

4. Militant and Triumphant Aspects

a. The Church Militant

Louis Berkhof describes this aspect as follows: "The Church in the present dispensation is a militant Church, that is, she is called unto, and is actually engaged in, a holy warfare. This, of course, does not mean that she must spend her strength in self-destroying internecine struggles, but that she is duty bound to carry on an incessant warfare against the hostile world in every form in which it reveals itself, whether in the Church or outside of it, and against all the spiritual forces of darkness She must be engaged with all her might in the battles of her Lord, fighting in a war that is both offensive and defensive." (*Systematic Theology*, Fourth Revised Edition, p. 565).

b. The Church Triumphant

Berkhof describes this aspect as follows: "If the Church on earth is the militant Church, the Church in heaven is the triumphant Church. There the sword is exchanged for the palm of victory, the battle-cries are turned into songs of triumph, and the cross is replaced by the crown. The strife is over, the battle is won, and the saints reign with Christ forever and ever." (*ibid.*)

D. The Relationship of the New Testament Church to the Old Testament Congregation

1. A dispensational view of the relationship

The following quotations are excerpted from John F. Walvoord's book, *The Church in Prophecy* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1964), specifically chapters 1-3:

"The purpose of God not only to provide a Redeemer but also a testimony to His name through a godly seed gradually unfolds in the Old Testament."
(page 14)

"By some, the nation Israel is considered to be an early stage of the church and organically one with the church of the New Testament . . . This point of view has also supported the concepts that the church in the Old Testament is essentially one with the church of the New Testament. Premillenarians . . . tend to distinguish believers in Christ in the present age from the saints of the Old Testament, that is, a body of believers whose sins are forgiven and who will have a blessed eternity in the presence of God. Disagreement exists as to whether the term church is properly applied to these saints of the Old Testament A careful study of both the old and New Testament, however, seems to justify the conclusion that something new began on the Day of Pentecost, namely, a body of believers distinct in divine purpose and situation from saints who preceded them in the Old Testament."
(page 16-17)