution of Israel, though sinful in its origin and disastrous in its immediate effects, was in divine mercy overruled to disclose some new aspects of the divine purpose toward our fallen world. It became the means of unfolding by a fresh series of types the future exaltation of the Messiah, the nature and extent of His kingdom, and the beneficial effects of His administration. When the rejection of Saul was definitely intimated, steps were quickly taken under divine direction in the choice of his successor; and in this instance the carnal views of the people were in nowise consulted. God chose a man after His own heart: one whom His grace had prepared, and who in his official character, unlike Saul, would pay implicit deference to every intimation of the divine will.

But before we take a closer view of David himself, let us add a further word to the above upon what brought about the institution of the kingly office in the constitution of Israel. As we have seen, it was a sin for the people to seek a king, yet it was of the Lord that they sought one. This is a deep mystery; yet its underlying principle is being constantly exemplified. God accomplishes His holy counsels by the free actions of sinful men. According to God's sovereign purpose Saul must be made king of Israel; yet in bringing this to pass only the working of natural laws was employed. From the human side it was because the sons of Samuel were corrupt in judging, and in consequence the people had asked him for a king. Had those sons been of the same caliber as their father, the people would have been satisfied and no king would have been requested. It was by His ordinary providential control that God brought this to pass.

In nowise was the divine holiness compromised: the divine decree was accomplished, yet the people acted freely, and the guilt of their action was justly visited upon them. It may be asked, "Why did not

Providence prevent this occasion of sin to His people? Why did His providence lay this stumblingblock before them? If God designed to give them a king, why did He not give them a king in a way that would have presented them with no occasion of rejecting Himself as King? God designed to show that rebellion was in them, and His providence manifests this, even in the way of fulfilling His own purposes, which coincided with theirs. Here is sovereignty" (Alexander Carson). Yes, and here is also infinite wisdom, that can bring to pass His own foreordinations without doing any violence to the responsibility of man, that can guide his evil inclinations, without any complicity therein. But to return to our more immediate inquiry.

At the time David was selected to be the successor of Saul, he was in the bloom of youth-the youngest son of his father's house. Although the intimation given of the high honor awaiting him was too distinct to be missed, it did not produce any injurious effects upon him. He continued to serve Saul as if he had been wholly ignorant of what God had designed. He was not puffed up with his prospects, nor did he give any intimation of a selfish ambition. He never presumed to anticipate by any effort of his own the fulfillment of the divine purpose, but left it entirely with God to effect the same in His own time and way. From Saul himself he received sufficient provocation to have tempted him to pursue an opposite course, but he quietly submitted to God's sovereignty and waited for Him to make good His promise. Well may we seek grace to emulate such becoming meekness and patience.

In due time God fulfilled His word. On the death of Saul, the tribe of Judah anointed David king at Hebron (2 Sam. 2:4), and seven years later, every hindrance having been providentially removed, all the other tribes concurred in his election (2 Sam. 5:3). During the early part of his reign, the attention of David was directed to suppressing the assaults of the Philistines and other enemies. His military operations were most successful, and the foes of Israel were humbled and subdued. On the establishment of peace throughout his kingdom, David's thoughts were directed to the removal of the ark, which had hitherto been migratory, to a settled place in Jerusalem. That city, in its entire extent, had recently come into his possession and had been chosen as the royal residence and the seat of divine worship. The conquering of the promised land, through the divine blessing on his administration, was now in a great measure completed; and David concluded that the time was ripe for him to erect a fixed and permanent habitation for the worship of Jehovah.

He formed the resolution to build a house for the Lord, and made known the same unto the prophet Nathan, by whom he was at first encouraged. But though God approved the thought of David's heart, He would not permit him to give effect to his intentions. That particular honor was reserved for his son and successor, Solomon, although he was not then born. The reason for this is expressly stated: God said to him, "Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars; thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight" (1 Chron. 22:8). This statement does not mean that the wars in which David had engaged were unauthorized and sinful; on the contrary, they were undertaken by divine orders, and their success was often secured by signal manifestations of God's interposition. But that aspect of the divine character revealed in those events was different from that which worship mainly disclosed; therefore, there had been an evident incongruity in one who had shed so much blood erecting a house for the God of mercy and grace.

