

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



**PATREON**

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_expositor-series-1.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php)

*DOUBLE PICTURES IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL  
AND APOCALYPSE.*

CONCLUDING PAPER.

WE have considered in two previous papers what have been spoken of as Double Pictures in the Fourth Gospel; and we have now to see whether any illustrations of the same method of Structure are to be found in the Apocalypse. We are met, indeed, in turning to this part of our subject, by the difficulty that the interpretations of certain passages of the Apocalypse upon which we shall proceed, are not by any means accepted by all commentators. Our first duty, therefore, must be to vindicate, from considerations quite independent of the structural principle before us, the interpretations we adopt. We cannot first deduce the interpretations from the supposed structure, and then infer the structure from the interpretations. This much, however, will be conceded, that the more we succeed in establishing the structure the greater will be the degree of probability added to the interpretations upon which it rests. Acts establish character, but character comes in afterwards to aid us in the interpretation of acts, even of the very acts from which we at first deduced it.

The first passage which naturally suggests itself upon the point before us is the description given by the Apocalyptic Seer of the Seven Churches of Asia or, in other words, of the one universal Church of Christ. The description is contained in Revelation i. 12-20, where we are first told that St. John "saw seven golden candlesticks" (verse 12), afterwards explained to be "seven churches" (verse 20); and next that, in the right hand of the glorious Person described in the vision, there were "seven stars" (verse 16), of which it is again said at a later point in the Chapter, "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches" (verse 20). The chief question arising here is the meaning of the word "angels." On this question we have already spoken in

an earlier number of the *Expositor*,<sup>1</sup> and it would be out of place to repeat the arguments there adduced against several of those meanings which have been adopted by different enquirers, and in favour of what seems to be the only tenable one. The word "angel" is of constant occurrence in the Apocalypse, and on every sound principle of interpretation it must be understood wherever it is possible to do so in the same way. This is more especially the case with a word the use of which by the writer is so peculiar to himself. Where else but in this book do we read of an "angel" of the winds, of the abyss, of fire, or of the waters (Chaps. vii. 1, ix. 11, xiv. 18, xvi. 5)? while even the Son Himself is said, in the very opening of the book, to signify the revelation "by his angel" unto his servant John (Chap. i. 1). A careful comparison of the many passages in which the word occurs can hardly leave a doubt upon the mind that the "angel" of any person or thing is a form of expression used to denote the passing of that which it represents from a condition of rest into one of activity. Everything in the universe has a mode of action, a voice. When it acts or speaks it does so by its "messenger" or "angel"; and thus its angel comes to be a representative of the thing itself, as it turns from inward contemplation or repose to the exercise of influence upon others. But "the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches" (verse 20); that is, they are the seven churches viewed in a state of activity rather than of rest. In the passage we are considering it will thus be seen that we have two figures for the Church of Christ. She is "seven golden candlesticks": she is "seven stars"; and, seven being but another mode of expressing unity, upon the force of which it is unnecessary to dwell, we are further entitled to say that she is a "golden candlestick," that she is a "star." We have a double picture of the Church.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. viii. (First Series) p. 205.

Nor is it difficult to see wherein the climax of this double picture lies. As a "golden candlestick" the Church is set in the sanctuary of God; she burns before the throne of the Divine Majesty; the eye of the world cannot penetrate into the secret of her tabernacle. There by day, and in all probability also by night, she sends forth her rays, yet less for the purpose of illuminating objects around her than for that of bringing out the glory of her own stem, towards which the wicks of all her lamps are trimmed, and which had been wrought into its perfect beauty in order to typify Him on whom the Church depends. The Church has entered into her chamber, and shut the door, that in communion with her Lord alone she may gain continual accessions of nourishment and strength. It is the Church in herself then, in her inner life, in her quiet and unmarked fellowship with God, that we behold when we see her as a "golden candlestick." All is changed when we see her as a "star." She is not now in a quiet chamber, but is set in the very front of the firmament of heaven, when the sun has gone down below the one horizon, and we are waiting for him to rise above the other horizon of our view. She is shining there where her light is diffused far and wide, and where "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. xii. 3). The world sees her now; the weary traveller is cheered by her; the mariner far out of sight of land finds in her a guide upon his trackless waste of waters; she shines not for God only but for men. The climax cannot be mistaken. The two figures also come before us in their proper order, whether of nature or of grace. Historically the Church was a "candlestick" before she was a "star," and never in any age can she be the latter until she has been the former. Finally, it may be remarked, for we shall have occasion to notice something of the same kind again, that the climax

traceable in the two figures consists in passing from something Jewish to something wider and more universal. The "golden candlestick" was peculiarly Jewish. The "star" is confined to no single nation; it shines upon Jew and Gentile alike, and it is equally precious to both.

