

are spiritual; and these spiritual and heavenly realities are often set forth under the form of earthly objects and human relationships. . . .

- (3) The fact that the Old Testament is both preliminary and preparatory to the New Testament is too obvious to require proof. . . .

b. Attitude of Dispensationalists to These Limitations . . .

- (1) This literalistic emphasis has shown itself most plainly in their insistence that Israel: it does not mean or typify the Church . . . . This led to literalism along other lines.

Along with this insistence on the letter, they early developed a tendency to seek for significant meanings in the very letter of Scripture . . . . Thus the words 'dust' . . . 'stars' . . . and 'sand' . . . are obviously used as synonymous terms to indicate that the seed of Abraham will be as countless as these familiar objects. But, if it be argued that the 'stars' signify a heavenly seed and the 'dust' an earthly seed, then . . . 'Sun of righteousness' . . . and 'morning star' . . . are beautiful figures used of the coming of Christ. But to argue that because there is an interval of time between the appearing of the morning star and the sunrise, there will therefore be an interval of time between the rapture and the appearing . . . . Such ingenious subtleties may do great harm . . . .

- (2) Dispensationalists . . . Regarding Israel as an earthly people . . . insist that all of the promises and prophecies which concern Israel are earthly and are to be taken literally. On the other hand, regarding the Church as a heavenly body having no connection with the earth, they insist that everything that concerns the Church is heavenly. . . .
- (3) While Dispensationalists are extreme literalists, they are very inconsistent ones. They are literalists in interpreting prophecy. But in the interpreting of history, they carry the principle of typical interpretation to an extreme which has rarely been exceeded even by the most ardent of allegorizers.

This is the reason that, in attempting to define the word 'type', it is customary to say that it is a person, event, or institution which is 'designed by God' and intended 'to prefigure something future'. . . Scofield . . . defined a type as 'a divinely purposed illustration of some truth'. But, unfortunately, he signally failed to observe this limitation. Where, for example, is there the slightest warrant for regarding the raven and dove as types of the 'believer's two natures'? . . .

. . . Dispensational teaching . . . In dealing with Old Testament history its treatment is highly figurative . . . . In dealing with prophecy, its treatment is marked by a literalism which refuses to recognize types and figures. . . .

The explanation of this seemingly inconsistent attitude of Dispensationalists is to be found in the very heart of their system of interpretation, their conception of the Church. If the Church is a mystery first revealed to the apostle Paul, it cannot be predicted in the prophecies of Isaiah; and if these are taken literally it is not foretold in them. . . .

In view of their preoccupation with the prophetic teachings of the Bible, the attitude of Dispensationalists to prophecy is of special interest and importance. For it is here that their insistence on the principle of literal interpretation is met uncompromising. This raises several questions, . . . .