

Adolph Saphir [1831-1891] was a Jewish believer in Jesus who was born-again in Pest (now Budapest) through the preaching of a few of McCheyne's fellow evangelists. He was a Presbyterian pastor, theologian, and author. He was also a contemporary and friend of Charles Spurgeon.

Here is what Saphir said in 1864:

"The Bible is simple and perspicuous. I hold the good old doctrine of the Reformers, that the Bible is given to all men, and that for its understanding we require not the erudition of the Universities, the tradition of the Fathers, the glosses of the scholastics (however valuable these may be in their proper place); to understand God's Word, all that is needed is a humble, childlike heart, conscious of its ignorance and blindness, and the teaching and illumination of the Holy Spirit. All Scripture is profitable for all men, who thus read it, and therefore it must be accessible to the understanding of all.

People are often deterred from the reading of the prophetic portions of Scripture by the assertion that it is difficult for unlearned men to distinguish between what is figurative and literal in prophecy. I do not see the difficulty. I think a child almost can distinguish between the two. When we read that we are to have our loins girded and our lamps burning, even a child knows there is no reference to a literal girdle and lamp; but when the author of the Book of Job narrates the appearing of the angels before God, and the presence of Satan among them, it is evidently meant as a statement of fact. *Why doubt for a single moment that when Zechariah speaks of the feet of the Lord standing on the Mount of Olives the Spirit meant to predict a literal event?*

Consider, again, the prophecies already fulfilled. You argue with a Jew, who does not admit that Jesus is the Messiah; you point out to him the word of Micah concerning Bethlehem, of Isaiah concerning Christ's miraculous birth, of the 22nd Psalm concerning His crucifixion, the prophecies about the thirty pieces of silver, and the Messiah's entrance as a meek and lowly king into Jerusalem, etc. But when the Jew refers to a number of passages in which the coming of the Messiah is connected with the ushering in of a period of universal peace and tranquillity, justice and knowledge, with the glory of Israel in their own land, and the fulfilment of

the promise made unto the fathers, how can you attempt to explain such passages 'spiritually,' when you insist on the literal interpretation of the other series of predictions?

Can anything be more explicit? I ask, When was the covenant of grace made with the Jews? When were they [as a nation] converted [Jer. 31.31-37]. When was their iniquity forgiven and their sin remembered no more? During the last eighteen centuries has [the nation, and all of] Israel been God's people, knowing and loving Him whom they crucified? You say, 'They are to be absorbed into the Church.' God says, 'No, they shall never cease from being a NATION before Me.' [Jer. 31.36] You say, 'They have forfeited their privileges.' Ah! where would you be, but for an unconditional covenant and a gracious God, who deals with you in mercy? But the Lord says, 'for all they have done' He will not cast them off. [Jer. 31.37]

...When they behold that Jehovah, the Deliverer, the Hope and Help of Israel is none other than the once rejected and crucified Jesus, then doubtless shame, confusion, terror, and grief shall take hold of them, even as the brothers of Joseph stood amazed and appalled when the great prince on whom their safety depended revealed himself as their brother, whom they had sold into Egypt. But Joseph had pity and compassion; he spoke to them, nay, embraced them and kissed them; he fell on the neck of his brother Benjamin and wept. Then, we are told, *his brethren talked with him*. And thus, when Jesus shall reveal to them His love and mercy, His pardoning grace and overflowing tenderness, fear and awe shall give way to deep, unutterable self-loathing and contrition; repentance and faith, self-abasement and joy shall burst forth out of the new hearts of flesh, renewed and gained for ever by their Lord and God.

How can any one say that the Jews would - if all this be true - become proud? Does God's favour make us proud? When, sitting at the Lord's Table, you hear the wonderful declaration, 'This is My body, broken for you', and you are assured that Christ gives you His body, which is meat indeed, and His blood, which is drink indeed; do you then think of your worthiness or your sin, of your greatness or your insignificance, of your merits or of God's grace? The Jews shall be bowed down to the very dust by the exceeding great weight of grace and glory bestowed on them. Like the

Apostle Paul, they shall say most emphatically, 'By grace we are what we are. Where is boasting? It is excluded. We are the monuments of His wonderful love. Salvation is of the Lord!'

God's Spirit shall be poured out upon them, and they shall be cleansed from all filthiness and backsliding. They shall remain faithful to God throughout the whole period of the [millennial] kingdom, and 'look back no more.'"