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that we can harmonize the histories of the resurrection without any recourse to the tradition about a "Galilee" existing in the Mount of Olives.[1]

ROB. M'CHEYNE EDGAR.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD OF ZECHARIAH XI.

WITH all due deference to the learned and gifted writers who have done so much for our understanding of the Minor Prophets, it seems to me that a good deal of constructive work remains yet to be done. And in especial I venture to think that none of them gives an intelligible and consistent account of the Shepherd of Zechariah xi. That he is a personage of extraordinary interest is manifest, from whatever point of view you regard him. Whether you think of him as having had an historical existence, or as a creature of the prophetic imagination—as a parable, in fact—or again as a shadow cast before by the Christ of God, you perceive at once that you are face to face with questions as difficult as they are attractive.

The following is an attempt—which in abler hands may become more fruitful of good results—to make a connected whole of the story, and to indicate where and how the New Testament type rises out of it. It has pleased God that the story should be presented in a guise which is singularly abrupt, obscure, and even fragmentary. That fact should make us very cautious in coming to conclusions, and modest in asserting them; but it does not alter our conviction that the Good Shepherd had a very distinct and definite existence in the vision of the prophet. It was no blurred and broken image which mirrored itself upon his soul. *We* may fail to reconstruct the image now, possibly

[1] For a full consideration of the discrepancies in the Resurrection-histories see *The Gospel of a Risen Saviour*, pp. 86–134.

fail even to get its outlines correctly; but we cannot doubt that an image existed, of extraordinary force and beauty, if we could only recover it.

The materials which we possess for this purpose are the (confessedly) disjointed and difficult utterances about the Shepherd in Zechariah xi. and xiii. It is not necessary to argue that Zechariah xiii. 7–9 must be read in connection with chapter xi. Many critics wish to transfer it from its present position (where it seems singularly out of place) to the end of chapter xi. But whether it originally stood there or no, it is agreed that the only possibility of understanding it is in taking it *as if it stood there.* Nor again is it necessary to enter into any argument about the authorship of these chapters. Personally I find the argument overwhelming in favour of a prophet who shall have been a somewhat younger contemporary of Hosea's. I know, of course, that the tide of critical opinion has turned strongly in favour of a far later date. I confess to a belief that in critical opinion there is an ebb and flow, a distinct tendency to move in the same direction, which a profane person might call fashion. Nothing is more difficult than to balance one set of reasons against another set, when you possess no common measure by which you can gauge the comparative value of these reasons. I can but repeat that to me the argument from the "political horizon," and from the close agreement of the situation depicted with the picture presented by Hosea, is overwhelming. Fortunately the question of authorship and date does not materially affect my reading of the story.

That story begins with the appointment of the Shepherd in xi. 4: "Thus said the Lord my God; Feed the flock of slaughter." Now the prophet to whom this order was addressed could not possibly have fulfilled it literally. It passed the wit or strength of any man to take charge of God's people in the face of the overwhelming disasters

which hung over them, nor is there the least reason to suppose that the prophet ever dreamed of seriously undertaking so impossible a task. But it is not therefore necessary, and certainly it is not satisfactory, to resolve the commission given and accepted into a mere parable. "Feed the flock of slaughter" was a real command, though not, as far as we can tell, directly addressed to the prophet. And as Isaiah heard, "Who will go for us?" and replied, "Here am I, send me"; so our prophet accepted the summons for himself with some true sense of responsibility, and proceeded in some real way to act upon it. What way this was may be gathered to some extent from the commission given to Jeremiah (i. 10), and accepted by him so unwillingly and with such anguish of mind: "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, and to destroy and to overthrow; to build and to plant." No one supposes that Jeremiah had any power of political control over nations and kingdoms, or that he ever attempted to exercise any such control in the sense of outward interference. Yet his commission was a real thing, and his sense of the burden which it laid upon him very real—all the more real perhaps because he could *do* nothing; just as a man in a dream labours with intolerable sense of effort to perform some feat of strength and agility, and cannot move a finger. In the "word of the Lord" Jeremiah was well-nigh omnipotent. In that "word" he could and did sweep the mightiest kings away, and reduce the greatest armies to hordes of hunted fugitives. In that "word" he could and did exalt his own people to the highest pitch of glory and of goodness. All the time in what men call real life he was as impotent as a man can be—ridiculed, denounced, without following and without influence. Yet no one would dream of saying that Jeremiah's mission was a parable. To himself it was a dreadful reality, just because he

