

THE HIEROPHANT;

OR

MONTHLY EXPOSITOR OF SACRED SYMBOLS AND PROPHECY.

No. XI. APRIL, 1843.

PROPHETIC DESIGNATIONS OF TIME.

TO PROFESSOR STUART.—LETTER VII.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Following in the order in which you have arranged the several topics of your discussion, I come in the present letter to the consideration of the *prophetical designation of times*. This constitutes the longest and most elaborate part of your treatise, and that also which I believe is usually deemed the most valuable. Of those who are utterly at variance with your previous conclusions respecting the general principles of prophetic interpretation, I have met with numbers who are disposed to adopt your views in regard to the chronological calculus of Daniel and John; and the subjoined extract from the recent work of Mr. Davidson, published in Edinburgh, entitled "Sacred Hermeneutics," indicates that similar sentiments are entertained abroad.

"The accomplished writer of this valuable little book undertakes to prove three things. 1st, That there is no double sense in prophecy. 2dly, That it is intelligible before it is fulfilled, and that the writers themselves were acquainted with the meaning of what they uttered. 3dly, That the designations of time in the prophetic Scriptures are *ordinary* and not *peculiar*. The first two points are briefly treated, and to our mind not altogether satisfactorily. In objection to the *double sense*, he combats such a view of it as is held by no intelligent writer with whom we are acquainted. He contends against the *spiritualizing* of Scripture, a practice, which, if we mistake not, is reprobated by those who hold the double reference of various portions in the Bible. In maintaining that the prophets understood all that they were prompted to write, he takes a

very imperfect view of the state in which the prophets were when commissioned to utter predictions, and to reduce them too much to the condition of ordinary men. We believe that in many cases they had very obscure notions of the meaning of what they uttered; and that sometimes, at least, they could scarcely be said to understand their own predictions.

"The third part is the longest, and by far the ablest. Days are days, and years, years. So the writer maintains, with no small skill and power of argumentation. We do not see how his conclusions can be set aside. It is true that they are contrary to prevailing sentiments, but if the latter be unscriptural, the sooner they are abandoned the better. Let those who object to the sentiments of the learned author reply to them in the spirit of candor and impartiality." pp. 717, 718.

For myself, I venture to regard this portion of your work as equally replete with error and open to refutation as any of the rest, and though my remaining limits will not allow of so full and detailed an exposé of its positions as I have given to the preceding, yet I shall hope to adduce sufficient reasons for a most decided rejection of your main averment, viz., that a day in prophecy always means a day, and is never, except in a few specified instances, used to denote a year or any longer period of time. The question involved I conceive to be one of the utmost moment to the interests of inspired prophecy. If your hypothesis be correct, not only has nearly the whole Christian world been led astray for ages by a mere *ignis fatuus* of false hermeneutics, but the church is at once cut loose from every chronological mooring, and set adrift in the open sea, without the vestige of a beacon, light-house, or star, by which to determine her bearings or distances from the desired millennial haven to which she had hoped she was tending. She is deprived of the means of taking a single celestial observation, and has no possible data for ascertaining, in the remotest degree, how far she is yet floating from the Ararat of promise. Upon your theory, the Christian world has no distinct intimation given it as to the date of the downfall of the Roman Despotism, civil or ecclesiastical, of Mahometanism, or of Paganism; no clew to the time of the conversion of the Jews, or of the introduction of the Millennium. On all these points the Church is shut up to a blank and dreary uncertainty, which, though it may not extinguish, will tend greatly to diminish, the ardor of her present zeal in the conversion of the world.

I am not indeed of the number of those who deem the consent of fathers or the current of tradition an infallible test of biblical interpretation; nor am I in the least a stickler for a punctilious specification of the dates of prophecy; but neither am I, on the other hand, inclined precipitately to discard an opinion long prevalent in the church, which has commended itself to those whose judgments are entitled to profound respect. That such is the case in regard to the year-day calculations of prophecy, I am abundantly satisfied, and I confess too at once to the pleasure that it affords me to find

that that which is sanctioned by age is also sustained by argument. How strong is the evidence of its truth from this source, it is the object of my present communication to evince, and I enter upon it without farther preliminaries.

