

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCURACY IN THE STUDY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

“ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” The last five words of this declaration are represented by only one word in the Greek, Θεόπνευστος (*theopneustos*), which means literally, “God breathed”. All Scripture is God-breathed—God-inspired. When, therefore, we are dealing with Scripture, how important it is that we should be most accurate in noticing each single word which God has inspired, however small or apparently unimportant.

Inspiration must be regarded by us as a fact, a great, grand and blessed fact to be believed and received, and not a system to be constructed or described. It is a fact which (as Gaussen says) is denied in its existence, in its universality, and in its plenitude. Some deny that there is any such thing at all, some deny that the whole of Scripture is inspired, admitting only certain parts so to be; while others, granting that the whole is inspired, deny that it is fully so, admitting it as regards the sense, but not the words. With these I do not propose to deal. I am addressing those who, I trust, are depending on the faithfulness of God’s word of promise for their salvation, and who extend the same confidence to all the other “words which the Holy Ghost teacheth”. In fact, we may divide people into two great classes with regard to their treatment of the Bible:

1. Those who put the Bible above everything.
2. Those who put something above the Bible.

The first say “the Scripture cannot be broken”. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away”. They have respect to the “jot and tittle”, and thus treat the Scriptures as Christ and His apostles treated them. The second say that they, although they are only human judges, are lawfully entitled to sit in judgment upon Scripture, and actually do put something above it. The Jews put their Targums and Talmud above it, and “make void the Word of God by their tradition”. Romanists put the Church and tradition above it. Philosophers and scientists put poor human reason above it. Mystics and

others such as the Swedenborgians, Mormons, and Shakers put new revelations above it, professing to have received them from heaven.

As disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, we say, with one of old, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth"—"The law of the Lord is perfect".

The command to disciples or learners is "Search". "Search the Scriptures" (John v. 39). Let us see what we may learn from noting accurately the meaning of the word here translated "Search"—ἐρευνᾶω (*ereunao*). It means to trace out, to track, to follow or scent out as a dog or a lion; hence, to notice a word, follow it out, see how it is used elsewhere, trace it and track it out in all its usages, and thus learn the mind of the Spirit and the will of God. There is another word used in Acts xvii. 11, where it says of the Jews of Berea, "These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind and searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so". The word here is ἀνακρίνω (*anakrino*), and it means to divide up; hence, to estimate carefully, judge of or sift, and it shows us how, if it be an apostle speaking, or even an angel from heaven, we are to go to the Word of God, compare it with what He has said, and judge of it accordingly. Then will it be true of us, as it is written of them—"Therefore many of them believed".

Here we have at once, at the outset, a beautiful example of what we may learn by observing accurately the very words that are employed. "Thy word is Truth". It will bear any amount of investigation or searching because it is Divine. No human mind can ever "by searching" exhaust the fulness of the word of God. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

If we study a book written by man, a mind of equal power can exhaust it and fathom it. When it has done this, there is nothing more it can do. But the Bible is God-breathed, infinite wisdom has indited it, and who then can ever say he has exhausted it? There is just the same analogy between Divine and human works. God's works will bear any amount of investigation, whether by microscope or telescope. The higher the power the more shall we see and learn. Not so man's. His works are like his words. A lens of higher power than that used

by the engraver or the photographer makes manifest the coarseness of the material and of the work; and the higher the power the more are the imperfections and defects made manifest. We cannot bring study too close, or accuracy too exact, or investigation too searching. "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth purified seven times." "Every word of God is pure." They are not "the words which man's wisdom teacheth but which the Holy Ghost teacheth", and hence, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned".

In this respect the Bible may be likened to a sun-dial. Earthly lights may bring out the beauties of its structure, its carving, its inlaid work or its decoration: but they cannot show us the one thing for which it exists—they cannot tell us the time of the day! No earthly light can do that, no candle, lamp or gas, not even the most brilliant electric light. Nothing but heaven's light can show us the hour. So it is with the Word of God. Mere human learning and knowledge can bring out its beauties of language and throw light upon its geography, history or antiquities; but they cannot tell us the one thing which it was given to reveal—"the mind of God". The wisest "natural man" cannot discern the true time—the meaning of God's word. Nothing but heaven's light—the Spirit of God—can reveal it. "He that is spiritual discerneth it." Happy they who can say, "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God".

The prayer of the disciple now is—"Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law". (Ps. cxix. 18.)

The promise is—"I will instruct thee and teach thee". (Ps. xxxii. 8.)

The performance is—"Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the scriptures". (Luke xxiv. 45.)

I wish now to show by example, as I have already done by precept, how important it is that we should be accurate in our reading, and study and teaching of God's word. I propose first to give some examples where difficulties are thereby removed, and then some which are profitable for "instruction". Instead

of seeking at random for examples, it will serve a double purpose if I take some, just as they are presented to us in an article on "Stephen" by Dean Stanley in Dr. Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, because I am not aware that they have been hitherto noticed as a whole. Speaking of what is called, and known as STEPHEN'S SPEECH, which is contained in Acts vii., Dean Stanley says— "No less than twelve of his references to the Mosaic History differ from it, either by variation or addition—

1. The call of Abraham before the migration to Haran (Acts vii. 2) not, as according to Gen. xii. 1, in Haran.
2. The death of his Father after the call (vii. 4), not, as according to Gen. xi. 32, before it.
3. The seventy-five souls of Jacob's migration (vii. 14), not, as according to Gen. xlv. 27, seventy.
4. The godlike loveliness (ἀστεῖος τῷ Θεῷ) of Moses (vii. 20), not simply, as according to Ex. ii. 2, the statement that he was a goodly child.
5. His Egyptian education (vii. 22) as contrasted with the silence on this point in Ex. iv. 10.
6. The same contrast with regard to his secular greatness, 'mighty in words and deeds' (vii. 22, compare Ex. ii. 10).
7. The distinct mention of the three periods of 40 years (vii. 23, 30, 36) of which only the last is specified in the Pentateuch.
8. The terror of Moses at the bush (vii. 32), not mentioned in Ex. iii. 3.
9. The supplementing of the Mosaic narrative by the allusions in Amos to their neglect of the true worship in the desert (vii. 42, 43).
10. The intervention of the angels in the giving of the law (vii. 53) not mentioned in Ex. xix. 16.
11. The burial of the twelve Patriarchs at Shechem (vii. 16), not mentioned in Ex. i. 6.
12. The purchase of the tomb at Shechem by Abraham from the sons of Emmor (vii. 16), not, as according to Gen. xxiii. 15, the purchase of the cave at Machpelah from Ephron the Hittite.

To which may be added—

13. The introduction of Remphan from the LXX. of Amos v. 26, not found in the Hebrew.

It is significant as showing the freedom with which he handled the sacred history, and the comparative unimportance assigned by him and by the sacred historian who records his speech to minute accuracy. It may be said that the whole speech is a protest against a rigid view of the mechanical exactness of the inspired records of the Old Testament."