By the intended house of prayer, symbolic instruction was designed to be conveyed, and in order for that to be accomplished, peaceful conditions were required in association with its erection. Accordingly Nathan was sent to David to prohibit the accomplishment of his design. The divine message, however, was accompanied with the most striking assurances of the favor of God toward himself. After reminding David of the humble condition from which he had been taken to be ruler over Israel, and of the invariable proofs

of the divine presence and blessing which had attended all his enterprises, the prophet declared, "The Lord telleth thee that he will make thee a house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever" (2 Sam. 7:11-16).

It is pitiable that any should raise a quibble that because there is no express mention here of any "covenant" being made, therefore we are not warranted in so regarding this event. It is true we have no formal account of any sacrifices being offered in connection with it, no express figurative ratification of it, such as we find attending every similar transaction of which mention is made in Scripture. But the silence observed on this point is no proof that no such formality took place. The legitimate inference rather is that those observances were so customary on such occasions, and were so well understood, as to make any specific allusion to them here quite unnecessary. However, that it was a true covenant is evident from the distinct and frequent mention of it under this very designation in other passages.

That the great transaction narrated in 2 Samuel 7 was thus regarded by David himself as a covenant is clear from his own declaration: "Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire" (2 Sam. 23:5). When was it that God made this everlasting covenant with David, if not in the place which we are now considering? But what is still more to the point, the Lord Himself refers to the same as a covenant, as we may see from His response to Solomon's prayer: "If thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt observe my statutes and my judgments; then will I establish the throne of thy kingdom according as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel" (2 Chron. 7:17, 18). With these statements before us, we cannot doubt that this divine transaction with David was a true covenant, even though there is no formal record of its ratification.

That the Davidic covenant constituted another of those remarkable revelations which at different times distinguished the history of the Jewish people, a cursory examination of its contents is sufficient to show. Like every similar transaction which occurred during the Old Testament era, it has certain typical aspects which were the figures of higher spiritual blessings. Those had special reference to David and his family. He was, for instance, assured that the temple should be built by his immediate successor, and that his family was destined to occupy a prominent place in the future history of Israel, and that the regal dignity conferred upon him should be perpetuated in his descendants so long, at least, as they did not by their sins forfeit the earthly advantages those secured to them. Those temporal promises were the ground on which the covenant rested, and were the elements which expanded into richer spiritual blessings in the distant future.

Viewed in relationship to the more spiritual results, David affirmed that the covenant was "ordered in all things, and sure" (2 Sam. 23:5). Against every possible contingency provision was made; nothing should ever prevail to defeat the fulfillment of those promises. Even the sins of the individuals of his race, though they would certainly meet with righteous punishment and might terminate in the ruin of those who committed them and in the permanent depression of the family, (as in fact they did), would not annul them. It is with these higher aspects of the Davidic covenant we shall be chiefly concerned. From them we may

gather the true nature of the solemn engagements it contained, and estimate the addition made by it to the sum of revealed truth-the increased light which it shed on the scheme of divine mercy, then in the course of disclosure.

The substance of the information conveyed by this covenant had reference to the exaltation, kingdom, and glory of the Messiah. Hints of a similar kind, though few, obscure, and isolated, are certainly to be found in the previous portions of Scripture, the most striking of which is the intimation given through Jacob, that "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. 49:10). But those hints were then, and up to the time of David, very imperfectly, if at all, understood, even by the most spiritually minded of the people. They do not seem to have attracted notice; now, however, they were concentrated in and amplified with far greater distinctness through the promises of the Davidic covenant. For the first time the regal dignity of the Messiah was exhibited, which, especially when enlarged by the later prophetic representations, the Jews were not slow to interpret in accord with their carnal ideas.

Thus far all has been, comparatively, plain sailing; but when we come to the actual interpretation of the promises made to David in 2 Samuel 7, real difficulty is encountered. Those which relate particularly to the ultimate design of the covenant require a much closer examination, and when attempting it a reference to other passages treating of the same subject will be essential. But before entering these deeper waters, let it be pointed out that, by the terms of this covenant a further and distinct limitation was given as to the actual line from which the promised Seed should spring. In the progress of divine revelation, the channel through which the future Deliverer should issue was, at successive periods, considerably narrowed. Though this has often been traced out by others, it is too important and interesting for us to ignore.

The first prediction, recorded in Genesis 3:15, was couched in the most general form, simply intimating that the Vanquisher of the serpent would assume humanity, though supernaturally. On the destruction of the old world, the promise was renewed to Noah, together with an intimation that it would be through Seth its fulfillment should take place (Gen. 9:27). A further step forward was taken when Abraham was chosen as the progenitor of Him in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed. His descendants, in the line of Isaac, on whom the promise was entailed, were, however, so numerous that no definite view could be taken as to the precise quarter from which its fulfillment might be looked for. Subsequently, the tribe of Judah was indicated, but this being one of the most numerous of the tribes, the same indefiniteness, though in a less degree, would exist as to the particular family on whom this honor was to be conferred.