I am not a little surprised at your remark in the following paragraph :

“It is a singular fact, that the great mass of interpreters in the English and American world have, for many years, been wont to understand the *days* designated in Daniel and in the Apocalypse, as the representatives or symbols of *years*. I have found it difficult to trace the origin of this general, I might say, almost universal custom. Without venturing on a positive statement, I am inclined to believe that we may trace it mainly to the distinguished Joseph Mede, who lived and wrote during the first quarter of the seventeenth century. His *Clavis Apocalyptica* (Key to the Apocalypse) excited much attention when it was published, and indeed for a long time afterwards. Many criticisms were made upon it by the learned ; and in the explanation and defence of the positions which he had taken in that work, Mede wrote many comments, essays, and letters. The learning, piety, and (in general) sobriety of mind, which this distinguished work exhibited, gave it great influence in the religious community in England, and eventually in America. Abroad, Vitringa and others attacked some of its leading positions, and, as was generally conceded, overthrew them. Still the influence of this work on English commentary, has been felt down to the present hour. Particularly is it so in regard to the subject of reckoning *time* ; the consideration of which is now before us.” p. 74.

The fact is, Mede is very far from being the first who adopted this solution of the symbolic term *day*. It is the solution naturally arising from the construction put in all ages upon the oracle of Daniel respecting the Seventy Weeks, which by Jews and Christians have been interpreted of *weeks of years*, on the principle of a *day's standing for a year*. This fact is obvious from the Rabbinical writers *en masse*, where they touch upon this subject, and Eusebius tells us, (Dem. Evang. L. VIII. p. 258, Ed. Steph.) that this interpretation in his day was generally, if not universally, admitted—*παντι που δηλον, everywhere manifest*. It is plain that this canon of interpretation is no modern novelty, and the universal consent which your own words ascribe to it, might at least suggest the propriety of a more rigid inquisition into its origin than you have seen fit to institute. I have in my own collection writers on the prophecies prior to the time of Mede, who interpret the 1260 days of so many years, and who are so far from broaching this as a new interpretation, that they do not even pause to give the grounds of it, but proceed onwards, as if no risk were run in taking for granted the soundness of a principle which came down to them accredited by the immemorial usage of their predecessors. I do not say that they were justified in this, for in a matter of this nature it is always well to lay an impregnable foundation for whatever sys-

tem of prophetic interpretation men are prompted to adopt ; but, as the present question is merely a question of fact, as to the origin of a certain mode of exegesis, the statement I have made will be seen to be wholly in point.

You enter upon the process of proof by which your main position is to be established, by laying down the following as one of the plainest and most cogent of all the rules of hermeneutics, viz., *that every passage of Scripture and of every other book is to be interpreted as bearing its plain, and primary, and literal sense, unless good reason can be given why it should be tropically understood.* To the truth of this canon I cordially assent. I subscribe also with equal freedom and readiness to the connected remark, that "when we admit the tropical sense of a passage, we do it because, if literally understood, the subject and predicate would not harmonize, or because a literal sense would be frigid, unmeaning, or inappropriate." The only question is, whether in the department of prophecy sufficient reasons can be assigned to justify a departure from the literal, and an adherence to a tropical sense. In other words, are these designations of time to be taken *symbolically*?