You will perceive at once why I have selected these examples. Here a distinct issue is raised. Our subject is "The importance of accuracy". Dean Stanley gives examples in order to prove the "unimportance" of "minute accuracy". Let us take then, in his own order, his own words—

"1. The call of Abraham before the migration to Haran (Acts vii. 2) not, as according to Gen. xii. 1, in Haran."

But Acts vii. 2 does not refer to Gen. xii. 1. It refers to Gen. xi. 31; and Acts vii. 4, refers to Gen. xii. 1. By a comparison of the two portions of scripture, it is clear that "the God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran". So far from being inaccurate, Stephen draws particular attention to the fact, and adds (v. 4), "Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran". That is exactly what is said in Gen. xi. 31. They "went forth from Ur of the Chaldees to go into the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there". The Holy Spirit by Stephen has told us why they started from Ur, and shows us how earthly relationships may hinder a perfect obedience to God's call. Until his father Terah, an idolater, died, the obedience was not complete. Special stress is laid on his death both in Gen. xi. 32 and Acts vii. 4; "and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him unto this land, . . .". And hence Gen. xii. 1 begins, "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee" (לך-לך go for thyself, no longer have regard to thy family, but go for thyself) "out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house" (the first call was simply "get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred" Acts vii. 3. Now it is added, with special reference to the previous hindrance "and from thy father's house") unto the land (הָאֶרֶץ HA-ARETZ; so LXX. τῇ γῇ THE land) "that I will show thee". And, as though to draw special attention

to the half obedience to the “call” of which Stephen speaks, when he stopped at Haran, he emphatically adds—Gen. xii. 5, “They went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came”. Not, as before in xi. 31, “they came into Haran and dwelt there”. But, if Moses does not record the call mentioned by Stephen, in Gen. xi. 31, or xii. 1, he does in Gen. xv. 7: “I am Jehovah who brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees”. The same fact is recorded in Neh. ix. 7. Thus the mere English reader, by noticing accurately the words employed, would have not only corrected Dean Stanley’s mistake, but learnt some valuable lessons as to obedience.

“2. The death of his Father after the call (vii. 4), not, as according to Gen. xi. 32, before it.”

This is answered above. But we may here remark that if the Holy Spirit mentions a fact in one place, and the reason of it in another, we ought not to be asked to regard it as a difference, an example of free-handling or of inaccuracy, and a protest against exactness.

“3. The seventy-five souls of Jacob’s migration (vii. 14), not, as according to Gen. xlv. 27, seventy.”

It is neither Stephen nor Moses who is inaccurate here. Both are most exact. It is the Dean who is free-handling the scripture. He makes them say something which they do not say, and then says there is a discrepancy. Compare accurately what they do say, and notice what is put in italics.

MOSES (Gen. xlv. 26–27).

“All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt *which came out of his loins*, besides Jacob’s sons’ wives, all the souls were *three score and six*, and the sons of Joseph which were *born him in Egypt* were two souls; all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were *three score and ten*.” (Compare Ex. i. 1–5.)

STEPHEN (Acts vii. 14).

“Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and *all his kindred, three score and fifteen souls*.”

Surely, if two persons are speaking of two different things, it is not inaccuracy if the numbers are different. But observe the accuracy. Stephen says all the “kindred” whom Joseph called were 75. Moses says those who “came out of his loins”

were 66, and adding Jacob and Joseph, and his two sons, makes 70, viz.—“The house of Jacob”. We could make a fourth numerical arrangement, but it would not necessarily be inaccurate. It is clear that Stephen includes what Moses excepts, and Moses excepts what Stephen includes. Is it not the critic who is himself inaccurate?

- “4. The godlike loveliness (ἀστειὸς τῷ Θεῷ) of Moses (vii. 20), not, simply, as according to Ex. ii. 2, the statement that he was a goodly child”.

As this is a point which involves the original languages, it will be merely necessary to point out that, in Ex. ii. 2, the Hebrew word טוֹב (*TOV*) is rendered in the Septuagint by the very word used by Stephen, ἀστειὸν (*asteion*), as it is also in Hebrews xi. 23. The margin of Acts vii. 20 says “fair to God”, the English of Ex. ii. 2 says “goodly”, i.e. God-like. Where is the inaccuracy?

- “5. His Egyptian education (vii. 22) as contrasted with the silence on this point in Ex. iv. 10”.

Stephen says that Moses was “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians” (vii. 22). Whatever may be the silence of Ex. iv. 10, or any other chapter and verse, Ex. ii. 10 tells us that Moses was “brought unto Pharaoh’s daughter and he became her son”. Is not this equivalent to his being educated in the wisdom of the Egyptians? Ex. iv. 10 speaks only of his want of eloquence, but neither then, nor now has eloquence ever been the necessary consequence of education. The contrary indeed, is proverbially the case. The spiritual mind will have no difficulty in discovering a great spiritual truth in the positive contrast and lesson taught by Ex. iv. 10. Notwithstanding all his proficiency in the learning and wisdom of the Egyptians, he had not the wisdom which God required for his service. It had to be all unlearned at the “back-side of the desert”, and then Moses was taught of God. He confessed, “I am not eloquent, but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue”.

- “6. The same contrast with regard to his secular greatness, ‘mighty in words and deeds’ (vii. 22, compare Ex. ii. 10).”

But why compare a verse which is silent? Why not compare Heb. xi. 24, where it says, “By faith Moses when he was come

to years” μέγας γινόμενος (*when he became great*)? Here we have the corresponding equivalent. To say that the Holy Spirit, the Author of the book, may not in one part give particulars which He has not recorded in another, is to deny the power of doing that which is allowed even in the case of human composition and of a human author.

“7. The distinct mention of the three periods of 40 years (vii. 23, 30, 36) of which only the last is specified in the Pentateuch”.

The last is specified in Deut. xxxi. 2, and xxxiv. 7, when his age at his death is given as 120 years (i.e. 3 times forty). The second is specified in Ex. vii. 7, “And Moses was fourscore years old” when he “spake unto Pharaoh”. The third is implied in Ex. ii. 11.

“8. The terror of Moses at the bush (vii. 32), not mentioned in Ex. iii. 3”.

No! but it is mentioned in Ex. iii. 6, three verses further on. “And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God”.

This is an example of the importance of accuracy in studying the scriptures, or even in reading them, which if attended to here, would have saved Dean Stanley from charging on Stephen and the Divine record a mistake which he has himself created, and which, in a school-boy, would be deservedly punished as gross carelessness.

“9. The supplementing of the Mosaic narrative by the allusions in Amos to their neglect of the true worship in the desert (vii. 42, 43).”

If these verses be read accurately, it will be seen at once that Stephen does not supplement “the Mosaic narrative by the allusions in Amos”. He leaves the Mosaic narrative altogether, and pointedly quotes another scripture, introducing it by the words “as it is written in the book of the prophets”. It has yet to be shown that the giving of additional information, by a quotation from another book, is a free-handling of the sacred history.

“10. The intervention of the angels in the giving of the law (vii. 53) not mentioned in Ex. xix. 16”.