From this double figure of the Church let us turn to a double representation of a heresy within the Church. The passage will be found in Chapter ii. 14, 15, in the Epistle to the Church at Pergamos: "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there some that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like manner." Have we two lines of erroneous teaching here, or only one? At first sight it might seem as if there were two,—“some that hold the teaching of Balaam,” and “some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.” This view has been accordingly taken by eminent commentators such as Professor Plumptre, who holds that two sects are brought under our notice which started from entirely different points, although they came practically to the same conclusion (*The Expositor*, First Series, Vol. II., pp. 186, 433). By far the larger number of commentators, however, adopt the idea that only one sect is spoken of, and various considerations may be mentioned which seem to confirm their conclusion. (1) Of the Nicolaitans as a separate sect nothing is known. Some of the early Fathers derived the name from Nicolaus, one of the seven deacons mentioned in Acts vi. 5, and imagined that those here alluded to had sprung from him. Others denied this origin of the name; but both parties had obviously no information either of the history or of the tenets of such a sect, except what they found in the passage before us. That the sect, if it existed, had Nicolaus for its founder is indeed in the highest

degree improbable; the testimony of antiquity is against the supposition (*Smith's Dict. of the Bible*—NICOLAUS); and we may safely regard it as a mere conjecture. Nor is any other Nicolaus known from whom the Nicolaitans could have had their origin. (2) The description given in Chapter ii. 20 of certain false teaching at Thyatira leaves it indubitable that it did not differ from that mentioned here: "She teacheth and seduceth my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols." But that teaching is connected with "Jezebel," a name almost universally recognized as one used by the Seer in a mystical sense, although with the thought of the impious wife of Ahab also in his view. There is no improbability in thinking that the word "Nicolaitans," whether it had a historical foundation or not, is also used mystically. (3) The position and connexion of the word "also" in verse 15 is to be noted, for it is closely connected with "thou," not with "hast." We are not to read "So thou hast also," etc., but "So thou also hast," etc., or, "So hast thou also," etc. No second class of false teachers is about to be spoken of, but a class precisely resembling those who troubled the Church of God in the days of Balaam. (4) The addition of the words "in like manner" at the close of verse 15 strengthens this conclusion. The words shew that the second class of false teachers is really identical with the first.

But if this be so the question naturally arises, Whence came the word "Nicolaitans?" a question to which the ready answer has long been given that "Nicolaus" is a Greek translation of "Balaam," a translation given after the manner of the writer of this book, who in Chapter ix. 11 translates "Abaddon" by "Apollyon," the Hebrew by the Greek. Of the derivation thus assigned to "Balaam" it is unnecessary to speak. It is familiar to all who will take any interest in the contents of this paper; and it may only be well to observe that there is no force in the objection

sometimes urged against the view here adopted,—that the proposed derivation is not etymologically correct. Even were this true, although it is not to be forgotten that that derivation has been defended by eminent names, the argument would not be affected. The popular instinct, so strong amongst the Jews, which took delight in noting similarities of sound, would certainly not concern itself about scientific etymology, any more than it does so among other peoples, and where other tongues are used. Similarity of sound would be enough, and the name בְּלַעַם, whether derived from בָּלַעַם and עָם or from בָּלַעַם with ם suffixed, would equally suggest to the Jewish ear the meaning “destroyer of the people.” Nor, again, is there any reason to be perplexed by the use in the compound Greek word of a verb signifying to conquer rather than to destroy. Evil is always in the Apocalypse, if we must not at present say in the writings of St. John, the counterpart of good. Christ is constantly the “overcomer,” the “conqueror,” and his enemies are the would-be overcomers, the would-be conquerors of his people. We are thus led to the conclusion that the “Nicolaitans” spoken of in Chapter ii. 15 are no sect distinct from the followers of Balaam mentioned in verse 14, but are designated by this mystical name because they imitated the example and the errors of the false prophet.