Time rolled on, and now the family of David was selected as the medium through which the promise was to take effect. To that family the longings of all who looked for the Hope of Israel was henceforth restricted, and greater facility was thereby afforded for obtaining the requisite proof of the claims of the Messiah when He should appear. Thus, by a succession of steps God defined the course through which His gracious purpose would be wrought out, and with increasing distinctness concentrated the attention of the faithful toward the true direction in which the divine promise would be realized; the last limitation possessing a definiteness to which none of the others could lay claim.

(In these two chapters we have followed closely John Kelly in his work [1861] on The Divine Covenants.)

III.

We closed the previous chapter by pointing out the successive steps by which God gradually made known the counsels of His will which were to eventuate in the advent and incarnation of His Son. Under the

Davidic covenant, the royal dignity of the Messiah was for the first time definitely revealed. It should however be pointed out that a remarkable anticipation of this was given through the inspired song of Hannah, recorded in 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Therein we find a blessed blending of the typical with the prophetic, whereby the former pointed forward to things of a similar nature but of higher and wider importance. In other words, typical transactions supplied the material for a prediction of something analogous yet much loftier and grander in kind. The future was anticipated by present incidents, so ordered by God as to foreshadow gospel verities, the historical thus serving as a mold to give prophetic shape to the future things of God's kingdom.

Hannah's song was evoked, under the moving of the Holy Spirit, by the birth of Samuel. The spiritual life of Israel was then at a very low ebb. The natural barrenness which had previously characterized Hannah adumbrated the sterility of the nation Godward. The provocation which she received from "her adversary" and which provoked her sorely (1 Sam. 1:5) was a figure of the contempt in which Israel was held by her foes, the surrounding nations. The feebleness of Eli and his lack of discernment imaged the decrepitude of the religious leaders in general: "in those days there was no open vision" (1 Sam. 3:1). The corruptness of Eli's sons and the readiness of the people to offer them bribes indicates clearly the sad level to which conditions had sunk. Such, in brief, is a historical outline of the situation at that time, typically featured in the items we have mentioned.

The gratitude and joy of Hannah when the Lord opened her womb served as a suitable occasion for the Spirit to utter through her the prophetic song alluded to above. Deeply moved at having received the child of her hopes and prayers, which she had devoted from his birth as a Nazarite to the Lord's service, her soul was stirred by a prophetic impulse and her vision enlarged to perceive that her experience in becoming a mother was a sign of the spiritual fruitfulness of the true Israel of God in the distant future. Under that prophetic impulse she took a comprehensive survey of the general scheme of God, observing that gracious sovereignty which delights to exalt a humble piety, but which pours contempt on the proud and rebellious, until in the final crescendo she exclaimed, "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them; the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed" (1 Sam. 2:10).

Remarkable indeed is that language. The final words "his anointed" are literally "his Messiah" or "Christ." This is the first time in Holy Writ that that blessed title is found in its most distinctive sense, though as we all know it occurs hundreds of times afterward as the synonym for the consecrated King, or Head of the divine kingdom. The other expressions in the same verse "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces" and "the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth" show that it was of the Messiah's kingdom that Hannah was moved by the Holy Spirit to speak. How striking, then, is it to see that the historical features of Hannah's day possessed an undoubted typical significance, and that they formed the basis of a prophecy which was to receive its fulfillment in the distant future! This supplies a valuable key to many of the later Messianic predictions.

Any possible doubt as to the prophetic purport of Hannah's song is at once removed by a comparison of the "Magnificat" uttered by Mary at the announcement of the Messiah's birth (see Luke 1:46-55). It is indeed striking to find how the Virgin reechoed the same sentiments and in some instances repeated the very words used by the mother of Samuel a thousand years previously. "Why should the Spirit, breathing at such a time in the soul of Mary, have turned her thoughts so nearly into the channel that had been struck out ages before by the pious Hannah? Or why should the circumstances connected with the birth of Hannah's Nazarite offspring have proved the occasion of strains which so distinctly pointed to the

manifestation of the King o-f Glory, and so closely harmonize with those actually sung in celebration of the event? Doubtless to mark the connection really subsisting between the two. It is the Spirit's own intimation of His ultimate design in transactions long since past, and testimonies delivered centuries before-namely, to herald the advent of Messiah, and familiarize the children of the kingdom with the essential character of the coming dispensation" (P. Fairbairn).