The argument, I think, may be very summarily despatched. To one who has so long and so largely considered the genius and structure of inspired prophecy as yourself, it can scarcely be otherwise than superfluous to remark, that the Scriptures present us with two distinct classes of predictions—the *literal* and the *symbolical*. Where an event, or series of events, of a historical character, is *historically* announced, we naturally look for the announcement to be made in the plainest, simplest, and most literal terms. No reason can then be assigned for designating periods of time in a mystical or figurative diction. If the fate of nations or individuals is concerned, and those nations or individuals are literally and historically specified, we regard it as a matter of course that whatever periods of time are mentioned in connexion with them, they are to be understood also in their primary and literal sense. Thus, to advert to the cases which you have adduced, when God announces the deluge to Noah, as there is nothing figurative or mystical in the events, so the designations of *time* are to be construed in their natural and obvious import. When it is foretold that Abraham's posterity should be afflicted four hundred years—that seven years of plenty and seven of famine should succeed each other in Egypt—that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness—that Nineveh should be overthrown within forty days—that Ephraim should be broken within sixty-five years—that the glory of Moab should be contemned within three years, and that Judah should be captive in Babylon seventy years—as all these communities are *literally* announced, we reasonably and rightly conclude that the several periods of time associated with them should be *literally* expressed.

All this is a dictate of common sense, and you are perfectly right in saying that in these cases "we never once even dream of putting a *day* for a *year*." Why should we? There is nothing at all in the circumstances to require it.

But the case is entirely reversed in regard to the *symbolical prophecies*, and that for the most obvious of all reasons—the very reason which you have yourself assigned, viz., that in prophecies so constructed "the subject and the predicate would not harmonize, —the literal sense would be frigid, unmeaning, and inappropriate." Nothing, you are aware, is more obvious, than that the prophets have frequently, under divine prompting, adopted the system of *hieroglyphic representation*, in which a single man represents a community, and a wild beast an extended empire. Consequently, since the mystic exhibition of the community or empire is in *miniature*, symbolical propriety requires that the associated chronological periods should be exhibited in *miniature* also. The intrinsic fitness of such a mode of presentation, is self-evident. In predicating of a nation a long term of 400 or even 4000 years, there is nothing revolting to verisimilitude or decorum; but to assign such a period to the actings of a symbolical man or a symbolical animal, would be a grievous outrage upon all the proprieties of the prophetic style. The character of the adjuncts should evidently correspond with those of the principal, or the whole picture is at once marred by the most palpable incongruity. When I find the Most High declaring in express language that the Jews should serve the king of Babylon seventy years, and that after the expiration of that time they should again be restored to their own land, I seek no other than a literal sense in the term *year*, inasmuch as all the other terms, *Babylon*, *Judah*, and *captivity*, are taken in their ordinary acceptation. But when I find "times and laws given into the hands of the Little Horn for a time, times, and half a time," or three years and a half, I naturally consider this period as mystical, because the Little Horn is so. So when I find "locusts tormenting men five months," I am as much prompted to inquire into the symbolical import of the *five months* as into that of the *locusts*. Why should one of these terms be *literal* and the other *tropical*?

Now this distinction in the character of the prophetic oracles you have seen fit to leave out of view altogether. Your whole train of reasoning goes on the assumption, that as periods of time are to be literally understood, in connexion with certain predictions, so they are in all. But the distinction is palpably obvious, and a glance of the mind's eye is sufficient to evince that we cannot legitimately reason from the one to the other. On the ground you have assumed the argument will stand thus:—The chronological periods attached to all *literally* expressed prophecies are found to be themselves *literally* and not *mystically* expressed. Therefore

the chronological periods attached to all *symbolically* expressed prophecies, must be themselves *literally* and not *mystically* expressed. Now this is a gross *non sequitur*. It is reasoning from *unlike to unlike*. More is put into the conclusion than had appeared in the premises. You will not be surprised therefore at the intimation that the whole force of your argument, based upon this ground, dissipates itself as completely as the famous waterfall in Switzerland, where the water is precipitated from so vast a height that it turns to mere vapor before it reaches the bottom of the declivity.