Still further, however, it must be noticed that the climax which we have always found in the second description or designation of anything, when compared with the manner in which it is first introduced to us, is also to be found here. We see it partly in the circumstance that the first name is Hebrew, the second Greek. Considered in itself, indeed, this circumstance might well be regarded as of trifling import. But when we have already seen a similar climax in the golden candlestick and the star, and when we shall meet it again in a fresh illustration of the general principle

to which we shall immediately turn, it can hardly be passed over as unworthy of notice. What is Hebrew is far more limited in its range than what is Greek. In addition to this the climax is also traceable in the associations which, by the time we reach Chapter ii. 15, have become connected with the name "Nicolaitans." Every student of the Apocalypse will allow that nothing is more characteristic of the book than a tendency to scatter throughout its pages different notices of anything of which it speaks. Ample illustration of this point has been given by Archbishop Trench in his work on the Epistles to the Seven Churches. The fact is clear, that the imperfect description of any object given us at one point is intended to be filled out by the larger, or simply additional, description given of it at another. When we meet the object a second time, we are to remember what we have read of it before; when we meet it a first time, we are to wait for the further information regarding it that may yet be afforded. Now the Nicolaitans are not mentioned for the first time in Chapter ii. 15. They have been already spoken of in verse 6 of the same Chapter, where it is said to the church in Ephesus, "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." These last words, then, we are to carry forward along with us; we are to add them in thought to the mention made a second time of the same teaching in verse 15; and in that mention we have a distinct element of climax. The conditions of a double picture are thus fulfilled in the passage before us.

Once more, we turn for another and still more important illustration of the point with which we deal, to the two visions of Chapter vii., the first extending from verse 2 to verse 8, and describing the sealing of the 144,000, the second extending from verse 9 to verse 17, and containing the description of the great multitude standing before the throne of God and of the Lamb. It is well known that



many, perhaps most, commentators regard these as two different companies, and that the negative school of criticism has gone further, looking upon the method of their juxtaposition as a conclusive proof of the narrow Judaic spirit of the Apocalypse. Baur has even asserted that those spoken of in the second vision are to be regarded as, properly speaking, only "an appendix to the 144,000 sealed out of all the tribes of Israel" (*Die Kanon. Evang.*, p. 348). The point is one of the utmost importance in its bearing on questions connected with the authorship, the date, and the meaning of the Apocalypse. If Baur's representation be correct, it will be very hard to believe that that book and the fourth Gospel issued from the same pen. It will be almost impossible to believe that the Apocalypse belongs to the later years of St. John's life. Our contention is that the two visions relate to the same company, and that this company includes the whole Church of God, both Jew and Gentile, from every age. It is not denied that first appearances are against this view; but it is urged that the peculiar mode of presentation employed by the Seer is occasioned by that love of his for double pictures which has already been in part illustrated. We turn, then, to the first vision with the view of asking whether it contains any signs of including others than members of the Judæo-Christian Church.

(1) The very name "Israel" indicates that more than Jews by birth are in the writer's mind. The word occurs in two other passages of his book, Chapters ii. 14 and xxi. 12. In the first it must be referred to the Jewish Church alone, because the time alluded to is that of Balaam: and all that can be said further is that there these "children" or rather "sons" of Israel are evidently thought of as the type and emblem of that Church of God which was to be established in the days of Christ, and which in Pergamos unquestionably included Gentile as

well as Jewish believers. In the second passage mentioned the word occurs in connexion with the New Jerusalem. The names written on the twelve gates of that city are those of "the twelve tribes of the children of Israel." It is hardly possible to doubt that these twelve tribes represent the whole people of God. Surely by the time that the New Jerusalem descends upon the earth, and when all the enemies of God's people have been cast into the lake of fire, the distinction between Jew and Gentile has been completely abolished. The city is inhabited not only by members of God's ancient people, but by all the followers of the Lamb. "*The nations* shall walk amidst the light thereof, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it"; "they shall bring the honour and glory of *the nations* into it"; those who enter into it are "they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (verses 24, 26, 27). They enter in by the gates; they have a right to enter; perhaps the names written upon the gates are a token to them of the privilege which they possess; in these names they behold their own. Confirmation of this is found in the fact that on the twelve courses of the foundation stones upon which the city rests are the "twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (verse 14), of the twelve to whom every believer even of the earliest times knew it had been said, "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts i. 8; comp. Matt. xxviii. 19). The names of the Apostles indicated universality, and not less did the names upon the gates. This sense of the word, too, is conformable to that in which we find it constantly employed both in the Old and the New Testament. In the former it is the designation of the theocratic people in their relation to God, as his Church. In the latter it is not once used except in a spiritual sense, 1 Corinthians x. 18 being no exception to this rule, for there the Apostle distinctly ex-