The combination of typical history with prophetic utterance which we observe in Hannah's song is seen again and again in the later Scripture, where the predictive feature is more extended and the typical element in the transactions which gave rise to it more definite. Such is especially the case with the Messianic psalms, which being of a lyrical character afforded a freer play of the emotions than could be suitably introduced into more formal prophecy. But this, in turn, had its basis in the intimate connection there was between the present and the future, so that the feelings awakened by the one naturally incorporated themselves into the delineations of the other. It was the very institutions of the temporal kingdom in the person and family of David which constituted both the ground and occasion of the predictions concerning Christ's future kingdom, and how beautifully the type prefigured the antitype it will be our delight yet to notice.

The introduction of the royal scepter into the hands of an Israelitish family produced a radical change in the theocracy, one that was calculated to draw the attention of the people more to the earthly and visible, and remove their minds from the heavenly and eternal. The constitution under which Jehovah, through Moses, had placed them, though it did not absolutely prohibit the appointing of a king, yet was of such a character that it seemed far more likely to suffer than be aided by the allowing of what would consist so largely of the human element. Till the time of Samuel it was strictly a theocracy: a commonwealth that had no recognized head but the Lord Himself, and which placed everything that concerned life and well-being under His immediate government. It was the distinguishing glory of Israel as a nation that they stood in this near relation to God, evoking that outburst of praise from Moses: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. . . . Happy art thou, O Israel: who like thee, O people saved by the Lord: the shield of thy help" (Deut. 33:27, 29).

But alas! Israel were far too carnal to appreciate the peculiar favor God had shown them, as was made evident when they sought to be like the Gentiles by having a human king of their own. That was tantamount to saying they no longer desired that Jehovah should be their immediate sovereign, that they lusted after a larger measure of self-government. But this was not the only evil likely to result from the proposed change. "Everything under the Old Covenant bore reference to the future and more perfect dispensation of the Gospel; and the ultimate reason of any important feature or material change in respect to the former, can never be understood without taking into account the bearing it might have on the future state and prospects of men under the Gospel. But how could any change in the constitution of ancient Israel, and especially such a change as the people contemplated, when they desired a king after the manner of the Gentiles, be adopted without altering matters in this respect to the worst.

"The dispensation of the Gospel was to be, in a peculiar sense, the 'kingdom of heaven' or of God, having for its high end and aim the establishment of a near and blessed intercourse between God and man. It attains to its consummation when the vision seen by St. John, and described after the pattern of the constitution actually set up in the wilderness, comes into fulfillment-when 'the tabernacle of God is with men, and He dwells with them.' Of this consummation it was a striking and impressive image that was presented in the original structure of the Israelitish commonwealth, wherein God Himself sustained the office of king, and had His peculiar residence and appropriate manifestations of glory in the midst of His

people. And when they, in their carnal affection for a worldly institute, clamored for an earthly sovereign, they not only discovered a lamentable indifference toward what constituted their highest honor, but betrayed also a want of discernment and faith in regard to God's prospective and ultimate design in connection with their provisional economy" (P. Fairbairn).

In view of what has been before us, it is not to be wondered at that God manifested His displeasure at the fleshly demand for a human king, and that He declared to Samuel that the nation had thereby virtually rejected Himself (1 Sam. 8:7). It is but natural that we should inquire why, then, did the Lord yield to their evil desire? Ali, wondrous indeed are the ways of Him with whom we have to do: the very thing which the people, in their sin, lusted after, served to supply on a lower plain a striking adumbration of the nature and glory which Christ's kingdom should yet assume on a higher plane. It was the eternal purpose of God that He would ultimately entrust the rule of the universe unto the Man of His own right hand! Thus the divine procedure on this occasion supplies one of the most striking instances found in all the Old Testament of the overruling providence of God, whereby He is able to bring a clean thing out of an unclean.

God not only averted the serious damage which Israel's demands threatened to do unto the theocracy, but He turned it to good account, in familiarizing the minds of future generations with what was designed to constitute the grand feature of the Messianic kingdom, namely, the Son of God assuming human nature. After the people had been solemnly admonished for their guilt in the appointing of a king after their worldly principles, they were permitted to raise one of their number to the throne, though not as an absolute and independent sovereign, but as the deputy of Jehovah, ruling in the name and in subordination to the will of God; and for this reason his throne was called "the throne of the Lord" (1 Chron. 29:23). But to render His purpose the more evident to those who had eyes to see, the Lord allowed the earthly throne to be first occupied by one who was little disposed to submit to the authority of heaven, and was therefore supplanted by another who, as God's representative, is over thirty times called His "servant."