The grand principle into which the usage of employing a day for a year is to be resolved, is that of *miniature symbolization*. As the *events* are thus economically reduced, the *periods* are to be reduced in the same relative proportion. What that proportion is, we cannot positively determine without some antecedent information touching the *rate or scale* of reduction. But the probability is, that such scale will be at the rate of a day or minor revolution of the earth round its axis, for a year or greater revolution of the earth round the sun. In adducing the proof of the principle upon which this prophetic usage depends, you will of course read at once the answer which I return to your construction of Ezek. 4 : 5, 6, and Num. 14. As to the first, we are informed that Ezekiel was commanded to "lie on his left side 390 days, that so he might bear the iniquity of the house of Israel." This was a typical action constituting a symbolical prophecy, and so far as its chronological purport is concerned, Jehovah himself adds, "I have appointed *each day for a year*." Ezekiel is in this transaction a *miniature hieroglyphic* of Israel; a man, of a nation. Hence as the man represented the nation in miniature, so the 390 days represented the period of 390 years in miniature. In like manner, his lying forty days on his right side symbolized the foreseen iniquity of Judah through the period of forty years. Again, when the land of Canaan was to be searched, twelve spies were appointed out of the twelve tribes to make the purposed explorations and report the result on their return. The tenor of their report and the subsequent conduct of the people was such that God was highly displeased, and consequently declared that Israel should wander in the desert for forty *years*, each year corresponding to one of the forty *days* of the espial. In this case, also, we recognize the same principle as in the preceding. The twelve selected spies jointly constituted a *miniature symbol* of the entire nation. Accordingly, the predicted term of the national wanderings was analogously represented in miniature also.

Your remarks upon these cases, viewed in their bearing upon the question at issue, are contained in the following extracts :

"The prophet is *expressly told*, in this case, that *one day is to be the symbol of a year*. Why? Plainly because it would never enter the mind

of himself or of any other man, that such could be the case, unless he were expressly informed of it. What bearing then, in the way of analogy, does or can this have upon the designations of time in Daniel and in the Apocalypse? Certainly none; for in these books we have no information given of such a nature. The writers never once hint at such a mode of interpretation. What follows, then, except that we must interpret these books in the usual way? A special communication to Ezekiel was deemed necessary in order to his understanding that *days* would or could be the symbols of *years*. Such a communication was in fact necessary; for nothing can be more natural to all men, than to interpret plain designations of time in the simple and usual way. To prevent Ezekiel from doing so, the symbolic significancy of *days* is a matter of express injunction. This of course constitutes a good and adequate reason for adopting the symbolical meaning of the word *day* in the passage before us.

"But how is it with the designation of times in Daniel and in the Apocalypse, where no such injunction or explanation is given? There can be, as it seems to me, but one answer to this question; which is, that *those times are of course to be reckoned in the usual manner*. Instead of being aided, then, by an appeal to Ezek. 4: 5, 6, we find that a principle is in fact recognized there, which makes directly against the interpretation which we are calling in question. The express exception as to the usual mode of reckoning, which is there virtually made, goes, under such circumstances, directly to show that the general rule would necessitate us to adopt a different interpretation." pp. 76,77.

In like manner as to the case of the spies in Numbers 14:

"We perceive at once that the whole is dependent on special divine appointment. Had the declaration been that 'Israel should wander in the desert according to the time in which the spies had been absent,' would any one have ever supposed that forty *years* were meant? It is conceded that they would not, in the very fact that *express* mention is made, that *days* are to stand as the symbols of *years*. Without a declaration of this import, no one would ever have surmised that the case was such. Now as neither Daniel nor the Apocalypse ever mention such a mode of counting days for years, what else can we do, except to follow the common laws of language in the interpretation of their predictions?" p. 78.