No! but if Dean Stanley read the Pentateuch carefully, and had not been possessed with the idea of the "comparative unimportance assigned . . . to minute accuracy," he would have found that Moses does mention it in Deut. xxxiii. 2, if he does not in Ex. xix. 16. "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints: from His right hand went a fiery law for them". It is also mentioned in Psalm lxviii. 17—"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place". To which may be added the following passages, though of course they were not before the mind of Stephen. Gal. iii. 19—"It (the law) was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator". Heb. ii. 2—"For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression, . . .".

"11. The burial of the twelve Patriarchs at Shechem (vii. 16) not mentioned in Ex. i. 6".

If we are accurate, we shall notice that special terms are employed which denote an exceptional fact. "They (i.e. our fathers) were carried over into Sychem and laid in the sepulchre". The word "carried over" is significant. It is μετατίθημι, and implies that they were *transferred*. We are told positively in Ex. xiii. 19, that the bones of Joseph were thus "carried up", and may not the other patriarchs have first been deposited in Egypt or Hebron, and afterwards transferred to Sychem, where the Rabbinical traditions—traditions mentioned by Wetstein and Lightfoot—report them to have been buried?

"12. The purchase of the tomb at Shechem by Abraham from the sons of Emmor (vii. 16), not, as according to Gen. xxiii. 15, the purchase of the cave at Machpelah from Ephron the Hittite".

The conclusion is as gratuitous as the mode of reasoning is peculiar, to infer that the statement in Acts vii. 16 refers to that in Gen. xxiii. 15. Who can prove that Abraham did not buy a "sepulchre . . . of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem"? These words "the father" are in italics. The Greek expression τοῦ Συχέμ would be usually translated "the son of Sychem". Shechem was the place where God at first appeared to Abraham in Canaan (Gen. xii. 6, 8), and here he built an altar. Is there

any ground for doubting the inspired words of Stephen that Abraham afterwards bought a "sepulchre" there, and that Jacob in after days followed his example and bought not a "sepulchre" but "a parcel of a field" (Gen. xxxiii. 19), or "a parcel of ground" (Josh. xxiv. 32), of the children or descendants of a younger Hamor, the father of another and younger Shechem? Probably it was the "field" containing or surrounding the "sepulchre" itself which Abraham had originally bought. It is clear that accuracy demands that the two statements cannot refer to the same event, or include the same purchase from the same descendants. It is also inconceivable that Stephen could have made any such blunders as have been frequently alleged by many, when we consider that he was speaking in the presence of the Sanhedrim, which comprised the most learned men in the whole nation; men who were "Masters in Israel", who knew every word of the law and the prophets by heart, and even the very number of words and letters in each book. I say it is inconceivable that in the presence of such men, who sought his life, his mis-statements should have gone uncorrected, if he had been guilty of making the alleged inaccuracies. On the contrary, we read "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake". In our day, men are found who are "able" to deny that he spake by the Spirit, and to question the wisdom and truth of his words. This is an ability which has been reserved for modern cavillers and critics to manifest.

Dean Stanley, at the close of these twelve examples of inaccuracy, says—

"To which may be added

13. The introduction of Remphan from the LXX. of Amos v. 26, not found in the Hebrew."

Nor is the word "Ethiopia" found in the Hebrew. Nor is the word "Syria". "Remphan" (Acts vii. 43) is the accurate equivalent for the Hebrew *CHIUN* (in Amos v. 26), just as "Ethiopia" is the equivalent for the Hebrew *KOOSH*; as "Egypt" is the equivalent for the Hebrew *MITZRAIM*; and as "Syria" or "Mesopotamia" is the equivalent for the Hebrew *ARAM*, in the Septuagint and English versions.

So much then for the examples furnished by Dean Stanley.

There is one other statement in Stephen's address which

sceptics have stumbled at, and at which Christians have been perplexed. I allude to the periods of 400 and 430 years mentioned in Acts vii. 6; Gen. xv. 13; Ex. xii. 40, and Gal. iii. 17. These are generally treated as though they referred to the same period of time, and hence it has been assumed that there is a discrepancy. Critics first of all create the difficulty themselves by their inaccurate reading, and then resort to such means of getting rid of it that "they make the word of God of none effect" by their very attempt to explain it. If attention be paid to the exact words, it will be found that these two periods, while they have the same termination, do not commence at the same point of time. The 400 years commence at the birth of Isaac as the "seed" of Abraham. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called". (Rom. ix. 7.) Acts vii. 6: "And God spake on this wise that his seed should sojourn in a strange land, and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years". Here, of course, the period embraces the whole sojourning, bondage, and evil treatment of the people from the birth of Isaac, "his seed", and is a reference to Gen. xv. 13: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them and they shall afflict them four hundred years". Here again, the period covers the whole strangership, servitude and affliction of the people from the birth of Isaac, "thy seed". The 430 years commence from the call of Abraham (Gen. xi. 31; Acts vii. 2), from the promise made to him, and from his sojourning, and his descendants then "in his loins". Ex. xii. 40: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years". Oh! what difficulties have been raised, and objections urged against these words, and what shifts have been resorted to on the part of commentators, by going to the ends of the earth and referring to the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint, because they failed to notice accurately what is really said. It is objected, "They were in Egypt only 215 years, and therefore, Ex. xii. 40 must be wrong". But stop! it does not say so! What is the verb?—"was". What is the nominative to it? "the sojourning!" The words "who dwelt in Egypt" form a relative clause defining who the people were, and the verse says that "the sojourning" of these people "was four hundred and thirty years". And so it was. Where did they sojourn? Heb. xi. 9 answers: "By faith

he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country", and Ex. vi. 4 also answers "The land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers". They sojourned in Canaan; they dwelt in Egypt; and the whole period covered by both was 430 years. The Exodus was 400 years from Isaac's birth, when Abraham was 100 years old (Gen. xxi. 5). Abram was 75 years old at the departure from Haran (Gen. xii. 4), and we must believe, therefore, that he was 70 years old when he first started from Ur of the Chaldees and commenced his "sojourning" five years before.

We have only one more passage to consider in which this period is mentioned, and that is Gal. iii. 17: "The covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect". Here the statement is clear that "the law" was given 430 years after "the promise". "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made", and, lest there should be any mistake as to our thinking of Isaac or Jacob, he adds: "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (v. 16). Therefore, the promise referred to is that which was made to Abraham, and "confirmed before God in Christ". And this was 430 years before the giving of the law, viz., in "Ur of the Chaldees" (Acts vii. 2, and Gen. xv. 7), where the God of glory first appeared to him. This "promise" was repeated in various forms several times, the first recorded repetition being in Gen. xii. 2, 3. "The God of glory" did not appear without speaking, for in Neh. ix. 7, 8 we find it distinctly stated: "Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; and foundest his heart faithful before Thee, and madest a covenant with him to give him the land . . . to give it I say to his seed . . .".

This must now suffice for the alleged inaccuracies of Stephen's address. We will now pass on to a few other illustrations which show how difficulties are removed by carefully noting the exact defining words; and then we will take a few which serve to bring out some hidden beauties which are thus brought to light.