It was in this second person, David, that the kingly administration of Israel properly began. He was the root and foundation of the earthly kingdom-as a "kingdom" --in which the divine and the human were officially united, as they were ultimately to be in a hypostatic or personal union. Most remarkably did the shaping providence of God cause the preparatory and typical to shadow forth the ultimate and antitypical, making the various trials through which David passed ere he reached the throne, and the conflicts in which he engaged subsequently, to prefigure throughout the sufferings, work, and kingdom of the Messiah. A whole volume might well be devoted to a full amplification of that statement, showing how, in the broad outlines, the entire history of David possessed a typical significance, so that it was really a prophetic panorama. The same principle applies with equal force to many of his psalms, where we find historical events turned into sacred songs in such a way that they became predictions of what was to be realized by Christ on a grander scale.

It was in this way that what had otherwise tended to veil the purpose of God, and obstruct the principal design of His preparations under the old covenant, was made to be one of the most effective means for revealing and promoting it. "The earthly head, that now under God stood over the members of the commonwealth, instead of overshadowing His authority, only presented this more distinctly to their view, and served as a stepping-stone to faith, in enabling it to rise nearer to the apprehension of that personal indwelling of Godhead, which was to constitute the foundation and the glory of the Gospel dispensation. For occasion was taken to unfold the more glorious future in its practical features with an air of individuality and distinctness, with a variety of detail and vividness of coloring, not to be met with in any other portions of prophetic Scripture" (P. Fairbairn).

As an illustration of this combination of typical history with prophecy, we refer to Psalm 2--which we hope to consult again in a later chapter. It has been termed "an inaugural hymn" designed to celebrate the appointment and triumph of Jehovah's King. The heathen nations are pictured as opposing (vv. 1, 2), as vowing together that if such an appointment was consummated, they would defy it (v. 3). Notwithstanding, the Most High, disdaining the threats of such puny adversaries (v. 4), accomplishes His counsel. The everlasting decree goes forth that the anointed King is established on Zion; and, because He is God's own Son, He is made the heir of all things, even to the uttermost limits of the earth (vv. 5-9). The psalm therefore closes with a call to earth's rulers to submit to the scepter of the King of kings, warning them of the sure doom that would follow defiance.

Before pointing out the obvious connection of this psalm with the life and history of David, let us carefully note the entire absence of any slavish literality. In his elevation to the throne of Israel, David was not opposed by heathen nations and their rulers, for they probably knew little and certainly cared less about it. Again, his being anointed king certainly did not synchronize with his being set on the holy hill of Zion, for there was an interval of some years between them. Moreover, when he was established in the kingdom, there is no record of his pressing the claims of his dominion on other, monarchs, demanding that they pay allegiance to him. We emphasize these points, not to suggest there is any failure in the type, but as a warning against that modern species of literalism which so often reduces Scripture to an absurdity.

Shall we, then, go to an opposite extreme, and say there is no real relation between this Messianic psalm and the life and kingdom of David? Surely not. Certainly it has, and a relation so close that his experiences were the beginning of what, on a higher plane and on a larger scale, was to be accomplished in his Son and Lord. While the language there employed for celebrating the Messianic King and His kingdom rises high above the experiences which pertain to His prototype, yet it bears the impress of them. In both alike we see the sovereign determination on the part of God to the regal office. In each case there is opposition of the most violent and heathenish kind to withstand that appointment--in David's case, first on the part of Saul, and then of Abner and Ishbosheth. In each case we behold the slow but sure removal of all the obstacles raised against the purpose of God, and the extension of the sphere of empire till it reaches the limits of the divine grant. The lines of history are parallel, the agreement between type and antitype unmistakable.

IV.

We recently saw an article which was headed "Humility and the Second Advent"; but after reading through the same, we laid it down with a feeling of disappointment. We had hoped from its title that the writer of it (quite unknown to us) would emphasize the deep need for lowliness of heart when taking up the prophetic Scriptures. God's holy Word ought ever to be approached with great reverence and sobriety, but particularly is this the case with prophecy, for on no other subject (except it be the vexed question of church government) have God's servants differed more widely than in their views of things to come. It seems as though God has put not a little into His Word for the express purpose of staining human pride. Certainly, dogmatism ill becomes any of us where so many have erred.