The obvious reply to all this is, that the instances now adduced are to be considered as merely giving us a clew to a general principle of interpretation. Here are two or three striking examples of predictions constructed on the plan of *miniature symbolic representation*, in which the involved periods of time are reduced to a scale proportioned to that of the events themselves. What then more natural or more legitimate, than that when we meet with other prophecies, constructed on precisely the same principle, we should interpret their chronological periods by the same rule? Instead of yielding to a demand to adduce authority for this mode of interpretation, I feel at liberty to demand the authority for departing from it. *Manente ratione manet lex*, is an apothegm which is surely applicable here if anywhere. You repeatedly in the course of your pages appeal to the oracles of *common sense* as the grand arbiter in deciding upon the principles of hermeneutics. I make

my appeal to the same authority in the present case ; I demand, in the name of common sense, a *reason* why the symbolical prophecies of Daniel and John should not be interpreted on the same principle with other prophecies of precisely the same class. But however loud and urgent my demand on this head, I expect nothing else than that hill and dale will re-echo it even to "the crack of doom," before a satisfactory response from your pages falls on my ear.

All the answer I obtain is the following: "Instead of being aided, then, by an appeal to Ezek. 4: 5, 6, we find that a principle is recognized there, which makes directly against the interpretation that we are calling in question. The *express exception* as to the usual mode of reckoning, which is there virtually made, goes, under such circumstances, directly to show that the *general rule* would necessitate us to adopt a different interpretation." I may possibly be over sanguine in my anticipations, but I cannot well resist the belief that the reader will perceive that that which you regard as the *exception* is in fact the *rule*.*

But you proceed, after having disposed of these *exceptions*, as you term them, to demolish what has perhaps generally been deemed the grand fortress of the defenders of the *year-day* calculation in Daniel's prediction of the seventy weeks. As to this passage I will say here, that even if your interpretation of it should be admitted to be correct, which however I do *not* admit, still I shall not consider the principle established above to be at all invalidated thereby. It would merely be subducting one from the catalogue of proofs. The position by no means rests upon this passage alone, though I have no doubt that this, when rightly interpreted, goes unequivocally in support of it. But let us come directly to the point. Your argument I give in your own words:

"Daniel had been meditating on the accomplishment of the seventy *years* of exile for the Jews which Jeremiah had predicted; Jer. 25: 12. 29: 10. Dan. 9: 1-3. At the close of the fervent supplication for his people which he makes, in connection with his meditation, Gabriel appears, and announces to him that "*Seventy sevens* are appointed for his people," as it respects the time then future, in which various and very important events are to take place. Our translation renders the words שְׁבַעִים שָׁבָעִים, *seventy weeks*. But through the Scriptures there is, if we except three instances in the book of Daniel, no such form as שְׁבַעִים which means *weeks*. This is only and always שְׁבַעִוֹת or שְׁבַעִוֹת. The form שְׁבַעִים, therefore, which is a regular masculine plural, is no doubt purposely chosen to designate the *plural of seven*; and with great propriety here, inasmuch as there are many *sevens* which are to be joined

* The following passage from Aulus Gellius, (*Noct. Att. L. III. c. 10.*) shows that this mode of computation was sometimes used by other nations besides the Jews. Speaking of M. Varro, he says, "Scribit se jam undecimam annorum hebdomadam ingressum esse," *he writes that he had entered into the eleventh WEEK of his years, i. e. his eighty-fourth year.*