The seventy weeks of Daniel ix. 25: "From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto

Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks. . . ." Now accurate attention to the words used, will save us from being led into error as to the starting point of the seventy weeks: "From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem". There were four commandments or decrees that went forth—

1. Cyrus to Ezra (i. 1), 536 B.C.
2. Darius to Ezra (vi. 1-12), 519 B.C.
3. Artaxerxes to Ezra (vii. 7-11), 468 B.C.
4. Artaxerxes to Nehemiah (ii. 1-5), 455 B.C.

Unless we note the defining words we shall be at a loss to discover to which of these decrees reference is made.

1. Cyrus's decree to Ezra is confined exclusively to the building of the temple: and mention of this, and "the house", "the altar", the "house of the Lord", etc., is made in chapters i-v no less than 22 times. True their enemies "wrote a letter against" them (iv) accusing them of re-building "the rebellious and bad city", and so their work was stopped "until another commandment shall be given". This, then, cannot be the decree referred to in Dan. ix. 25, quite apart from any difficulty of fitting in the date.

2. Darius's decree to Ezra. In this chapter, twelve times do we find this decree confined to "the house", "the temple", "the house of God". This, then, cannot be the decree.

3. Artaxerxes' decree to Ezra. This decree is confined particularly to the permission that was given to "the people of Israel and of his priests and Levites in my realm which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem". It declares what they were to carry with them "for the house of their God which is at Jerusalem"; but there is not one word about building, either the temple or the city. This, then, cannot be the decree referred to.

4. Artaxerxes' decree to Nehemiah. This is declared specially to relate to Nehemiah's request "That thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it" (ii. 5). "So it pleased the king to send me" (ii. 6). Consequently we read now nothing of the temple, for that was already built. Many also of the people were there, but there was no city. We read nothing now but of building "the city",

its "walls", its "gates", and its "houses". We read of nothing else. This, then, must be the decree referred to in Dan. ix. 25, whatever may be the difficulties created or removed. Those who have theories must be prepared to correct them, those who have them not, will be prepared to learn. It is difficult to imagine how any should have missed the plain, and apparently unmistakable language of verses 26 and 27, for the restoration and rebuilding of the city having been foretold in verse 25, its destruction is also foretold in verse 26. The agents are "the people of the prince that shall come". As the destruction of Jerusalem was by the Romans, "the prince that shall come" must also be a Roman. Moreover, "the prince" is the nominative to the verbs "confirm", etc. in verse 27, expressed by the pronoun "he—" "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week". Could any have referred this to the Messiah, if they had noticed that this "covenant" is mentioned again in other passages as having been made and broken by "the prince of the covenant" Dan. xi. 22, (who is the same as "the vile person" xi. 21, and "the little horn" viii. 9, 23-25)? By him the covenant is made and afterwards broken, xi. 28, 30, 32. This cannot be the Messiah, nor is it the Messiah who causes "the sacrifice and oblation to cease" in the midst of the last week (which is still future), as is clear from viii. 11-13; xi. 31; and xii. 11, where it is also connected with the setting up of the "abomination of desolation". Let those who doubt read carefully and accurately the passages referred to in this paragraph. The 26th verse describes the present dispensation from the crucifixion of Christ to the rise of the Anti-Christ, while the 27th verse describes the last week (or seven years of Anti-Christ's actings), divided as it is into two parts of 1260 days, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ years or 42 months.

David's numbering of the people. 2 Sam. xxiv. 9; and 1 Chron. xxi. 5: Through not accurately noticing what the numbers given in the two accounts respectively define, it has been assumed that they refer to the same thing, and hence, being different, they have been treated as a discrepancy, and as a difficulty which does not really exist. In the one account Israel is said to number 800,000, and in the other 1,100,000, while Judah is given as 500,000 and 470,000. Now compare the two accounts and employ the principle which is the subject of our lecture, to this illustration.

2 SAMUEL xxiv. 9

"There were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men."

1 CHRONICLES xxi. 5

"And all they of Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah was four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword."

In taking a census, of course, more may be done than merely counting heads, and in this case, distinctions must have been made between the totals and the various numbers which made up those totals. As to Israel, there was, consequently, a smaller number of "valiant" men; and as to Judah, it is clear that not all the "men of Judah" "drew sword": there were at least 30,000 who did not, either from old age or some other cause. Accuracy in a case like this, ought not to come in to explain a difficulty; it ought to have prevented its ever being made.

David's purchase from Araunah or Ornan, affords an illustration similar in character. In the one account David, it is said, gave "fifty shekels of silver"; in the other account, he gave "six hundred shekels of gold". Without looking to see what was purchased in each case, it is assumed that it was the same, and the sacred history is either ridiculed or too ingeniously explained. But notice the nature of the purchase.

2 SAMUEL xxiv. 24

"So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver."

1 CHRONICLES xxi. 25

"So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight."

No person would see a discrepancy if they heard that a friend had given so much for a farm, and so much for the live and dead stock. All could distinguish between a house and its fixtures or furniture. But yet many see no difference till it is pointed out, between "the threshing-floor and oxen", and "the place". The difference is clear, even in English, but it is still more so in the original. "The threshing-floor" (גֹרֶן *GOREN*), was a very small spot (Ruth iii. 2)—a place made smooth and even (as the word means), for a particular object. "The place" (מָקוֹם *MAKOM*), means a possession, a region or district (Judg. xviii. 10, xix. 16; Ruth iv. 10; Gen. xii. 6, xviii. 24, xix. 12-14, xxix. 22, xxxiii. 17), just as we still use the English "place". In this case it consisted of Moriah, which

contained about eight or nine acres, on which grew that which was threshed in the "floor". Once more, a difficulty created by inaccuracy, is avoided and explained by carefully noting even the English words.

The thirty pieces of silver—Matthew xxvii. 9, 10: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver". It is urged that this passage is not written in the book of the prophet Jeremiah, but in Zech. xi. 12, 13. Well, it does not say that it is! It says that it "was spoken by Jeremy the prophet". Can it be proved that it was not "spoken" by him? True it was afterwards written by Zechariah, but surely we are not required to believe that every prophecy spoken was put into writing, nor is there any great demand on our faith in being asked to believe that a prophecy originally spoken by Jeremiah should have been afterwards written by Zechariah.

The murder of Zacharias—Matthew xxiii. 35, 36: "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar". Now in 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21, we read "The Spirit of the Lord came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest . . . and they conspired against him and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the Lord". It is hastily and inaccurately assumed that our Lord referred to this event; and either He—the Son of God—is charged with a grievous mistake, or the sacred history is convicted of a serious blunder. But let accuracy again come to our aid. Let us reverently conclude that if our Lord says he was the "son of Barachias", he could not have been the same man who is spoken of as the "son of Jehoiada". If He says he was slain "between the temple and the altar", it could not be the same event as that which took place "in the court of the house of the Lord". This is clear from the English, but it is still more so from the Greek: for in the former case it is *ναός* (*naos*), the holy place, and in the latter it is *ιερόν* (*hieron*), the temple. Two words which are never confounded in the Scriptures. If He began with "Abel", the first martyr, it is not probable that He would end with a murder which took place 840 B.C., when there were many worse in those 840 years. Let us ask then, was there another Zacharias? Yes, there was. He,

of whom we read in Zechariah i. 1, who is there, and in i. 7, called "the son of Berechiah". He lived some 350 years later than the other, and he was next to the last of the prophets. True, his death is not mentioned in the sacred history, but the Lord here tells us how he died. There is every reason therefore, for believing the truth and the accuracy both of the sacred historic record and of the Lord's own word.

