

THE BIBLE

A Miracle Book

by

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CHAPTER THREE

THE BIBLE'S CONTINUITY OF THOUGHT

It is of immediate interest to the reader and student of the Bible to apprehend the continuity of thought running throughout its sixty-six Books. This is one of the hall-marks of inspiration. It proclaims the fact of a Master-mind back of it. How impossible otherwise! It would be replete with confusion and lack perfect cohesion. But, marvel of marvels, what is laid as a foundation in Genesis is built upon in the succeeding books and brought to a glorious finish in the book of the Revelation.

THE SOWER

The miracle of the Bible's continuity of thought presents the Author in a new role altogether. It is that of Sower.

Matthew introduces us to the God-Man, in the Person of Jesus, and after His rejection by the Jewish Nation as their Sovereign; he sets Him before us as the Sower. He sows seed that He might reap a harvest for God. Long beforehand, however, He sowed seeds of divine truth, in infinite variety, in the Old Testament Scriptures so that they might produce a full fruitage in the New.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer in his informative book entitled, "*Major Bible Themes*," in consideration of this theme says,

"The Bible appears in one volume in which there is a perfect continuity of historical sequence from the creation to the new heavens and the new earth; a perfect unfolding of doctrine from the blade to the full corn in the ear; from type to antitype; from prophecy to its fulfillment; and the anticipation, realization, and exaltation of the most perfect Person on earth, or in Heaven."

THE SEED AND THE TREE

At once we recognize the infinite range of truth awaiting research. However, before I confine myself to a few specific truths, let me call your attention to the vital connection between Genesis and Revelation, between the seed and the tree.

Genesis opens with a description of the heavens and the earth, and goes on to present man's home in Eden where the tree of life grows, and the river flows. It relates the union between man and woman and their universal dominancy. Revelation unfolds a new heaven and a new earth, the home of redeemed humanity, with the tree of life bearing fruit, and the pure river of water of life flowing. It elaborates upon the marriage of the Lamb and the final sovereignty of Christ and His Bride over all things.

Continuing in Genesis we have the record of the Serpent's deception and pronounced doom (3:15), also the entrance of sin with its accompanying sorrow, pain, and curse. But Revelation announces the final banishment and doom of the Serpent with the cheering statement:

“There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain . . . there shall be no more curse.”

It is not without significance that Genesis should introduce the rainbow (chap. 9); Babylon (chap. 11); the confusion of tongues (chap. 11); the call of Abraham, the depository of the promises to both Jew and Gentile (chap. 12); Melchizedec (chap. 14); Isaac, the son of the free-woman (chap. 21; Galatians 4); Jacob, the father of the twelve sons from whom came the twelve tribes (chaps. 25-50); and Joseph, the world deliverer (chaps. 37-50).

Revelation brings all to fruition. The rainbow around the Throne of God in heaven (chap. 4) and around the Head of Jesus on earth (chap. 10). Babylon is described as apostate Christendom with its indescribable confusion (chaps. 17, 18). The promises made to Abraham are literally fulfilled in the glorification of saints both heavenly and earthly (chap. 5, 7). Melchisedec's priesthood is witnessed operating in blessing to all men everywhere (chaps. 21, 22). The son of the freewoman is Jerusalem which is above (see chap. 21). The twelve tribes find their place in history before and after the great tribulation (chaps. 7, 14). And Jesus is that Joseph who brings in deliverance for creation and redeemed humanity (chaps. 20, 21).

ELEMENTS OF THE ROMANTIC

Beloved, this theme entralls. It sends waves of ecstatic delight over us. And why not? It has the element of the romantic about it. This always appeals. We love to explore; to discover a new world; to locate a new star; to invent a new machine; to introduce a new drug; and to advance a new means of travel, or communication, such as wireless or television, excites us tremendously. But here is something which far exceeds all these things. It is exploration in the realm of the divine, in the field of inspiration.

Now to be specific, I purpose to concentrate upon well-known, fundamental, vital truths. The truths are the Holy Trinity; redemption by blood; the Church of God; and the prophetic program marked out for the world. In the consideration of these truths I want to show the continuity of thought running, like the blood stream, throughout the whole body of revelation.

