

SIGNS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

INTRODUCTION (II)

THE TIME FORESHADOWED BY THESE SIGNS

By Arlen L. Chirwood

"The time" when events foreshadowed by each of the *eight signs* in John's gospel will be fulfilled is *EXACTLY the SAME* as "the time" when events foreshadowed by the *numerous types* in Genesis will be fulfilled, *with the unchangeable pattern established in the opening two chapters of Genesis and reiterated in the opening two chapters of John.*

Events foreshadowed in *BOTH books* — the *types* in Genesis, the *signs* in John — are *ONE and the SAME*. And these foreshadowed events *will be fulfilled at the end of six days of redemptive work, immediately preceding or on the seventh day.*

(That is, in keeping with the septenary structure of the whole of Scripture — as established in the opening thirty-four verses of Genesis, reiterated in John's gospel — God is going to take six days to perform a redemptive work on man's behalf and then rest the seventh day [the Sabbath rest awaiting the people of God, the Messianic Era (Heb. 4:9)]. And each of these days, as seen in II Peter 3:8 [reflecting back on that previously stated in II Peter (1:12-18; 3:3ff)], will be 1,000 years in length.

And the *signs* in John's gospel, as the *types* in Genesis, point out ahead to this millennial day.)

Inseparability of the Old from the New

When studying the Scriptures — whether the Old Testament or the New Testament — one is studying about *Jesus the Christ*, Whom God has "appointed

heir of all things" (Luke 24:25-27; Heb. 1:2). There is *NOTHING* in the New Testament that is *NOT seen* after some fashion in the Old. The New Testament is simply a revealing, an unveiling, of God's Son, as previously introduced in the Old Testament Scriptures.

"Jesus" is the *Word made "flesh,"* referring, in an inseparable sense, to *BOTH the Old Testament Scriptures* and to God becoming "flesh" in the person of His Son. "Jesus" is *NOT ONLY* God manifested in the *flesh* *BUT the Old Testament Scriptures manifested in the flesh as well.*

There is "the written Word," inseparably identified with "God," and there is this same Word manifested in the form of "flesh," *with life and inseparability seen throughout.*

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God...

And the Word was made [the Word became] flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:1, 2, 14).

One Person, One Goal

Thus, "studying Scripture," one is simply *studying about God's Son*. And note that the *Word* became "flesh" *AFTER* the whole of the Old Testament had been penned *BUT BEFORE* a single word of the New Testament had been penned. In this respect, one would have to conclude that *there is NOTHING in the New that is NOT seen after some fashion in the Old, else God's Son — the Word becoming "flesh" — would have been incomplete at the time of His incarnation.*

THEN, in John 1:14, the *Word* becoming "flesh" is seen in connection with two things:

- 1) *Christ's Glory.*
- 2) *Christ's Sonship, God's Firstborn* ("sonship" implies *rulership*, and it is *firstborn sons* who rule in the human realm).

All of this *can ONLY* take one back to the beginning of God's revelation of His Son, back to the opening

verses of Genesis. That which God desires man to know about His plans and purposes, which He will bring to pass *through His Son*, begin at this point.

And everything from this point forward is REGAL.

Everything has to do with God's Son, God's Firstborn, Who has been "appointed heir of all things." And everything moves toward that day when God's Son will come forth in all His Glory and realize this inheritance.

The Old Testament opens *THIS way*, providing the complete story in the opening book. And the New Testament opens *EXACTLY the SAME way*, providing commentary on the manner in which the Old Testament opens, providing the complete story, after another fashion, in one book as well.

Scripture begins in Genesis with, "In the beginning... [lit., 'In beginning...']," and the New Testament begins *EXACTLY the same way*, though a problem exists because of the manner in which man has arranged the four gospels beginning the New Testament.

The Gospel of John is the *ONLY gospel* which begins the same way Genesis begins, "In the beginning... [lit., 'In beginning...']," along with the fact that both Genesis and John parallel one another completely, from beginning to end.

Thus, *IF* the Gospel of John occupied its proper place in the arrangement of books in the New Testament, *BOTH books*, Genesis and John, *would NOT ONLY* introduce each Testament *EXACTLY the same way* *BUT BOTH of these books would relate the complete story of each Testament — the complete story of Scripture as a whole — at the beginning of each Testament.*

(John's gospel, over the years, has been the one gospel among the four which has provided problems for those arranging the order of the four gospels introducing the New Testament. New Testaments have been printed in the past with John occupying different places among the four, even placed at the beginning of the four gospels.

However, the Gospel of John is presently in the wrong place in relation to the other three [placed after the other three rather than at the beginning]. And *THIS*, along with Christians *NOT understanding the structure of both Genesis and John* — paralleling one another, introducing each Testament, and relating the complete story of Scripture — *can ONLY be*

responsible, in no small part, for an existing Biblical ignorance among Christians concerning the central message of Scripture.