These examples must suffice for illustrating how assumed difficulties may be removed by carefully attending to the exact words of Holy Scripture. There are some cases of course, where this will not suffice, and recourse must be had to the exactness of the words in the Hebrew or the Greek. I have chosen these from the English version as being more to our purpose, and therefore of greater interest to us.

We will now take a few other illustrations, not for the purpose of removing difficulties, but in order that our minds and our hearts may be impressed with the fact that every word of importance has its place, and that not one such word is without its design, its meaning, and its lesson, which no other word could equally supply. Take the use of names in scripture, whether human or divine. We use them, or think they are or may be used, indiscriminately, but I have long believed that, whether we should ever discover the reason or not, there is infinite wisdom displayed in the use of the commonest names, and that we could not transpose or alter any one of them without marring the perfection of the Word. God Himself has many names and titles. He has given many of His people two names. Perhaps they all have a "new name" given by Him, "*My new Name*" at their new birth. Whether this be so or not, let us look at Jacob and his new name "Israel". Jacob was the birth-name, and means a supplanter or deceiver. Esau asks, "Is he not rightly named Jacob?" (Gen. xxvii. 36). It set forth his natural character. Israel was the God-given name, and means "a prince or prevailer with God". It set forth the new nature, or what he was as grace had made him. "Jacob" expressed his relation to God by creation; "Israel" his relation by covenant. Jacob was the human side; Israel the divine side of his character. This is true in all similar cases. You will find a great precision and meaning in the use of these names, and it is important that you should accurately notice which is used. For example, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob" (Isa. xli. 14) strikes us

at once. We see that "Israel" would not be rightly used in this case.

"Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel." Isa. xlviii. 1.

"But now saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel." Isa. xliii. 1.

"Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not", when they told him that Joseph was alive, but, "when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived; and ISRAEL said, It is enough, Joseph my son is yet alive, I will go and see him before I die." Gen. xlv. 26, 28.

The significance of this is so apparent that I need not stop to enforce it. Then look at Simon the son of Jonas. The Lord calls him and gives him a new name, He calls him "Peter"—Πέτρος (*Petros*) a stone, a rolling stone, here to-day and gone tomorrow. Very different from πέτρα (*petra*) a rock, geologically a rock *in situ*. In Matt. xvi. 18: "Thou art Πέτρος, and upon this πέτρα I will build my church". Peter was weak and changeful, but Christ was the rock—the foundation laid in Zion. It was the divine name setting forth a new-covenant relation to Christ—what he was as grace had made him. Hence, when the Lord would recall to his mind what he was before He had called him and dealt with him, He always uses his old name of "Simon".

"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee . . ." Luke xxii. 31.

"And He cometh and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, SIMON, sleepest thou, couldest not thou watch one hour?" Mark xiv. 37.

"Peter went out and wept bitterly." Luke xxii. 62.

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" When the question had been repeated a third time, we read "Peter was grieved". John xxi. 16.

The Divine Names and Titles afford a vast field for the exercise of the principle I am now seeking to advocate and impress upon you. Let me in a few words, point out to you the leading features of the chief names and titles, that you may in your own studies be able to learn many lessons which would otherwise have passed unnoticed.

1. "God" Heb. אֱלֹהִים (*ELOHIM*), occurs about 2,700 times in the Old Testament. It is plural in its form, and is so

translated in Gen. iii. 5; Ps. xcvi. 7; lxxxii. 6; John x. 34, 35. In itself it implies strength, and hence, whenever the word "God" is used, it is the God of creation, and denotes creation-power and glory. It implies merely a creation-relationship. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Gen. i. 1.

2. "Eloah" Heb. אֱלֹהִים (*ELOAH*) is formed from a root, not in use, which means worship. It denotes when used of God, the one living and true God who alone is worthy of adoration. It is put, therefore, in direct contrast with false gods, or the many gods of the heathen. There is a beautiful example in Neh. ix. 17 "Thou art a God (*ELOAH*) ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not. 18: Yea, when they had made them a molten calf, and said, This is thy God (*ELOHIM*) . . .". Another example occurs in Deut. xxxii. 15: "Then he forsook God (*ELOAH*) who made him." 17: "They sacrificed to devils, not to God (*ELOAH*); to gods (*ELOHIM*) whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not". Still more pointed is Ps. xviii. 31: "Who is God (*ELOAH*) save the Lord (*JEHOVAH*)?" and Ps. c. 3: "Know ye that the Lord (*JEHOVAH*), He is God (*ELOHIM*)."
3. "Jehovah", יהוה (*JEHOVAH*), is generally represented by the word printed in capital letters, thus, "LORD". It expresses God, in His covenant relation to His people, sustaining what His hands have made, and directing all to the accomplishing of His own purpose. It is He who was, and is, and is to be. The word denotes a personal, continuous, absolute existence.

Hence, in several passages, the very words "I am that I am" (Ex. iii. 14) are translated in the same chapter (verse 12) "I will be with thee". So also in Gen. xxvi. 3; xxxi. 3. It might be well rendered in these passages: "I AM with thee". It marks the eternal, unchanging presence of a covenant God. Jesus uses these words of Himself in speaking to Paul (Acts xviii. 10) "I am with thee . . .", as He does also in John viii. 58, "Before Abraham was, I AM". Hence, we read of "the God", never the Jehovah, because "Jehovah, He is the God". (1 Kings xviii. 39.) We hear His people say "my God" not my Jehovah,

because Jehovah implies my God. We read of "the God of Israel", but not the Jehovah of Israel, because there was no other Jehovah for Israel, though Israel frequently went after "other Gods". We read, as we have seen, of "the living God", but never of the living Jehovah, because Jehovah is He who was, and is, and is to be—the everliving One. For the same reason it is generally "thus saith the Lord", not thus saith God.

The full meaning or significance of this name was first revealed in Ex. vi. 2-8: "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord: And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known unto them". Immediately, the "covenant" is mentioned, and the actings of a covenant God rehearsed, "I have established my covenant;" "I have remembered my covenant;" "I have heard;" "I will bring you out;" "I will rid you;" "I will redeem;" "I will take you to me for my people;" "I will be to you a God;" "I will bring you in unto a land;" "I will give it you for an heritage". And then the whole is summed up by the declaration with which it commenced as including all beside, "I am Jehovah". In Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7, Jehovah still further "proclaims Jehovah", and gives twelve attributes, all included in the name of a covenant-keeping God. See verse 10: "Behold I make a covenant".