together in one common sum. The manner in which I have translated the words in question, therefore, gives an exact representation of the Hebrew original. Daniel had been meditating on the close of the seventy years of Hebrew exile, and the angel now discloses to him a new period of *seventy times seven*, in which still more important events are to take place. "*Seventy sevens*," or (to use Greek phraseology) "*seventy heptades* are determined upon thy people." Heptades of what? Of days, or of years? No one can doubt what the answer is. Daniel had been making diligent search respecting the seventy years; and, in such a connection, nothing but seventy heptades of years could be reasonably supposed to be meant by the angel. But independently of this, the nature of the case is sufficient. Years are the measure of all considerable periods of time. When the angel speaks, then, in reference to certain events, and declares that they are to take place during *seventy heptades*, it is a matter of course to suppose him to mean years. If he had not meant so, then some word would have been added in order to render it plain what his meaning was. And so it actually happens, in Dan. 10: 2, 3, where he again employs the peculiar plural, שְׁבַעִים. But as the period designated in this last passage has respect to a season of fasting which the prophet had kept, and as this could not be a period of three years, so the writer adds, after the words *three sevens* (in our version, *three whole weeks*), the word יָמִים, *days*. He fasted "*three sevens as to days*" is a literal and grammatical version. This means, indeed, *three whole weeks*, as our version has it; but the shape of the Hebrew expression is different from this.

"These examples render it quite plain, therefore, that when, in Dan. 9: 24, the angel speaks of *seventy heptades* he must of course be understood as meaning so many heptades of years=490 years. He has not made *days* at all the representative of *years*, in this case, but merely and simply designated the number of years. And as to chap. 10: 2, 3, surely no one will contend that Daniel fasted twenty-one years; which must be the conclusion, however, if days are to be regarded as the representatives of years, in the writings of this prophet. But in 9: 24, as has been said, *days* are not brought at all into question. The phraseology employed (*seventy heptades*) is indeed elliptical; yet it is not at all obscure, for every mind spontaneously supplies the word *years*, in such a connection. The appeal to Daniel, then, for an example of employing *days* for *years*, is certainly not well directed, when made to the passage in question. Indeed, the exact contrary of such a usage is manifest, when we read onward only six verses more; for in 10: 2, 3, the ground assumed would necessarily make Daniel to say, that he fasted in the most rigid manner for twenty-one years! The credibility of this, on any ground, needs not to be argued against."—p. 79.

We have here to determine a question of pure philology. You maintain that the original Hebrew phrase rendered *seventy weeks* (שְׁבַעִים שָׁבָעִים) properly signifies *seventy sevens*, and may as legitimately be understood of weeks of *years* as of *days*. Now even granting for a moment that this is correct, still it would seem that some consideration should have been given to the fact, that the phrase has been otherwise understood in all ages of the church. The whole current of the ancient versions and interpretations, Jewish and Christian, agrees in the rendering *seventy weeks*. Ἑβδομάδες,

weeks, and not *éntrades*, *heptades*, as might be *inferred* from your language, is the rendering of the Greek, and the same is the sense put upon it by the early fathers. This is a fact to be accounted for, and one which no thoroughgoing discussion of the subject is at liberty to overlook. Yet to this fact not the slightest allusion is made in your critique. As if the case were one which admitted no manner of doubt, you say that as שָׁבָעִים is a regular masculine plural, it is purposely chosen to designate the *plural of seven*, and of course *seventy sevens* must denote *seventy heptades of years* without any implication whatever of *weeks of days*. But who has a right to take this for granted? Every Hebrew scholar will of course admit that the word שָׁבָעִים is derived from a root signifying *seven*; but שָׁבָעִים is not the normal plural of the Hebrew term for *seven*. This is שְׁבַעִים from the singular שֶׁבַע, and this you are well aware is the appropriate term, not for the simple plural of seven, but for *seventy*; the *tens* of the Hebrew numerals being expressed by the plural forms of the corresponding *units*. In the nature of the case, the last thing we should expect to find in the language would be a regular plural for a number of which the singular itself is virtually a plural, as is evidently the fact in all languages when we get beyond *one*. Nobody would look in Latin for a plural to *duo*, *quatuor*, *six*, or *septem*. I know that the structure of the Hebrew is different, and that very rare cases of the use of such terms as ‘thousands,’ ‘hundreds,’ ‘fifties,’ and ‘tens,’ occur; but still such a kind of plus-plural for seven is not to be expected in the economy of Hebrew forms.