accepted it quite seriously with no power to carry it out except in thought and word. Similar instances might be quoted of other prophets commanded to take up impossible positions and discharge impossible duties. In no case must the command be assumed to have been a mere form of speech. It always carried with it the responsibility of acting—not in the outward sphere of politics, but in the inward sphere of mind, in which so many conflicts, so many sufferings, so many errors are possible. Our prophet never undertook in any outward form the rule and governance of his oppressed and impoverished people; but in his own mind he went through it all, discharged the duties of a faithful ruler, accepted the responsibilities, however hard, and accepted also the reward, however bitter. We may call this a "parable" if we like, because there was no outward action corresponding to it; but it differed *toto cœlo* from a parable in this, that the prophet gravely accepted the commission as a fact not a fancy, and speaks quite seriously of himself as having carried it out. *As far as he was concerned*, it was apparently all one as though he had really ruled in Israel. "So I fed the flock of slaughter, verily the poor of the flock." That includes literal feeding, no doubt, in those days of famine. That would be part of his duty as the Shepherd of his people, just as it is part of the duty of an Indian Governor of to-day; but only part, of course. And then in order to lead his flock, or to support his own steps in leading them, he supplied himself with two staves, and gave them allegorical names, Beauty and Bands. The names speak for themselves, since every true shepherd must set himself these two great tasks, to make his flock fair and gracious in the eyes of all who look upon it, and to keep it undivided and undistracted. But he had other responsibilities, as God's shepherd, and more painful ones. "I cut off the three shepherds in one month; for my soul was weary of them, and their soul also loathed

me." It seems certain to me that "the three shepherds" were some actual rulers of Israel with whom our prophet became convinced that he could not possibly work. They disliked one another too cordially and too necessarily for that. There was nothing for it but to make a clean sweep of them, if the flock was to be fed to any good effect. So far then the prophet has acted faithfully and vigorously in his office, but only so far. For some reason which he does not state he suddenly flings up his office in disgust and anger. The passionate and petulant words of *v.* 9, together with the cutting of the staves which follows, are no mere parable. They reflect the violent emotion of a soul which has tried hard to be good and patient until the moment when an over-mastering irritation and despair sweeps all before it. Such outbursts of passion were not unknown to Jeremiah, nor wholly unknown to Elijah, or even to Moses himself. If words mean anything, they point to such an outburst of real passion in the soul of our prophet also. One thing remained—to get his wages for the work he had done, since the work was at an end. It is easy to read the mutual scorn and exasperation of both parties to this unhappy transaction, and difficult indeed to believe that such an evident bitterness of feeling had no existence except in a vision or in a dream. What could be so naturally, because so petulantly, contemptuous as the words, "If ye think good, give me my hire; and if not, forbear"? As much as to say, "It is all one to *me* if you choose to be as dishonest as you are unmanageable; *I* don't care." And what so naturally, because so deliberately, contemptuous as the answer expressed in the thirty pieces of silver? *They* would not cheat him of his full wages, not *they*. *They* would not take advantage of his offer to let them off a just payment. He should have the exact sum he was worth—the sum long ago fixed as the compensation value of an unskilled slave. So far we can follow with a