I have mentioned all this because I want you to notice as you read your Bibles, every particular title that is used. You are doubtless aware that in the book of Genesis the name "God", and "Lord" (*ELOHIM* and *JEHOVAH*) are both frequently used, and that critics who have little or no reverence for the Bible as the inspired word of God, have invented what is called the Elohistic and Jehovistic theory to account for the use of first one and then another of these names. They have supposed that Moses had before him a number of documents written by two or more individuals, one of whom employed the word "Jehovah", and another the word "Elohim"; that he wove these fragments together, and thus compiled the book of Genesis. This is as far as human wisdom can go without the illuminating Spirit of God. It begins with supposition, and ends with a denial of inspiration. But how wonderfully does this when properly considered, set forth and "proclaim the name of Jehovah" as He is elsewhere revealed, "A just God and a Saviour" (Isa. xlv. 21). "Just and yet the justifier of him that

believeth on Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26). Have we not here the full Gospel? God so loving the world—giving His Son Who, when made sin for His people, was not "cleared" but "visited" with the wages of sin, that God might be gracious, longsuffering, merciful, and the giver of eternal life to all who are sheltered by the substitute He has provided. And what scope there is for a mind who goes to the Word fully convinced that it is inspired, and feeling the importance of accuracy when studying the words which the Holy Ghost speaketh. It is impossible here, to enter into a full investigation of so great and grand a subject, but sufficient may be said to enable you to study it for yourselves and to search it out.

Notice then, accurately, in a few examples, the use and choice of these two words, connecting the meaning of each.

In Gen. i., it is ELOHIM, or God, because it is Creation, which is treated as an act of power, but in chapters ii. and iii., where God enters into communion with man, it is the "Lord God" (*JEHOVAH ELOHIM*). In chapter iii., the tempter avoids the use of the name of Jehovah. In chapter iv., it is "Jehovah" who has respect to the offerings, and it is to Him they are brought. In chapter vii. 1-5, it is "Jehovah" because the command is in reference to the "clean beasts" which were to be taken into the ark "by sevens", and therefore for sacrifice, and in respect to covenant relation; while in verses 7-9 it is "God", because the command is in reference to the "unclean" as well as the clean, which "went in two and two" evidently with a view to creation-relationship merely. Sometimes we have both the names in one verse, notably in 2 Chron. xviii. 31: "It came to pass when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, He is the King of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out and the LORD (*JEHOVAH*) helped him; and GOD (*ELOHIM*) moved them to depart from him". How beautiful is this when we notice accurately the choice of the words. It was to "Jehovah" that Jehoshaphat cried out. It was to one whom he knew, in whom he trusted, and to whom he stood in a covenant relation, who had promised to help and deliver them that call upon Him. But the Syrians knew nothing of Him thus: God (*ELOHIM*) who had created them, exercised His power and caused them to depart, but they knew not who or what it was that "moved them". So, in the next chapter (2 Chron. xix. 6, 7) we read that Jehoshaphat said

when speaking to the Lord's people: "Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD (*JEHOVAH*) be upon you, take heed and do it", and in verse 9: "Thus shall ye do in the fear of the LORD". But now notice chapter xx. 29, that when Jehoshaphat had returned with praises from the overthrow of their enemies, who stood in no such covenant relation, it is written: "And the fear of GOD (*ELOHIM*) was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they had heard that the LORD (*JEHOVAH*) fought against the enemies of Israel".

Could anything be more beautiful than the wondrous and minute accuracy of these words of our God. The spiritual mind can see in these things a greater proof of inspiration than in the most elaborate arguments, though they are the very things whereat mere human wisdom stumbles.

The Psalms of David afford us much material for the exercise of the principle of careful observation on the use of these names, viz. Jah or Jehovah on the one hand and El, Eloah and Elohim on the other. The Psalms are divided into five books, the first, second, and third ending with "Amen and Amen". The fourth with "Amen Hallelujah" and the fifth with "Hallelujah". The first book (Pss. i-xli.) is the "Genesis" book, the book of the divine counsels: and it gives us the purposes of grace in the person and work of Messiah. Hence we have "Jehovah" 272 times, and "Elohim" only 32 times, of which 11 are associated with Jehovah. The second book (Pss. xlii.-lxxii.) is the "Exodus" book: the book that gives us man in ruin, responsibility, and redemption. Hence, in this book we have "Elohim" 208 times, and "Jehovah" only 33 times. The third book (Pss. lxxiii.-lxxxix.) is the "Leviticus" book, the book of the Sanctuary, and gives us in its 17 Psalms, the holiness of God and His requirements—His way "in the sanctuary". Hence, in the first section (lxxiii.-lxxxiii.), which gives the requirements of the sanctuary in relation to man (Israel), and the enemy in the midst of the congregation (Pss. lxxiv. 4 and lxxix. i, etc.), we have "Elohim" 60 times and "Jehovah" only 14; while in the second section (lxxxiv.-lxxxix.), which gives the requirements of the sanctuary as met in Christ, and the Lord loving the gates of Zion and speaking glorious things concerning her, we have "Elohim" only 20 times of which 7 are associated with Jehovah, but "Jehovah" 32 times. The fourth book (Pss. xc.-cvi.) is the "Numbers" book, the book of the wilder-

ness, and like the third, is short, containing only 17 Psalms. It begins with "a prayer of Moses the man of God"—the funeral Psalm of the wilderness. Messiah is again introduced as the one who returns to the world, so long destitute of His manifested presence, and changes the wilderness into a garden of the Lord. Ps. xc. is an epitome of the whole book, ending "Return, O Lord, how long", "O satisfy us early with Thy mercy", etc. Hence, in this book, "Jehovah" as the covenant God, the coming one, is the prevailing name, and occurs 107 times while we have "Elohim" only 27 times of which 12 are associated with Jehovah. The fifth book (Pss. cvii.-cl.) is the "Deuteronomy" book, and gives us the ways of God, and the works of God in grace and glory. Here again the first Psalm (cvii.) like the first Psalm in each book, gives an epitome of all that follows. We have in verse 2, redemption as the starting point; verse 7, guidance; verse 14, enlightenment; verse 19, deliverance; verses 29, 30, preservation; verse 42, final victory. While in verses 1, 8, 15, 21 and 31, we have a five-fold call to praise God for His goodness, answering to the five sections of this fifth book of praise, which alone ends with the single word "Hallelujah" (i.e. Praise ye the Lord). Hence as we might expect, we have "Jehovah" 268 times and "Elohim" only 40 times of which 8 are associated with Jehovah. In all these cases the very exceptions prove how exact and true the rule is. It is impossible to do more here than thus briefly to put as it were, a key into your hands, which each one must for himself put into the lock of the Word, and pray: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law". If we have in one case (Ps. xiv. 2) "Jehovah looked down from heaven", and in another (Ps. liii. 2), "Elohim looked down from heaven", are we to suppose that it is written without design? If we read in one Ps. (xiv. 4), the wicked "call not upon Jehovah", and in another Ps. (liii. 4), "They have not called upon Elohim", are we to profanely call these fanciful distinctions, as though the Holy Ghost had not indited them? Nay, let us carefully study the most apparently trivial difference as a matter of the greatest importance, and then we shall find it to be of the deepest interest to the spiritual mind. Let every word and every sentence of the inspired word be solemnly pondered; let nothing be passed over as unimportant; let us honour God's word and He will honour us.