We dare not say it is in a spirit of true humility that we now take up our pen, for the heart is very deceitful, and it generally follows that when we deem ourselves most humble, pride is at work in its subtlest form. It is, however, with considerable diffidence that we continue these chapters on the Davidic covenant, for it presents to me the most difficult aspect of the whole subject. Possibly this is because of my early training, for it is never an easy matter to get quite away from our first thoughts and impressions on a subject.

During the years of our spiritual infancy we heard and read nothing but the premillennial interpretation of prophecy, and, of course (as a spiritual child), we readily accepted all that our teachers said. But for the last decade, we have sought to carefully examine what was taught us, and we have discovered that, some of it at least, was but "fairy tales."

Common fairness compelled us to weigh the postmillennial view. In doing so, we recognized a very real danger of allowing our mind to run to an opposite extreme. We are free to admit that, upon a number of important points this system of prophetic interpretation is no more satisfying to us than the "pre"; and therefore at the present time we are not prepared to commit ourselves to the entire position of either the one or the other. Nor does that which is known as amillennialism completely solve the problems. In other words, we now have no definite ideas concerning coming events, applying to ourselves those words of the Lord, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:7). But this makes it the more difficult to write on our subject, and we can do so only according to that measure of light which God has vouchsafed us, urging our readers to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21).

We seem to be fully warranted in saying that what serves to divide interpreters of prophecy more than anything else is whether its language is to be taken literally or figuratively. This, of course, opens a wide and most important field of study, into which we must not now enter. Yet we cannot forbear from pointing out that--it certainly seems to me--we have a most solemn warning in the papist perversion of the Lord's Supper, of the real danger there is of wresting Scripture at the very time we appear to honor it (by "childlike" faith and simplicity) in taking it at its face value. If Rome's insistence that "this is my body" means just what it says, shows us what serious results follow when mistaking the emblem for the reality which it represents, ought not this to serve as a very real check against the gross carnalizations of chiliasm which literalizes what is spiritual and makes earthly what is heavenly?

The above remarks have been prompted by the promises contained in the Davidic covenant, recorded in 2 Samuel 7:11-16. In view of all that has been before us in connection with the preceding covenants, it is but reasonable to expect that this one too has both a "letter" and a "spirit" significance. This expectation is, we believe, capable of clear demonstration: in their primary and inferior aspects those promises respected Solomon and his immediate successors, but in their ultimate and higher meaning they looked forward to Christ and His kingdom. In the account which David gave to the princes of Israel of the divine communications he had received concerning the throne, he affirmed that God said unto him, "Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his Father" (1 Chron. 28:6). Yet the application of the same words to Christ Himself-- "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son" (Heb. 1:5) --leaves us in no doubt as to their deeper spiritual import.

The thrice occurrence of "for ever" in 2 Samuel 7:13, 16 obliges us to look beyond the natural posterity of David for the ultimate accomplishment of those promises. God did indeed set the carnal seed of David upon the throne of Israel and establish his kingdom, though certainly not unto all generations. Those who have contended that this covenant of royalty guaranteed to David the occupancy of his throne by one of his own descendants until the coming of the Messiah, take a position which it is impossible to defend--the facts of history flatly contradict them. David transmitted the kingdom of Israel to Solomon, and he in turn to Rehoboam, but there the reign of the family of David over all Israel actually (and so far as I perceive, forever) ceased. Let us enlarge upon this a little.

Rehoboam, by the haughtiness of his bearing and the cruelty of his measures, forfeited the attachment of his subjects. Ten of the tribes revolted unto Jeroboam, being completely dissevered from their brethren, and were never after recovered to their government. Thus, the reign of David's family over all Israel lasted, from beginning to end, at most but three generations, or about a century. Over Judah alone, his descendants continued to reign for several centuries more, until, at length Nebuchadnezzar invaded and conquered the nation, destroyed Jerusalem, burned the temple, carried the people into captivity, and desolated the whole land. With this overthrow, which occurred some six centuries before the birth of Christ, ended the reign of David even over the tribe of Judah. His literal throne exists no more!

It is true that after the Babylonian captivity, which continued seventy years, a remnant of the people returned and for another century Judah was ruled by Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. The first of these was of the house of David, but both the others belonged to the tribe of Levi! None of them, however, were kings in any sense, but merely governed under foreign authority. During the next two centuries Judah was governed by their high priests, all of whom pertained to the house of Aaron! Meanwhile, the nation was tributary successively to the Persians, Greeks, Egyptians, and Syrians. From the close of this period, until Judea became a Roman province under Herod, when Christ was born, the Jews were under the government of the Asmonian family, known as the Maccabees, all of whom belonged to the priestly tribe. History, then, manifestly refutes that interpretation of the Davidic covenant which asserts that it promised David that his natural seed should reign upon his literal throne until Christ appeared. We are therefore forced to seek another interpretation.