Here we face mystery. The understanding of this truth is beyond finite comprehension. But the fact remains. The Bible teaches that the One God subsists in a three-fold Personality.

The Old Testament intimates the Trinity in unity while the New reveals it perfectly.

God introduces Himself as the “Three in One and the One in Three” in the opening statement of the Book: **“In the beginning God . . .”** The word is ELOHIM.

Dr. C.I. Scofield, in his reference Bible says: *“Elohim (sometimes EL or ELAH), English form 'God,' the first of three primary names of Deity, is a uni-plural noun formed from EL—strength, or the strong one, and ALAH, to swear, to bind oneself by an oath, so implying faithfulness. This uni-plurality implied in the name is directly asserted in Genesis 1:26 (plurality), 27 (unity) see also Genesis 3:22. Thus the Trinity is latent in ELOHIM . . . Used about 2500 times.”*

That this truth might be maintained and proclaimed God brought Israel to Himself. The fundamental tenet of their faith was, **“The Lord our God is one Lord”** (Deuteronomy 6:4).

The New Testament is definite in its emphasis on the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

We observe the Trinity in unity at the baptism of Jesus, for the Father speaks, the Son is baptized, and the Holy Spirit anoints (Matthew 3:16, 17). It comes to light in the baptismal formula: **“Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”** (Matthew 28:19). It finds its place in the Apostolic benediction: **“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all”** (II Corinthians 13:14).

While mystery and majesty surround the Holy Trinity I like to think of the words of the child who, when giving his testimony, protruded three fingers, and said:

“Three in one,
and one in three,
and the One in the middle
died for me.”

REDEMPTION BY BLOOD

The doctrine of redemption presupposes the presence of sin. And the Bible, as well as human experience, assures us that man is a sinner. It makes little difference what men say sin is, and they have all kinds of opinions to offer. God says: “Sin is lawlessness.” And it is equally true that all sin is directly against God. As another has said: “Sin is any want of conformity to the character of God, whether it be in act, disposition, or state. Sin is sinful because it is different from what God is; and God is holy because holiness is infinitely desirable.”

It was at sin's entrance into the world that the Lord God sped to the side of His fallen creature with the remedy. It was a blood-sacrifice (Genesis 3:21). Thereafter, Abel was accepted; Noah sheltered; Israel redeemed; and the precedent established that every spiritual blessing is given on the ground of the blood of Christ.

THE WORK OF THE CROSS

Let me draw attention to the outline given by Dr. W.H. Thomas as he traces the development of truth in connection with the wonderful work of the Cross. He says:

“In the Old Testament that Cross is promised in prophecy and pictured in sacrifice and personal types (Acts 8:34,35).

In the Gospels it appears gradually in the teachings of Christ, and was at length provided in the event of Calvary (John 1:29).

In the Acts the Cross is proclaimed in sermons and explanations (2:23; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 7:52; 10:39, 40; 23:29, 30).

In the Epistles it is proved in various ways, and shown in its theological and practical bearings (Ephesians 1:7).

Then in the Revelation it is praised as theme of the glorified saints whose one song is “**Worthy is the Lamb that was slain**” (Revelation 5:12; 13:8).

THE CHURCH OF GOD

The Church is a New Testament revelation. This is evident from Paul's words: “**By revelation He made known unto me the mystery . . . which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit**” (Ephesians 3:3,5).

The revelation was first given when Peter confessed the Son of Man as “**The Christ, the Son of the Living God.**”

Immediately Jesus said: “**Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it**” (Matthew 16:16, 18).

However, it was not until Jesus was glorified and the Holy Spirit given that the truth of the Church, in all its blessedness and beauty, its greatness and glory, was communicated to Paul. He made known that it is like unto a body, a building, and a bride.

Perhaps the first seed in connection with the Church was sown in the soil of typology, in Genesis. We cannot fail to see the woman in the man, the Church in Christ, in the statement, “**Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion**” (chap. 1:26).

And, more plainly still is the Church seen in the creation of Eve. Paul actually quotes from Genesis 2 when referring to the great mystery. His words are: “**Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it . . . For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones .**

.. They two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and His Church” (Ephesians 5:25, 30-32).