We must not leave the word “Jehovah” without noticing one of several combinations, viz.:—

4. “Jehovah Elohim” (the Lord God). We have this title for the first time in Gen. ii. 4, where the God of creation comes into communion with man as yet unfallen. It is used 20 times in chapters ii. and iii., and then after the fall, when man had been driven forth, it is very seldom used. (The title “the Lord God” which occurs so frequently, especially in the prophets, is literally “*ADONAI JEHOVAH*”).

We have already seen from the Psalms that the time is coming when there will be no more curse. Then the word of Jehovah will be fulfilled, which He spake when He said “I will be their God”, when “the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God”. That is what the title “Jehovah Elohim” implies and involves.

5. “Almighty God.” *אֵל שֶׁדַּי* (*SHADDAI*), really indicates the power of God in the fulness of His riches and resources, the all-bountiful giver. Read Gen. xxviii. 3. “El Shaddai bless thee and make thee fruitful and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people”. So also Gen. xvii. 1, 6; xxxv. 11; xliii. 14; xlix. 25. Shaddai is used only once again with “El”, viz. Ezek. x. 5.

Its first occurrence affords us a beautiful example. Gen. xvii. 1: “I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect”. Here, when God was calling Abraham to walk before Him, and to live the life of faith, the title which He chose to use was not God or Lord, but “El Shaddai” the One who was almighty in resources to support and defend him, to supply all his need. On the other hand, the last occurrence of the title, in Rev. xix. 15, shows that the same One is also almighty in resources and power to take vengeance on His enemies. “He treadeth the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God”. It is significant that this should be the chosen title of all those who know not God in Christ. They speak of Him as “Almighty God”—by that very title in which He takes vengeance on all who “know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ”.

One other passage in 2 Cor. vi. 14–18, shows that when the child of God is now called out from the world to be separate, and to live the life of faith, a similar title is used to that which was used with Abraham under similar circumstances, and for a similar reason. “Ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty”.

6. “The Most High God”, עֶלְיוֹן (*ELYON*) is the Millennial title, setting forth God’s sublimity, as Shaddai does His bounty, Elohim His power, and Jehovah His covenant.

It is His title as ruling over, and acting on the earth as well as in the heavens. See Gen. xiv. 18–22; Deut. xxxii. 8 (compare Acts xvii. 26); Ps. xviii. 13; lxxviii. 35; lxxxix. 27; xcvi. 9. Wherever this title occurs it embraces and implies the exercise of power and blessing over the earth, when He shall, in His Melchisedec character, be “A priest upon His throne” (Zech. vi. 13). Five times is “the Most High” used in Dan. iv., and five times in Dan. vii., in order to show that this is the title He assumes when it is declared that it is He who “ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will”. When we have this title in Mic. vi. 6, it is not Elyon but מָרוֹם (*MAROM*), lifted up. In Ps. xcix. 2; cxiii. 4; cxxxviii. 6, and Isa. lvii. 15, a simpler form of this word is used and also rendered “High” and applied to God.

7. “The Lord of the Whole Earth” is a title which we have first in Josh. iii. 11, 13, and used when He took possession of the land. Joshua was the type of Him by whom He would accomplish it, and Canaan was then a pledge of it.

But soon the land was polluted and Ezekiel sees in vision the glory departing (i.–ix.), God no longer finding a throne on it. Afterwards he sees the glory returning (xliii.). He sees in vision what will take place when this title will be re-asserted (Rev. xi. 4. See also Zech. iv. and vi. 5). Men will be willing to own Him as the “God of Heaven” (Rev. xi. 13); but not till after the judgments of seals and trumpets and vials will the earth be delivered and the song of praise burst forth (Rev. xi. 15), “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever”.

8. “The God of Heaven”. This is the title which God assumes during the time of Israel’s dispersion.

In the five books written after the captivity they are not once called "my people" by God, except as they be viewed prophetically. While they are "lo-ammi—not my people" He finds no home and throne in this world. He sometimes interferes, it is true, but He acts from heaven, no longer from His place on earth between the cherubim. Hence, this title is almost exclusively confined to the books which refer to that period, Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, etc. It is used about twenty times altogether, while He acts in and from heaven, but not upon earth. He controls all for the discipline and blessing of His people. The application is too clear to need any citation of passages.

We pass on now to consider the New Testament Divine Titles. So little attention has been paid to these titles of the Lord Jesus Christ, that few imagine there is any significance in their choice or order. But enough has already been said to convince us of the importance of accuracy in noticing and studying every detail. So numerous are these variations, that in Paul's epistles alone there are seventeen different combinations of the words "Lord", "Jesus" and "Christ". This includes the article, and in three cases the word "our". Unless these words are used at random, there must be a reason why, if certain words are used, no other words would have answered the same purpose. For example, if it says "Jesus Christ" we must believe that "Christ Jesus" would not have been appropriate. Whether we may ever discover a reason, or whether the reason I now submit may be the right one, does not alter the fact.

I was led to the conclusion at which I have arrived from the circumstances of counting the number of occurrences of each name and the various combinations. When I discovered that the Resurrection was the great line of demarcation, the reason was not far to seek. When I found that in the Gospels "Jesus" occurs alone 612 times, and in the other books only 71 times (out of which 38 are in the transitional book of the Acts); while in all the four Gospels "Christ" occurs alone only 56 times, and in the other books 256 times, the reason was clear. But let us look at the names in order:

1. "Jesus" Ἰησοῦς (*Iesous*). It means not merely "a saviour" because there is another word for that. It means really Jehovah our Saviour. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21). It

was therefore, the name of His earthly life, and was associated with Him as the sin-bearer, the sufferer, the man of sorrows. It was the name of His humiliation and shame. It was the name under which He was crucified. "This is Jesus" was the inscription on the Cross.

Notice then, that though it occurs alone some 683 times, it never occurs with an adjective. Let us learn to observe accurately what is omitted as well as what is written, and never say with Romanists and sentimental Christians "blessed Jesus", "dear Jesus", "sweet Jesus". Nothing can add to the perfection of His person, His works or His ways; He needs no adjective to set Him forth. Let us also be accurate in our use of scripture expressions. If we were all more careful in this matter, there would not be so many and great differences between us. Again, the expression "in Jesus" is not a scriptural expression. It does occur once in the English version in 1 Thes. iv. 14, but following the Greek, this should read "by" or "through Jesus." "Yours in Jesus" is written in epistolary correspondence because the writers have not noticed that we are never said to be "in Jesus": but, as we shall presently see, we are always said to be "in Christ".

Jesus was His earthly name; and suffering, sorrow, and death were His earthly lot. But God raised Him from the dead, and then all was changed. "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts ii. 36). God has now ordained that the scene of His suffering shall be the scene of His glory, and "that at the name of Jesus (not the Lord or Christ) every knee shall bow . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 10, 11). Whenever, therefore, you meet with the word "Jesus" alone, it bids you think of "the man of sorrows" who humbled Himself to death for you.