plains himself by the words which he subjoins, "Behold Israel *after the flesh*." No Judæo-Christian community, no church composed simply of converts from among the Jews, ever constitutes Israel in a New Testament sense. The one Church of God in which there is neither Jew nor Greek is the only Israel which either our Lord (Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 30) or his Apostles know. If, therefore, we are to interpret the word "Israel" in the passage before us as applying to a Jewish Church alone, we shall be interpreting it in a sense to which, notwithstanding the frequency with which it is used, no parallel can be found. Nor does the prefix "every *tribe*" make the slightest difference. Let our readers look at Chapter i. 7, and they will find there an expression which will at once put them in possession of the Apocalyptic writer's thought upon this point—"And all the tribes of the earth shall mourn." Why the *tribes* of the earth? Because the writer sees all men divided into two classes in direct contrast with one another. The one is "the tribes of the earth," the godless of every nation; the other is "the tribes of the sons of Israel," the godly, the believing, whether of Jewish or of Gentile birth.

(2) The number spoken of, 144,000, points to the same conclusion. There can be no doubt as to the manner in which this number is obtained. It is  $12 \times 12$ , and then raised to thousands. But the number 12 is throughout the Apocalypse not the number of Old Testament Israel, of the Jewish Church; it is rather the number of the Church of God in its widest sense. Once indeed it belonged to the Jewish Church,—at the time when, although the Good Shepherd had other sheep that were "not of this fold," these had not yet been brought into the one flock under the one Shepherd (John x. 16). But no sooner was the one flock formed, no sooner was the voice of the one Shepherd heard by all, than the number which had been the mark of the ancient Church became that

of those who were not so much a new Church, as the old Church upon a wider basis and with more enlarged privileges. According to the uniform conception of Scripture the whole Church of God, without distinction of nationality, is the "seed of Abraham," and if therefore the number 12 denoted the latter it must denote the former. The use of "thousands" leads to the same conclusion, for it will be found that in the Apocalypse that number is always associated with the idea of what is perfect in the kingdom of God. When, therefore, we find the number 12 first squared, and then perfected by the addition of thousands, we have a very clear intimation that the Seer is thinking of the redeemed in all the completeness of their company. The Apocalypse itself, however, affords further and positive proof that the 144,000 include more than the numbers of the Jewish Church, or rather of the Christian Church gathered from among the Jews. We meet them again in Chapter xiv. 1, where the Seer beholds "the Lamb standing on Mount Zion and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand." It would paralyse all exegesis if this be not the same 144,000 of which we read in Chapter vii.; but, if so, how are they described? In verse 3 it is said of them that they are "they that had been purchased out of the earth," words which do not mean simply that they were a part of the Redeemer's purchase to which, were it a fit time for thinking of them, others might be added, but that they were co-extensive with the whole company of purchased ones. This company again, so described, includes Gentile Christians, for the new song sung to the Lamb when He takes the book sealed with seven seals out of the Father's hand is, "Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and didst purchase to God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Chap. v. 9). Still clearer perhaps is

the language of verse 4, where a further description is given us of the 144,000: "These were purchased from among *men*," for it can hardly be necessary to say that the words "man" or "men" are always used in the Apocalypse to denote the whole human race, and not any particular section of it. Once more, it is said of the 144,000 of Chapter xiv. that they have the Lamb's name and "the name of his Father written on their foreheads" (verse 1), a trait which meets us at a later stage as characteristic of *all* the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem: "And they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads" (Chap. xxii. 4). No doubt it may be said that the language of Chapter xiv. 4, where the 144,000 of that Chapter are described as "the first fruits unto God and the Lamb," is inconsistent with our argument; but the difficulty, so far as it concerns us at present, is removed by a comparison of James i. 18: "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." No commentator doubts that these words include Gentile as well as Jewish Christians, and that it was therefore a method of conception in the early Christian Church to think of all Christians as the first-fruits of all the creatures of God (comp. Plumptre *in loc.*, and his *Introduction*, p. 38).

