

miracle upon the sandy plain. David's plans crystallized into the stones and gold of the magnificent temple. It was serene rest ; it was opulent security. In the next reign, ten tribes revolted, leaving Judah and Benjamin alone. In the subsequent history they were carried into captivity ; they were lost among the other nations—their genealogical tables gone, their language lost, their existence a doubt. Judah is the only tribe that can trace their descent. We follow the course of that tribe.

After varied fortunes they were carried captive, their chief city destroyed, the temple, with its sacred furniture, removed or burned. After 70 years they returned to Judea. For a time they were subject to the Persians. Nehemiah gained signal favours for them. Ezra purified the people, and in troublous times the walls of Jerusalem and of the temple rose again. Malachi, the last prophet of his race, has closed the visions of futurity, has predicted Elijah to be the voice of John, the harbinger of the Messiah. The interval of history is not remarkable. About 167 B.C., Mattathias established the true worship of God, which had been interrupted. One of his brethren assumed the kingly rule, which continued till 34 years before the birth of Christ.

Take now the thread as you find it in the Gospel of Luke. The Roman Governor of Syria commanded a taxing, an enrolment of the nation. It is supposed to have been for the purpose of blending the people with the Roman Empire. About 11 years afterward Judea became a Roman province, upon the banishment of Archelaus, son of Herod the Great ; thenceforth Judæa was governed by a Roman deputy, and the power of life and death taken from the Jews. Then, when the sceptre was passing from the hand of Judah, the Son of David grasped it ; when the nationality of the Jews was blending with Rome, the Shiloh came.

The thread of history unites the prophecy of Jacob with the fulfilment in Jesus Christ, the sent of God. The words of this prophecy show, for Luke relates in fact what Jacob predicted in vision, the Divine authenticity of the scriptures. The spirit of inspiration flashed its fulfilment, as if the finger of God had written it upon the everlasting hills. Quibble as sceptics may at the fact, yet one word of all that the Lord has spoken has not failed. Polluted hands would pluck down the monuments of our faith, but they are firmer than the pyramids. Blighting hands would uproot the flowers