2. "Christ" Χριστός (*Christos*). This word means "anointed". It speaks of Him as the Anointed One. Anointed and appointed to carry out the gracious covenant of Jehovah as the light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel.

As I have said, it occurs only about 56 times in the four Gospels, and then it is generally with the article (ὁ Χριστός),

the Christ, His official title. The Christ who came unto His own, and was set for the blessing of Israel. But Israel knew not the day of their gracious visitation. They saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. But now, as raised from the dead, He is made the Head of His body—the church, anointed for blessing to His people. In the other books therefore, we have this title 256 times, setting Him forth as the risen and glorified One, defining the believer's position as justified and accepted in Him. And hence, believers are always said to be "in Christ", quickened with Him, raised with Him, sitting together in the heavenlies with Him, blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Him. We connect our position with Him as Christ, but we connect our responsibility to Him as—

3. "Lord" Κύριος (*Kurios*). This title, according to its meaning, sets Him forth as the One who owns, and therefore as one having power and authority. Whenever we find this title, this is the thought connected with it. It is a title connected with the privileges and responsibilities of our position and standing "IN Christ". All the various conditions of life are associated with Him as "Lord"—

Marriage: "Marry only in the Lord" not merely "in Christ". That would mean you must marry only a Christian, but this means more,—not only that you are to marry a Christian, but, in doing so, you are to say "If the Lord will": you are to recognize His authority, whom you are to acknowledge in all your ways.

Wives: "As it is fit in the Lord" (Col. iii. 18).

Children: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord" (Eph. vi. 1).

Servants: "Do it heartily as to the Lord" (Col. iii. 23).

Believers: It is "the Lord's supper", "the cup of the Lord", "the body and blood of the Lord", "the Lord's table" (1 Cor. xi.). He, therefore, has a right to command, and say "Do this in remembrance of me".

Unbelievers: "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost". He may say He is Jesus or Christ, but to say that He is "Lord" is to take Him for our Master as well as our Saviour, it is to bow our wills to His, and take His yoke upon us. That is the work of the Holy Ghost.

4. "Jesus Christ". When we have this combination, the emphasis is on the first word, and our thoughts are conveyed from what He was to what He is, from His humiliation to His exaltation. You may translate it in your own minds as you read, "The humbled one who is now exalted" or "The suffering one who is now glorified". In every instance you will find the most remarkable accuracy.
5. "Christ Jesus" conveys just the opposite thought. The glorified one who was once humbled. The exalted one who once suffered and died.

I must not stop to give you many examples. The whole New Testament is one vast example. You will not find however, each passage equally clear. Sometimes you will see it at once, and it will give you the thought of the context; at another time, the context will tell you why the titles are used in a particular order. Look at Phil. ii. 5: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus". Why "Christ Jesus"? Why not "Jesus Christ"? Because the thought of the context is—from what He was to what He is. The next verse explains, "Who being in the form of God . . . made Himself of no reputation". Phil. i. 1, 2: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of JESUS CHRIST, to all the saints IN CHRIST JESUS . . . Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father, and from the LORD JESUS CHRIST". Here the Apostles were servants of Jesus (now exalted) servants of the One who sent them forth even as He was Himself sent forth, as a servant: but they wrote to the saints who were "in Christ" (once humbled) and they prayed that, as Lord and Master He would send forth to them grace and peace.

6. "Son of Man" is the title which sets Him forth in His human nature, as the "second man", and as the "last Adam".
7. "Son of God" is the title which reveals Him in His divine nature, and in His relation to God. Hence, in Him all who believe are "called the sons of God".

There is an important difference to be observed in the use and choice of these names. Sometimes they occur in close proximity. Notably in John v. 25. The hour is coming "when the dead shall hear the voice of the SON OF GOD and they that

hear shall live". It is as Son of God that He is the quickener of the dead, as is explained in the next verse: "For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the SON OF MAN". It is as Son of Man that He will judge, as it is written: "God hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by THAT MAN whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 31).

In conclusion, let me exhort you to be accurate, not merely in your reading and in your study of the Bible, but in your quotation and interpretation of it. Do not sit down to interpret it, but sit down before it that it may interpret to you the will and purposes of God. It is too often assumed that God never means exactly what He says; and persons go to His word not simply to learn what He says, but to tell us what He means, which is very often something quite different. But may we not ask: If the Holy Ghost meant just that, why did He not say just that? For example, if He says Jerusalem or Zion, why must we suppose that He meant the church? If He says Euphrates, why are we to assume that He meant to say Turkey?

If we wish to know how we are to interpret unfulfilled prophecy, we have an infallible guide in that which has been already fulfilled. We have for example Ps. xxii. and Isa. liii., which both speak minutely of the sufferings and death of Christ: and every detail has been fulfilled literally. We have also Ps. lxxii. and Isa. xi., which both speak of the future reign of Christ: and though each is from another part of the same book, yet a different principle of interpretation is commonly applied. In the one case, "They pierced my hands and my feet" is literal; in the other, "The wolf shall lie down with the lamb" is said to be figurative. In the one case, "They cast lots upon my vesture" is literal, but in the other, "The leopard shall lie down with the kid" is said to be figurative. In the one case, "They part my garments among them" is literal; in the other, "The lion shall eat straw like the ox" is said to be figurative. Does not such a principle of interpreting the scriptures carry its own condemnation with it?

And yet, may we not ask how such scriptures as Pss. xxii., xl., lxix and Isa. xlix. and liii. appeared to those who lived

before they were fulfilled? To the great majority, the word of the Prophet applied (Isa. liii. 1), "Who hath believed our report?" Many who did profess to believe, made the word of God of none effect by their tradition, and dealt with that word precisely in the same way that many do now. They would not have it that their Messiah was to suffer, and so they said that such a passage as Isa. liii. referred to Isaiah himself, or Josiah, or to the whole body of the prophets personified. But thank God there were those who believed and trusted in His word.

If we ask how such as Hezekiah, Josiah, David, Isaiah, Daniel, Mary, Simeon, and Joseph of Arimathæa, treated the Word and acted in the face of scriptures which must have been hard to understand though clear now to us; we are told in 1 Peter i. 10-12 "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow . . . which things the angels desire to look into". Luke x. 24, Jesus said, "I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see". Luke ii. 25, "Simeon . . . was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel". Luke ii. 38, "Anna . . . served God . . . night and day . . . and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem". Mark xv. 43, "Joseph of Arimathæa, an honourable counsellor . . . also waited for the kingdom of God".

Let us then, dear friends, be in the company of those "angels", "prophets and kings", "just and devout" persons who "served God night and day", "honourable counsellors". Let us like them, "enquire", and "search diligently", "desire to look into", "desire to see", "wait" and "look for" the fulfilment of that which our hearts long for. Now we know only "in part" but that which is perfect is coming; then shall many a prophecy, parable, and portion which while here was obscure to us, and "hard to be understood", be all made plain and clear; for we shall then be "for ever with the Lord", who we may believe will still be the expounder of scripture to His people, as He was to His disciples after His resurrection from the dead, when "beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning HIMSELF".

“These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning ME. Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scripture.” (Luke xxiv. 27, 32, 44.)