And a purported late date for the writing of John's gospel [usually seen as about 90 A.D.] has not helped matters in the preceding respect. John's gospel, of necessity, by its own internal evidence, had to be written much earlier. Since the gospel was directed to the Jewish people during the re-offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel [evident by the signs (cf. I Cor. 1:22) in conjunction with that stated in John 20:30, 31 concerning *the purpose for these signs*], it could NOT possibly have been written after about 62 A.D. [when this re-offer closed] and may have been written as early as about 45 A.D. [an early date accepted by a number of scholars on the basis of late manuscript evidence].

In fact, because of the place which John's gospel occupies in relation to the other three [paralleling the place which Genesis occupies in relation to the other four books of Moses], it is very likely that John's gospel was written first, before the other three.

Also, note that placing John's gospel at the beginning of the New Testament would allow Luke's gospel to be followed by the Book of Acts. And these two books belong together [both written by Luke] as much as John belongs at the beginning of the gospels.

Luke ends his gospel by relating things about *Christ's ascension*; and he continues this in Acts, with added detail. The only other gospel writer mentioning this is Mark, apart from detail such as Luke provides.

The four gospel writers present *the offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel*. Acts, forming a continuation and somewhat of a fifth gospel, presents *the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel*.

Then, with the New Testament structured in this manner, a *Pentateuch* is seen beginning both Testaments.)

Comparing Genesis and John

Genesis, in the opening two chapters, begins with:

- 1) A creation at a beginning point (1:1).
- 2) A subsequent ruin of the creation (1:2a).
- 3) A restoration of the ruined creation (material creation), through Divine intervention, over six days time (1:2b-25).

4) Man created on the sixth day, following all of God's restorative work, for a revealed purpose having to do with the seventh day (1:26-31).

5) God resting on the seventh day, following all of His work (2:1-3).

John, in the opening two chapters, begins with:

- 1) A creation at a beginning point (1:1-3).
- 2) A subsequent ruin of the creation (1:4, 5).

3) A restoration of the ruined creation (ruined man), through Divine intervention, over six days time (1:6-2:1 [1:29, 35, 43; 2:1]).

4) Man seen as redeemed at the end of six days, following all of God's restorative work, for a revealed purpose having to do with the seventh day (2:2-11).

5) God resting on the seventh day, following all of His work (2:2-11).

In Genesis, the restoration is that of the material creation, foreshadowing the restoration of man even before his creation and fall.

In John, the restoration is that of ruined man, foreshadowed in the Genesis account.

In BOTH, the purpose is the SAME — placing restored man (redeemed man) on a restored earth (a redeemed earth), in a regal position, on the seventh day.

And this septenary, foundational overview, seen in the opening two chapters of each book, relates the complete story of Scripture. Each of the six days of God's restorative work, foreshadowed in either account (Genesis or John), has to do with days of 1,000 years each (cf. II Peter 1:15-18; 3:3-8).

That is to say, God is presently working six days, 6,000 years, to bring about the restoration of both man and the material creation. THEN, at the conclusion of His work, man will be in a position to REALIZE the purpose for his creation in the beginning. Man will be in a position to RULE a restored earth with the second Man, the last Adam, during the seventh day, during the seventh 1,000-year day.

The preceding is the parallel manner in which BOTH books begin; and from this point in BOTH books, the parallel continues.

Genesis is built around numerous types, and John is built around eight signs.

The types in Genesis have to do centrally with Abraham and his seed through Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's progeny through his twelve sons — the nation of Israel. And all of these types provide different facets of God's present restorative work, ending at the SAME place as His past restorative work, on the seventh day, the seventh 1,000-year period.

The signs in John have to do with and are directed to the seed of Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's progeny through his twelve sons — the nation of Israel. And ALL of these signs, EXACTLY as the types in Genesis, provide different facets of God's present restorative work, ending at the SAME place as His past restorative work, on the seventh day, the seventh 1,000-year period.

(Scripture was established in this type structure at the beginning of each Testament. And, within this structure, the relationship of John to Genesis is typical of the relationship of the whole of the New Testament to the whole of the Old Testament.)

The New Testament, through various means [signs, parables, metaphors, other means] simply provides commentary, opening up that previously seen after some fashion in the Old Testament [types, metaphors, the Prophets, etc.]

The whole of Scripture is about Jesus the Christ. And the whole of Scripture moves toward a seventh day, a seventh 1,000-year period, when God's firstborn Son, God's Christ, will come into possession of His inheritance, and, with Israel [presently God's firstborn son (Ex. 4:22, 23)] and the Church [to be revealed as God's firstborn son in that coming day, following the adoption (Rom. 8:14-23; Heb. 12:22, 23)] will realize that seen in the opening chapter of Genesis at the time of man's creation:

"...let them have dominion [Heb. *radah*, 'rule'; '...let them rule']" (Gen. 1:26, 28).

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