It is indeed true, as you say, that “throughout the Scriptures there is, if we except three instances in the book of Daniel, no such form as שָׁבָעִים which means *weeks*.” But what then? There are *no* instances elsewhere in which שָׁבָעִים is used as a simple *plural of seven*, and I contend, therefore, that the license of assumption is far greater on your side than on that of the established version. In other words, there is fuller evidence that שָׁבָעִים is rightly translated *weeks* than there is that it ought to be translated *sevens*.

The current Scriptural term for *weeks*, you say, “is only and always שָׁבָעוֹת and שְׁבַעִוֹת.” This, understood with the exceptions mentioned in Daniel, is no doubt correct; but it is unquestionable that שָׁבָעִים is quite as nearly related in form and signification to those words as it is to שְׁבַעִים the plural form of שֶׁבַע *seven*, and we have just as good authority for rendering it *weeks* as you have for rendering it *sevens* in the sense of *sevens of years*. From this we learn how much weight to attach to your assertion, that the manner in which you have translated the word in question “gives an exact representation of the Hebrew original.” But I will array more distinctly before the reader the Hebrew usage as to the term

weeks, that he may have still more definite data for forming a judgment on the question at issue.

Gen. 29: 27, "Fulfil her week (מלא שבוע זאה) and we will give," &c.

V. 28, "And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week (שבוע זאה וימלא)."

Lev. 12: 5, "But if she has a maid-child, then shall be unclean two weeks (שבועים), dual of שבוע=שבועים."

Num. 28: 26, "In the day of the first fruits, when ye bring a new meat-offering unto the Lord, after your weeks be out (בשבועותיכם)," i. e. as appears from Lev. 23: 15, after numbering שבוע שבוע seven sabbaths.

Deut. 16: 9, "Seven weeks (שבועה שבועה) shalt thou number unto thee; begin to number the seven weeks (שבועה שבועה) from such time," &c.

V. 10, 16, "And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks (חג שבועות) unto the Lord thy God," &c. Compare Ex. 34: 22. 2 Chron. 8: 13.

Jer. 5: 24, "He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks (שבועות חקוקות) of the harvest."

Dan. 9: 24, "Seventy weeks (שבועים שבועים) are determined."

V. 9: 25, "Unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks (שבועים שבועים) and threescore and two weeks (שבועים ששים ושנים)."

V. 27, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (שבוע אחד), and in the midst of the week (במצות השבוע) he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease."

Ch. 10: 2, "In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks (שלושה שבועים ימים)."

V. 3, "Neither did I anoint myself at all till three full weeks (שלושה שבועים ימים) were fulfilled."

The results of the foregoing induction will be found of no small importance in enabling us to pronounce intelligently upon the main averment of your essay. It appears beyond debate that the Hebrews had a distinct term for the conventional designation of time which we call a *week*. This term is שבוע, or more fully written, שבוע, derived from the radical שבוע seven. The form, as Hengstenberg remarks, is participial, and properly indicates a *septemized* period, like *ἑβδομας* in Greek, *septimana* in Latin, *settimana* in Italian, and *semaine* in French, all which are severally derived from roots denoting seven. No analogy of Hebrew forms affords the least countenance to the idea you have suggested of its plural being the plural of seven, for the plain reason, that its singular does not import the number seven, nor have any of the Hebrew numerals a form approaching to that of שבוע. Established usage does indeed give to this word for the most part the feminine plural form שבועות, שבועות; but in Daniel the masculine שבועים=שבועים

uniformly appears. But as this form has confessedly no other singular than שְׁבִיעַ, and as שְׁבִיעַ uniformly stands as the representative of *a week of seven days*, what else can שְׁבִיעִים properly denote than *weeks of seven days*? You may reply, indeed, that this is giving both a masculine and feminine form to the plural of שְׁבִיעַ. True enough: but is it not the obvious fact that neither of these plurals has any other singular than שְׁבִיעַ? And to the author of a Hebrew grammar I need not observe, that a large class of words occur in that language having a twofold gender, and consequently form, in their plural. Among these Ewald (Heb. Gram. § 373. Lon. 1836) expressly enumerates this very word, along with a multitude of others, which place the truth of the grammatical canon beyond controversy.