Before considering the spiritual and higher import of the divine promises in the Davidic covenant, further attention must be given to their application unto David's natural descendants, and particularly in connection with their failures; and here we cannot do better than quote from P. Fairbairn. "On that prophecy (2 Sam. 7:5-17), as on a sure foundation, a whole series of predictions began to be announced, in which the eye of faith was pointed to the bright visions in prospect, and, in particular, to that Child of promise, in whom the succession from David's loins was to terminate, and who was to reign forever over the heritage of God. But while the appointment itself was absolute, and the original prophecy was so far of the same character, that it indicated no suspension in the sovereignty of David's house, or actual break in the succession to his throne, David himself knew perfectly that there was an implied condition, which might render such a thing possible, and that the prophecy behooved to be read in the light of those great principles which pervade the whole of the Divine economy.

"Hence, in addition to all he had penned in his Psalms, he gave forth in his dying testimony, for the special benefit of his seed, a description of the ruler, such as the Word of promise contemplated, and such as ought to have been, at least, generally realized in those who occupied the throne of his kingdom: 'he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God' (2 Sam. 23:3). Not only so, but in his last and still more specific charge, delivered to his immediate successor on the throne, he expressly rested his expectation of the fulfillment of the covenant made with him, on the faithful adherence of those who should follow him to the law and testimony of God. For after enjoining Solomon to walk in the ways and keep the statutes of God, he adds as a reason for persuading to such a course, 'that the Lord may continue His word, which He spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way to walk before Me in truth, with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee a man on the throne of Israel' (1 Kings 2:4).

"But when this fundamental condition was violated, as it began to be in the time of Solomon himself, the prophetic word became, in a manner, responsive to the change; so that now it spoke almost in the same

language respecting the house of David, which had formerly been addressed to that of Saul--'I will rend the kingdom from thee, and give it to thy servant:' 1 Kings 11:11 compared with 1 Samuel 15:28; coupled only with the reservation that so much was still to be left to the house of David as was needed for maintaining the essential provisions of the covenant. Even this, however, appeared for a time to give way; the inveterate folly and wickedness of the royal line called forth such visitations of judgment, that the stately and glorious house of David, as it appears in the original prophecy, came afterwards to look like a frail tabernacle, and even this at a still future stage, as fallen prostrate to the ground--according to the figure in Amos 9:11.

"In consequence of these changes, darkness settled down on the hearts of God's people, and fearful misgivings arose in their minds concerning the faithfulness of God to His covenant engagements. The painful question was stirred in their bosoms, 'Has His promise failed for evermore?' The thought even escaped from their lips, 'He has made void the covenant of His servant.' The whole Psalm from which these words are taken (the 89th), is a striking record of the manner in which faith had to struggle with such doubts and perplexities, when the house of David was (for a time) cast down from its excellency, and God's plighted word, like the ark of His covenant, seemed to be given up into the hands of His enemies.

"God, however, vindicated in due time the truthfulness of His word, and the certainty of the result which it contemplated. The prophecy stood fast as regarded the grand article of its provisions--only in travelling on to its accomplishment, it had to pass through apparent defections and protracted delays, which could scarcely have been anticipated from the terms of its original announcement, and which were, in a sense, forced on it by human unbelief and waywardness. And so, within certain definite limits--those, namely, which connected the Divine promise with the sphere of man's responsibility, and bore on the time and mode of its fulfillment--it might justly be said to carry a conditional element in its bosom, in respect to those whom it more immediately concerned; while still, from first to last, the great purpose which it enshrined, varied not and continued to be, as a determinate counsel of Heaven, without shadow of turning."

We must not here anticipate too much what we hope to yet take up in detail, but in bringing this chapter to a close it is pertinent to point out that, in view of what was before us in the previous chapter--on the terms of Messianic prophecy being cast, more or less, in the mold of the typical history of Israel--we surely should not repeat the mistake of the carnal Jews, who expected Christ to sit on an earthly throne. When Old Testament prediction announced that the Messiah was to occupy the throne and kingdom of David, was it not intimated that He was to rule over God's heritage, and accomplish spiritually and perfectly what His prototype did but temporally and partially namely, bring deliverance, security, and everlasting blessing to the people of God? In view of the divine personality of the Messianic King and the worldwide extent of His kingdom, all of necessity rises to a higher plane, Immanuel's reign must be of another order than that of the son of Jesse--spiritual, heavenly, eternal.