This incident evokes this noteworthy remark: “We have the Church relationship to Christ as the Eve of the 'Last Adam,' and it is striking that we have to go to the beginning of the world, before, in an evil sense, there was any world at all, before sin had spoiled things, to find at the very outset imaged for us that special relationship with Christ has made His own. How wonderful it must be to His heart when it is the first thing we find typically presented to us in the history of man.”

OLD TESTAMENT BRIDES

The choice of Eve, to typify the Bride of Christ, begins a truth which finds development in other brides in Old Testament history. For example,

- The Church, or Bride, is seen in her union with Christ in Eve (Genesis 2);
- Kinship relation with Christ in Rebekah (Genesis 24);
- Affection for Christ in Rachel (Genesis 29);
- Position in Christ in Asenath (Genesis 41);
- Rejection with Christ in Zipporah (Exodus 2);
- Redemption by Christ in Ruth (Ruth 4);
- Administration with Christ in the daughter of Pharaoh, wife of Solomon (II Chronicles 8).

The Church set forth as a virgin in Corinthians, and a Bride in Ephesians, becomes a wife in Revelation. It is the complete realization of all the types; the perfect presentation of the seed sown. Listen as heaven speaks! **“Rejoice . . . for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready”** (Revelation 19:7, 9)

THE PROPHETIC PROGRAM

In the consideration of God's program for the nations it is of infinite importance to understand that Israel occupies the central place. All nations are set in relation to Israel. The Jews and Jerusalem are the center around which all the purposes of God are worked out in the world. This is by divine determination. Moses said:

“When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel” (Deuteronomy 32:8).

THE JEW AND PALESTINE

Connected with the call of Abraham was the promise of Palestine (Genesis 12, 13), and the establishment of an everlasting throne (Genesis 17).

At this moment of writing the Promised Land has never been fully possessed, or the throne of Israel occupied by the true Son of Abraham. But events today herald the eventful fulfillment of

this promise. The world has witnessed since May 1948 an Independent Palestine with autonomous rule for the Jews. And beyond waits the realization of Israel's hope. Their Messiah shall divide to them their land, deliver them from the Gentile overlords, and make them the head of the nations.

“In that day shall the Branch of the Lord (the Lord Jesus) be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel” (Isaiah 4:2).

ORIGIN AND CONFEDERATION OF NATIONS

A full chapter is devoted to a detailed account of the origin of the nations (Genesis 9:18-10:32). Dr. William Evans in his book entitled “*Genesis*” says:

“These tables may be looked upon, also, as God's farewell to the nations, ere He chooses Abraham and yet they are a loving reminder that the nations are His, even as Israel, and He is their Creator. This list of names is used almost unchanged in First Chronicles, showing that its correctness was recognized up to that time.”

As the end time hastens, we shall witness great confederations of nations. The smaller nations will be submerged into the larger, and to all practical purposes, lose their national identify. How marvelously this is taking place today! In the main we may look for Russia dominating all Northeastern and Northwestern Europe. Ezekiel makes this clear. It is plain from the Apocalypse that Asia shall be confederated with Japan playing the leading role. Daniel and John lay tremendous stress upon the revival of the Roman Empire in its ten-kingdom form; while both Isaiah and Ezekiel strongly suggest that Britain, her Colonies, and the United States of America, shall come together. As you look at the map it will be observed that Palestine holds the spotlight as the center.

BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON

And it is to this center that all the nations shall come to the battle of Armageddon.

“For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle,” says Zechariah's prophecy.

“And He (God) gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon” (Revelation 16:16).

About this gathering the Psalmist speaks:

“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, 'Let us break Their bands asunder, and cast away Their cords form us'” (Psalm 2).

Then shall Christ break the nations with the rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Daniel graphically described the action by picturing Christ the Stone falling upon the Gentile nations and crushing them to powder, and upon the scene of judgment raise up His own kingdom which shall stand for ever (chap. 2).

From this moment onward throughout the millennial reign of earth's rightful King shall men be blessed in Him, and **“All nations shall call Him blessed.”**

So we could continue. However, enough has been said to make manifest the perfect harmony and the continuity of thought throughout the precious Book. And surely, enough has been said to encourage trust in Christ for the remission of sins, a life of absolute soul-calm, and a future home in glory; and to warn everyone to flee from the impending doom of unregenerate humanity. For, **“He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”** (John 3:36).

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