fair amount of certitude the inward history of our prophet, although all attempts to connect that history with outward events are frustrated by the obscurity of the narrative. What follows is more difficult. In *v.* 15 he is told that he has yet an office to fulfil, and a part to play. He is to take unto him the instruments of a foolish shepherd, and the character and the fate of that shepherd are declared unto him in the next two verses. We may ask in passing what the instruments of a foolish (or worthless) shepherd are? The answer will doubtless be that they are just the same as those of a wise and good shepherd, *with this difference.* A foolish person always overdoes his part. The shepherd had only a crook and a staff and a wallet, and maybe a sling (like David); and a knife and a flute in his girdle. The foolish shepherd would have all these carefully displayed about him. He would have all the possible stock-in-trade of a shepherd of the largest possible size and the newest possible pattern. He would be advertising himself all the time; and whilst he was parading his shepherd's paraphernalia he would lose sight of his sheep. When he wearied of that, and when he grew hungry and angry, he would begin to slay the sheep to feed himself. But what is the true connection between this command in *v.* 15 and what goes before? Surely it is not far to seek. The servant of Jehovah who had been charged to sustain (in some way we cannot define) the part of good shepherd had thrown up his office in disgust and despair. Humanly speaking that disgust and despair were justified by the ingratitude and insolence of the people. But they were wrong, clearly wrong, in Jehovah's servant who had been chosen to "present" the Shepherd of Israel. It is not possible, because one is in a very bad humour, to get rid thus lightly of responsibilities laid upon one from on high. "Shepherd" he had to be; if not good shepherd, then bad shepherd. There is, unhappily, no other alternative

allowed in the counsels of the Most High. No doubt the people *deserved* to have it so, and they had their deserts. If they will not hear the voice of that Shepherd who is the Life, then are they "appointed as a flock for Sheol," and "Death shall be their shepherd." But the shepherd also must suffer. A petulant temper and a bitter sense of injustice cannot save him from himself; he must become bad shepherd, and be the final ruin of the flock. And he must look forward to the recompense of reward due to him that spoils Jehovah's flock.

It is here, as I venture to think, that we find the explanation of that most obscure passage in chapter xiii. 7–9. Standing where it does, it is inexplicable, for no reasonable account can be given of its connection with the context, or of what it meant for the prophet. We have no doubt a firm conviction that every "prophecy" which we apply to the Messiah arose out of something in the prophet's circumstances or surroundings, or else out of something in his own mental history: it must have had some basis, some starting point, in the time then present: it must have had a meaning for the prophet out of which its meaning for the Messiah arose according to those laws which govern the fulfilments of prophecy. Where they stand, these three verses are hopeless. Most critics wish to remove them from their present place, and to read them at the close of chapter xi. The recurrence of those leading thoughts of "sword," "shepherd," "flock," make this suggestion an obvious one. Whether we agree to this rearrangement of verses or no, we shall probably all agree that xiii. 7–9 can only be understood at all by being taken in close connection with chapter xi. and not with its immediate context.

Now if this be done, it seems to me that no more assumptions are necessary, no other actors in the great drama introduced. It is the very sword foretold in xi. 17 as bound

to fall sooner or later upon the arm and the eye of the evil shepherd who left caring for his flock, and so became their enemy. And that is the very shepherd of chapter xi.—a man indeed, and yet Jehovah's "fellow" in a mystery. For it is one of the chief features of this wonderful book that Jehovah identifies Himself in the most surprising way with His shepherd, and His shepherd with Himself. The price paid for the shepherd He deliberately and unreservedly accepts as the price which they put upon Himself (*v.* 13), and orders it to be dealt with accordingly. It is true that the evangelist who quotes the scripture (Matt. xxvii. 9) is apparently quite blind to this most remarkable feature of it, and has actually altered it so as to obliterate the very thing which makes it most distinctively "Christian" for us —an unexpected fact which meets us again in connection with the New Testament citations of xiii. 7 and xii. 10. But that cannot possibly alter the character of the original prophecy. The shepherd whom they of Israel rejected and insulted *was* the recognised representative and *alter ego* of Jehovah Himself. Nor could he divest himself by his own wilfulness of that character. His sin and his punishment were so great, precisely because he was still Jehovah's "fellow," who had been assumed into a sublime partnership, a holy *solidarité*, of work and office and position, and had *failed* to discharge with patient zeal the duties and reponsiblities of that high-exalted state.