It should be quite obvious to those who are really acquainted with the earlier Scriptures that, in keeping with the character and times of the old covenant, any representation then made of Christ's throne and kingdom would, in the main at least, be of a figurative and symbolic nature, exhibited under the veil of the typical images supplied by Israel's commonwealth and history. It was thus that all the "better" things of the new covenant were shadowed forth. The immeasurable superiority of Christ's person over all who were His types compels us to look for a far grander and nobler discharge of His offices than which pertained unto them. It is true there is a resemblance between Christ as prophet and Moses (Deut. 18:18); nevertheless the contrast is far more evident (Heb. 3:3, 5). It is true that there is an agreement between Christ as priest and Melchizedek and Aaron (Heb. 5:1-5; 7:21); nevertheless the antitype far excels them

(Rev. 5:6, etc.). So the throne He sits on and the kingdom He administers is infinitely higher than any that David or Solomon ever occupied (Heb. 2:9; 1:3). Beware of degrading the divine King to the level of human ones!

The Lord of glory no more stood (or stands) in need of any outward enthronement or local seat of government on earth, in order to prove His title to David's kingdom, than He required any physical "anointing" to constitute Him priest forever, or a material altar for the due presentation of His sacrifice to God. As another has well said, "Being the Son of the living God, and as such, the Heir of all things, He possessed from the first all the powers of the kingdom, and proved that He possessed them by every word He uttered, every work of deliverance He performed, every judgment He pronounced, every act of mercy and forgiveness He dispensed, and the resistless control He wielded over the elements of nature and the realms of the dead. These were the signs of royalty He bore about with Him upon earth; and wonderful though they were, eclipsing in real grandeur all the glory of David and Solomon, they were still but the earlier preludes of that peerless majesty which David described from afar when he saw Him, as the Lord, seated in royal state at His Father's right hand."

V.

In the preceding chapter we pointed out that in view of all which has been before us in connection with the earlier covenants, it is but reasonable to expect that the Davidic one also has both a "letter" and "spirit" significance. This expectation is, we believe, capable of clear demonstration: in their primary and inferior aspects the promises in 2 Samuel 7:11-16 respected Solomon and his immediate successors, but in their higher and ultimate meaning, they looked forward to Christ and His kingdom. And is not this fact evident from the immediate sequel? Does not that which is recorded in 2 Samuel 7:18-25 plainly intimate that David himself was enabled to perceive the spiritual purport of those promises, that they had to do with Christ Himself? There is not a doubt in my mind that such was the case, and we shall now endeavor to make this clear to the reader.

"Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord" (2 Sam. 7:18). His posture was, we think, indicative of the earnest consideration which David was giving to the message he had just received. As he pondered the divine promises and surveyed the wondrous riches of divine grace toward him, he burst forth in self-effacing and Godhonoring language: "And he said, 'Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?'" (v. 18). Why, his "house" pertained to the royal tribe: he was the direct descendant of the prince of Judah, so that he was connected with one of the most honorable families in all Israel. Yes, but such fleshly distinctions were now held very lightly by him. "Brought me hitherto": why, he had been brought to the throne itself, and given rest from all his enemies (7:1). Yes, but these faded into utter insignificance before the far greater things of which Nathan had prophesied.

"And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of men, O Lord God? And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant" (vv. 19, 20). Here again we see the effect which the Lord's message had wrought upon the mind of David. "He beheld in spirit another Son than Solomon, another Temple than one built of stones and cedar, another Kingdom than the earthly one, on whose throne he sat. He perceived a sceptre and a crown of which his own on mount Zion were only feeble types—dim and shadowy manifestations" (Krummacher's David and the Godman). That the patriarch David understood the whole of those promises to receive their fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ, is evident from his next utterance.

"For thy Word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant to know them" (v. 21). The reference was to the personal Word, Him of whom it is declared, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1); and "according to thine own heart" meant according to God's gracious counsels. That David was not referring to God's spoken or written Word is evident from the fact that nothing of the kind had been uttered to him before, while of the written Word there was no Scripture then extant which predicted Christ, either personal or mystical, under the similitude of a "house." Let it be duly noted that all later references in Scripture to Christ under this figure are borrowed from and based upon this very passage. Unto Da

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