Putting these different considerations together, we may surely conclude that the 144,000 seen with the Lamb upon Mount Zion are a representation of all believers who have fought their fight, and are now entered upon their reward. There is among them no distinction between those of Jewish and those of Gentile birth. They are all equally Christ's purchased ones: they are all equally followers of the Lamb. But, if so, it seems absolutely necessary that we should find the same characteristics in the 144,000 who are sealed in Chapter vii.

(3) There is another sealing spoken of in the Apocalypse,

that of his own by Satan or the Beast. Thus we read, "And he causeth all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, that there be given them a mark on their right hand or upon their forehead; and that no man should be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark" (Chap. xiii. 16, 17), to which may be added Chapters xiv. 9, xvi. 2, xix. 20, xx. 4, all of which speak of a similar "mark" imprinted on the "forehead" as in Chapter vii. 3, or on the hand. It will be observed, too, in the words which we have quoted at length, that to those who have not this mark the privileges of the Beast's kingdom, the buying and selling in the markets of the world, are denied. Now let our readers call to mind, what is probably familiar to most of them, that the style of the Apocalypse is so remarkably characterized by what may be called the principle of contrasts, that whatever is said of God's kingdom has its counterpart in the devil's, or *vice versa*, and they will at once see the use to be made of this fact. It will not be denied that the marking or sealing by the Beast is the portion of *all* ungodly ones, whether they belonged to the Jews or to the Gentile nations. The counterpart must be equally extensive. Hence the description of the 144,000 in Chapter vii. 3 as "the servants of God"; "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God,"—not some of his servants, but "the servants," evidently implying all of them, as it is said in Chapter xix. 5, "all ye his servants."

(4) We remark that if Gentile Christians are not included in the sealing of Chapter vii. they are never sealed. It will not be contended that they are not saved; but they must be saved without being sealed. We ask any one to reflect whether such an idea is consistent with the imagery of this book. The seal is God's mark upon his own, his pledge to them that, whatever be the troubles coming upon the earth,

they "shall never perish, and no one shall pluck them out of his hand." Can we suppose them saved without having received this mark, this pledge? The whole spirit of the book compels us to answer the question in the negative. Yet, if they are not sealed in Chapter vii., they are never sealed.

We conclude, therefore, that in the first vision of the 144,000 now before us we have a representation of the whole body of Christ's believing people who are marked by Him for preservation amidst the trials that are to come upon the world. This conclusion, too, is independent of all considerations drawn from the structural principle that we have at present in view. It grounds itself upon the use of words by the writer of the Apocalypse in other passages of his book, as well as in the context of the particular passage with which we deal.

In turning now to the second picture of Chapter vii. it is not necessary to say a single word upon the universality implied in it: "After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues." Nothing can be more general. It is of more consequence to notice that in the relation of the two pictures to each other there is clearly that relation of climax which is demanded by the structural principle we are considering. The first relates to earth, the second to heaven. In the first, believers are still upon the scene of their difficulties and trials and sorrows. True, the winds are for the moment hushed. There is a pause so far at least as the sealing angels and the sealed are concerned, in order that not one of the latter may be omitted. But trial is not over. No sooner shall the sealing be completed than the storm winds will burst forth in renewed fury, and believers must again meet them, strong only in the protecting care and promises of God. How different is the scene in the second picture. All is joy and happiness, anticipation

more than realized, hope more than fulfilled. The members of that great company have had their troubles; but now trouble is for ever past: "These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." In the first picture, they were no doubt safe, but it was amidst hungering and thirsting and tears. In the second, the idea of their safety is continued, but it is amidst circumstances of a very different kind: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life; and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes." The climax of the two pictures is not that of a transition from one part of the Christian Church to all its parts in their completeness. It is from the state of the Church here to her state hereafter. She is encouraged first by the assurance that, whatever troubles come upon the earth, she shall be preserved in the midst of them; and then she has a glimpse given her of that Feast of Tabernacles which she shall celebrate for ever, when her pilgrimage in this world is over, "arrayed in white robes, and palms in her hands" (verse 9).

It may be still further noticed that the climax of the two pictures of which we have been speaking is marked by the same characteristic that we have already found in the Candlestick and the Stars, and in the followers of Balaam and the Nicolaitans. The first figure connects itself with Judaism, the second with the wider range of the Gentile nations. We conclude, therefore, that in the two visions of Chapter vii. we have a double picture of the same central thought,—the preservation by the Almighty of his people whatever be their country or their age.