On the ground, therefore, of the above exhibition of the *usus loquendi* in regard to this term, I shall venture to consider your interpretation of it as the *plural of seven* as completely set aside. The field of debate is accordingly narrowed down to the simple and single question, whether in Daniel's use of it it is to be understood as implying *weeks of days* or *weeks of years*; for that the sense of *weeks* of some kind is its true import here, we are no longer at liberty to doubt. But here we are met at once by the incontrovertible fact of the *usage* being uniformly in favor of the sense of *days*, and Mede's reply to the objection which you have urged is perfectly satisfactory:—"The question lies not in the *etymology*, but in the *use*; wherein שְׁבִיעַ always signifies *sevens of days*, and never *sevens of years*. Wherever it is absolutely put, it means of *days*; it is nowhere thus used of *years*." (*Works*, Book III. ch. ix. p. 599.) If this be so, it is obvious that we need express authority for interpreting it of *sevens of years*, without the implication of *days*. Such authority does not exist.

Still your assertion stands in unqualified assurance, that Daniel "has not made *days* at all the representatives of *years* in this case, but merely and simply designated the number of years." Of this position you find a proof in Dan. 10: 2, 3, where the prophet speaks of his fasting three weeks of days;—"Surely no one will contend that Daniel fasted twenty-one *years*; which must be the conclusion, however, if days are to be regarded as the representatives of years, in the writings of this prophet." But I have already adduced evidence that the true purport of שְׁבִיעִים is always primarily *weeks of days*, and I see nothing more conveyed by the addition of יָמִים *days* in this passage, than a casual but appropriate intimation that such is its actual primary meaning wherever it occurs in the course of this prediction. I look upon it as inserted expressly for the purpose of barring any such conjectural interpretations as yours, that would assign to it, as its first sense, the meaning of years. It is to me therefore nothing more nor less than a direct authentica-

tion of the version which has always been so generally admitted, making the native and original sense of the Hebrew term for *week*, a *week of days*. At the same time, as the usage of prophecy employs a *day* as an involved or miniature expression for a *year*, and as the historical event has shown that the seventy weeks of this oracle covered the space of 490 years, we feel that we are building on a sure foundation, when we take these seventy weeks of days to be a symbolical and not a literal designation of seventy weeks of years.

I here suspend the train of inquiry with a view to introduce in my next and closing letter, additional evidence of the use, in the sacred writings, of a *day* for a *year*.

Very respectfully,

Your friend and brother,

GEORGE BUSH.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE BEAST AND THE LITTLE HORN, SUCCEEDED BY THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM OF THE SAINTS.

EXPOSITION OF DANIEL VII. 9-28.

[CONTINUED.]

Ver. 17.

CHAL.

אֵלֵין דִּיּוֹתָא רַבִּיבְתָא דִּי אַנְיִן
אַרְבַּע אַרְבַּע מַלְכִין יְקוּמוּן
מִן־אַרְצָא :

ENG. VERS.

These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.

GR. OF THEOD.

Τὰ ἄνωγα τὰ θηρία τὰ μεγάλα τὰ τέσσαρα, τέσσαρες βασιλείαι, ἀναστήσονται ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, αἱ ἀρθῆσονται.

LAT. VULG.

Hæ quatuor bestię magnæ, quatuor sunt regna, quæ consurgent de terra.

These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. We have in this and the subsequent verse a condensed and compendious exposition of the drift of the vision. In the words themselves there is nothing that calls for special annotation, excepting perhaps that the symbolical sense of 'kings' may require to be made out with some particularity of proof. That it is here equivalent to 'kingdoms,' as rendered both by Theodotius