

Hermeneutics - principles of interpretation

Why can't we just read what it says? It's not that simple

Eg.

1, Zechariah 11: 1-3 Cedars, Cypress, Oaks literal but also authorities

2, The Lion of the tribe of Judah (½ symbolic & ½ literal)

3, "This is my Body" - a serious issue in the 1500's Reformation

Coming to Zechariah 12 --- big issue with most of older commentaries

They contain much truth but take as only symbolic what is literal also.

To them

Israel = Spiritual Israel = the Church. The old Israel has fulfilled its purpose with the arrival of the Messiah. Now they say the Church is made of both Jew and Gentile but there is no longer a special place for Israel in God's plans. Cf. Matt. 21: 33 ... , Matt.19:28

Jews and Gentiles both come to Christ on the same basis (Rom. 3:22)

Paul uses 'Israel' in two senses in Rom. 9:6 ie believing Jews and unbelieving Jews cf Rom. 2:28-29

The role of modern day Israel is considered to have no special part to play in the future kingdom any more than any other nation.

These views are now called by some – "Replacement Theology"

Replacement Theology approach to Zechariah 12

The interpretation of words like Jerusalem, Judah, David's house in Zechariah 12 are considered as metaphors (symbolic) for the Kingdom, God's people. They are "spiritualised" because there is no clear reference to the church in the OT since it was a secret (mystery) kept by God till the NT (Ephesians 3:6). Commentators read "the Church" into these names.

Cf. H C Leupold in his Exposition of Zechariah says "It will be seen that the prophecy in Zechariah 12 covers all time from that in which the prophet wrote to the end of days. What is said concerning Judah applies to the people of God of all times. The claims made for Jerusalem's future find their ultimate fulfilment in the true Zion of God – His church; in fact they can be applied to Jerusalem only insofar as she for a time harboured the church of God. The whole passage speaks of God's sovereign care and protection of the church of the Old and New Testaments through the ages and more particularly of the church's victory rather than the victory of Judah after the flesh."

Cf. Hengstenberg – "A real conflict between the city of Jerusalem and all the nations of the earth is in itself a very improbable thing"

Of course 'Jerusalem' can be spiritualised cf Galatians 4:24, but remember this is 1st Century writing before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Hebrews 12:22 compares with Rev.21: 1-2

There is a measure of truth in the partial fulfilments as forerunners of later days but this approach can also produce a blind spot to Israel now and has generated much hostility to Jews.

A non- replacement approach to Zechariah 12 sees that 'Jerusalem' normally means the literal place, 'Judah' is the land, and David's line as the royal family, ie a literal view. Prophecy often does have quite a measure of symbolism but there are also clearly literal parts too eg. The Messiah entering Jerusalem on a donkey, betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, a pierced redeemer.

Partial fulfilments of Zechariah 12

Pouring out the Holy Spirit cf. Pentecost >>>>> revivals

Mourning in Luke 23:48, Acts 2:37

Looking on the one pierced (by grace) in Jn. 19:37 but also negative aspect in Matt.24:30, Rev. 1:7