It is therefore, as I take it, a mistake to dwell upon those words "my shepherd, and . . . the man that is my fellow" as though they were only meant to intimate the greatness and the majesty of him to whom they refer. They do that, but only in order to make it clear *why* the sword is invoked against him by Jehovah. The same "sword" which invoked by him had cut off the three evil shepherds in one month (xi. 8) must now be called out against himself, forasmuch as he had become as one of

them—he, who in a mystery had played the part of God's vicegerent and partner in His righteous acts. When he was removed, the sheep would be scattered indeed; but better so than perish wholesale under his evil guidance.

I venture to claim for this interpretation that it is all in keeping, and presents us with a definite and intelligible picture. Underneath the broken and disjointed fragments of the story, with its references more or less obscure to the history of Israel, there is the story of a soul. It is the story of one who, like Jonah certainly, and perhaps like others among the prophets, cannot rise to the height of his vocation—or at least cannot abide there. One who breaks down under the tremendous strain to which he is exposed, cuts asunder his staves, renounces his ideals, flings up his office. One who is punished according to his failure, first by deterioration of character and conduct, and last by utter destruction. True, it is impossible to say, and useless to guess, how far the prophet actually went in the path of disobedience—how far his wilfulness actually carried him on the road to ruin. But he went far enough to see the end—far off perhaps, but all the same inevitable; spiritually discerned may be, but none the less real. He realized in himself what it meant—that change from good to bad, from bad to worse. He awaited in himself the stroke of the sword: the more surely because in his own hands it had cut short the evil ways of others. The details of outward history are of little moment, but the story of a soul which had knowledge of the Most High is of the profoundest interest, wherever its lot was cast; and here was one who, in a certain true sense, stood very near to the Most High and might have been crowned—with thorns indeed, for that rejection and insult were his earthly recompense,—but yet with glory and honour unspeakable.

If I am right in believing that this was in outline the per-

sonal history of the prophet—a history which we can only follow with any distinctness on the side of his inward experiences—then it follows that any satisfactory application of prophecy to our Lord must arise out of this personal history. We need not in the least disdain such verbal applications as we find in Matt. xxvii. 9 or John xix. 37. But unquestionably our deepening knowledge of the prophet entitles us to look deeper. The underlying basis of all such applications must be found in the fact that our prophets occupied the place for the time being of Jehovah's shepherd, and that as such he was in a true sense identified with Jehovah Himself. He is a type of *the* Good Shepherd, not arbitrarily but by virtue of what he was and what he did. He prefigures *the* Good Shepherd, as everybody sees, in that he feeds the flock destined otherwise for slaughter, and especially the poor of the flock, who in return are especially ready to recognise his authority. He prefigures Him in the choice of the two staves, Beauty and Bands. There are two things above all others which characterise the flock as fed by Christ—the *charm* of their Christian life and conversation, and the strong instinct of *unity* which binds them together. What is not so often seen is that he really prefigures the Good Shepherd in a point where we might easily see difference only. The prophet in his official character cut off "the three shepherds," *i.e.* the previous rulers who misgoverned the people. Our Lord said, "all that came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them." Now that sounds harsh and sweeping, and commentators are at pains to soften it down. It is only necessary to remember that He spake as the Good Shepherd who was alone responsible for the sheep, and He spake of these others, not as they were in their private character, but as rivals and competitors for the leadership of the flock. So He "cut off" all these shepherds by that one strong saying.

Again, the precise amount at which he was "prised" when his work was done is of no real importance. It was one of those superficial correspondences which had such a powerful attraction for the simple piety of the first evangelist. But what really made the transaction a true prophecy was of course the studied insult, the implied comparison to a disabled slave; and along with this the express assertion that it was Jehovah Himself whom they thus lightly esteemed. It was the Father whom they vilified in the Son: it was the eternal King and Shepherd of Israel to whom they greatly preferred Barabbas.