Other illustrations of the same structure might without



difficulty be found in the Apocalypse. The series of the Trumpet visions, in particular, may upon this principle be compared with the visions of the Seven Bowls. It will be seen that the correspondence between them is so striking as almost to compel the conclusion that they express the same general idea. Their climactic relation also will be manifest to any one who examines them with the slightest care. We may spare our readers, however, a detailed examination of these visions here, leaving it to themselves to make it, if they are of opinion that the general principle has been at least so far established by the illustrations already given.

The conclusion of the whole matter will now be obvious. Dissimilar as are the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse, we seem to find in them, when they are closely examined, a mode of thought which may almost be said to be peculiar to themselves among the books of the New Testament. Each loves to present double pictures of the same object, and to do this in such a way that the second picture shall be in climax to the first. It is true that there are occasional traces of something of the same kind in St. Matthew's Gospel, a circumstance which may help to confirm our belief that it had its foundation in a special tendency of the Jewish mind. Thus in Chapter xiii. of that Gospel we have certain representations of the "kingdom of heaven" which approach at least to a double picture of it. At verse 31 it is likened to a grain of mustard seed which, when sown, "becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof," and in the very next verse it is likened to leaven which a woman took and hid in meal "till the whole was leavened." Again at verse 44 of the same Chapter the kingdom of heaven is compared to "a treasure hidden in the field," and at verse 45 to "a pearl of great price," for the sake of possessing which the finder in each case

went and sold all that he had. Two parables also meet us in Matthew xxv., those of the Ten Virgins and of the Talents, of which a similar remark may be made; for both evidently relate to the same subject and have an intimate relation to one another. In none of these instances, however, does the relation seem to be exactly that of the double picture. The same precise object is not looked at in both cases, though in the second with more deeply graven lines or heightened colouring. What the first Evangelist sees is rather two different aspects of the same object which must be *added* to each other if we would understand it as a whole—in the first group, the external and internal development of the kingdom of God; in the second, its worthiness to have all sacrificed for it when it is found either accidentally or after careful search; in the third, its passive and its active sides. In the double pictures of the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse there is no need of such *addition* of the two parts in order that we may see the nature of the object dealt with. In the first we see all that is in the second; only the material is not so intense and so impressive. With the exception of this approach in St. Matthew to the structural principle we have been considering, there does not appear to be anything of the kind in the other New Testament books. It is peculiar to the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse; and so far therefore it is an argument in favour of identity of authorship. There is nothing in it like what a forger writing the Gospel of St. John, with the Apocalypse already in his hand, and making an effort to spiritualise it, would be prone to imitate. It is too little on the surface, too remote, for the purposes of such imitation. Whatever may be said of it, it is at least the natural, the independent, working of the author's mind in each case; while, at the same time, it is so peculiar in itself that if, on other grounds, there be reason to suppose that the

authorship of the two books is one, it must help to confirm the supposition.

The question, how far we are entitled to make use of this method of structure as a principle of interpretation, depends of course for its answer upon the degree to which it is admitted that the structure has been established. It might have been well, therefore, to have given other illustrations of it, especially from the Fourth Gospel, had we had more ample space at our command. We might have referred to John xiii. 16, "A servant is not greater than his lord, neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him," where no one will deny that the second clause is in climax to the first. We might have referred also to John xiv. 16, compared with verse 26 of the same Chapter—the advance of thought in the second form of the promise being distinctly perceptible in several particulars; to John ix. where the second examination of the blind man, beginning at verse 24, is clearly in climax to the first; or lastly to John xviii. 33–40, the trial of Jesus before Pilate, which finds a higher counterpart in Chapter xix. 1–16. We have probably, however, illustrated the point before us at sufficient length. If, then, it be correct, it at once suggests a most important principle of interpretation, which will be found, when applied to the Apocalypse, to go far towards dispelling the mistaken idea of those who discover in that book the traces of a mind not yet emancipated from Jewish prejudices. It will help us to see that the Author of the Apocalypse is really as wide in his sympathies as is the Author of the Fourth Gospel; and that, if he appears at the first glance to look upon Jewish Christians as more privileged than Christians from among the Gentiles, he really means no more than is implied in the words of his Divine Master to the woman of Samaria, "Salvation is from the Jews" (John iv. 22).

WILLIAM MILLIGAN.