

8. Milton S. Terry

"From these considerations it will be also seen that, while duly appreciating the peculiarities of prophecy, we nevertheless must employ in its interpretation essentially the same great principles as in the interpretation of other ancient writings. First, we should ascertain the historical position of the prophet; next the scope and plan of his book; then the usage and import of his words and symbols; and, finally, ample and discriminating comparison of the parallel Scriptures should be made."

-- Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, Second Edition (reprinted Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), p. 418.

9. George L. Murray

"In the book of Acts, we find Peter spiritualizing the sixteenth Psalm as foretelling the resurrection of Christ. The apostle Paul, speaking in a Jewish synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:34), declared that Isaiah's prophecy concerning 'the sure mercies of David' (Isaiah 55:3) was a foretelling of the resurrection. James, the Lord's brother, showed that the prophecy of Amos concerning the building of the tabernacle of David and the raising of the ruins thereof, was then being fulfilled in the conversion of the Gentiles to Christianity. All the apostles give spiritual interpretations of the Old Testament prophecies, and literalists do not find fault with them for that. It is universally agreed that the chief cornerstone laid in Zion is to be interpreted as Jesus Christ. Peter likens Christians to living stones built up into a spiritual temple. The apostle Paul, speaking of the experiences of Israel in the wilderness, says, 'And did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ' (I Corinthians. 10:3-4). Here we have a spiritual rock.

Surely there is here a basic argument and disagreement between dispensationalists and Paul. Much more could be said of his allegorizing of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar, as representing spiritual realities. Time would fail us to follow this principle through the Epistle to the Hebrews where even Zion and Jerusalem are spiritualized. If the literalist still insists that we are spiritualizing prophecy, we can at least boast of being in very excellent company. The same cannot be said of the literalists. He is following the Jewish method of interpretation which led its exponents to expect a literal fulfillment of every prophecy and which led them to reject and crucify their Messiah. Paul says that this was done 'because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day' (Acts 13:27). The plain truth is that there is not one chapter of the prophetic Scriptures which can be taken with absolute literalness and shown to prove the restoration of natural Israel and the establishing of a Palestinian kingdom in which Jews will predominate, with Jerusalem as capital and Christ as king.