It is not difficult to get so far as this, if once we recognise the fact that we are perfectly free to see much deeper into the type than it was given to St. Matthew to see. But the next step is more difficult. We feel certain that the astonishing prophecy in xiii. 7–9 finds its ultimate fulfilment in our Lord, but how is it to be explained? The evangelists do not help us, for here again St. Matthew has deliberately altered the words (chap. xxvi. 31), and in altering them has entirely obscured their chief significance. It is *not* "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered": it is a far more remarkable saying than that, and much more peculiarly and profoundly true of our Lord. It is "smite the shepherd"; the command is Jehovah's command, and it is addressed to the "sword" which has been invoked in the previous verse. The "sword" means no doubt those forces of death and destruction which are employed by the Lord of all to fulfil His purposes; and more especially those hostile human agencies whether of war, or of civil government (Rom. xiii. 4), or of popular rage, whereby men's lives are cut short. In any case the essential point is that the "sword" is invoked and (as it were) commissioned by Jehovah, although it is to act against His own Shepherd and Partner. One sees of course in a moment how it came true of our Lord. It

was "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" that He was delivered unto His foes, that they might do unto Him whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done (Acts ii. 23; iv. 28). Whatsoever theological difficulties may be involved in such statements, they were clearly and deliberately made. It was the Father whose decree awoke the sword against His beloved Son. But granting this, how does the type arise? Where is the historical basis on which alone it can stand secure? My answer is found in the application for which I have argued above—the application of these words to the prophet as bad shepherd, when he had thrown up his office as good shepherd. The sword was invoked in the type against a shepherd and a representative of Jehovah who had deserved condign punishment. It was invoked in the antitype against a Shepherd and a Representative of Jehovah who had not deserved it in the least, but who had nevertheless brought it upon Himself because He chose to be the Representative of all sinners. It does not matter in the least what theory of the Atonement we hold: it is certain that the sentence of the Sanhedrim "he is guilty of death" was *as much a foregone conclusion* in the eternal counsels of Heaven as in the infamous conclave of Caiaphas and his crew. People must take the consequences of their own doings. Since *He* had willed to identify Himself, in His infinite pity and desire to save, with all the wicked upon earth, He too must take the consequences, and the fate of the evil shepherd must overtake Him.

Thus our prophet was a rue figure of the Divine Shepherd not only in his work while he was faithful, not only in his shameful treatment when his work was over; but also in his mournful end when he endured the inevitable recompense of unfaithfulness and sin. It becomes quite plain and simple when we perceive that in the type the faithfulness and unfaithfulness were successive and both his own;

in the antitype co-existent—the one His own indeed, the other ours and only His as the Representative of fallen men, and amongst them of our prophet himself.

R. WINTERBOTHAM.

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN:

ITS PLACE IN NEW TESTAMENT CRITICISM.

THE baptism of John is of more than doctrinal importance in the history of the apostolic age. There is reason to think that it has a critical significance in the growth and formation of the gospel tradition. The later disciples of the Baptist constituted a danger in the early Church, and the presence of the danger moulded to some extent the character of the gospel teaching.

It is at Ephesus that they first appear in the records of the Acts. It is said of Apollos that he had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and that he taught carefully the things concerning Jesus, "knowing only the baptism of John" (Acts xviii. 25). He is reckoned among Christian teachers, though it is implied that his teaching is defective. In the case of the Twelve, whom St. Paul found on reaching Ephesus, it is clear that their practice, as well as their teaching, was defective. They baptized into John's baptism, which St. Paul regarded as invalid. The fault in their teaching is touched by the first question he put to them: "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" They were, on their own confession, ignorant of the Holy Ghost; they neglected Christian baptism, yet they were spoken of as disciples (xix. 1–7). They "were Christians, though imperfectly informed Christians." [1] They were possibly, as Bishop Lightfoot suggests, whilst he warns against hasty conclusions, "early representatives

[1] Lightfoot, *Colossians*, p. 402.