

clusive, reference here to the Messiah. Another example of this kind of reference to a real person occurs in Isaiah lxi. 1-3, where the original reference is to the prophet himself who writes the passage. Although he may be speaking of himself in a representative character, still he here declares the true nature of his own mission, which was pre-eminently one of comfort and instruction.

It is useless, however, to multiply examples. By adopting the ordinary methods of prophetic interpretation, expositors continually claim a reference to Christ where no such reference exists. They inconsistently apply to him such portions of a passage as suit their purpose, overlooking or ignoring the fact that other portions of the passage are utterly inapplicable to him. Isaiah xi. 1-10, for instance, contains many expressions that are not at all applicable to the Christian Messiah. Even the very sacred chapter, Isaiah liii., though Messianic in its application, contains passages which are not strictly Messianic, and which cannot be appropriately applied to Christ. The ninth verse of this chapter has not been applied to him by the Evangelists, and should not be applied to him by any one. To try to torture the original into a translation suitable for such an application, as Hengstenberg has tried to torture it, is reprehensible. Such torturing of Scripture, together with the multiplying of types, the capitalizing of letters and the printing of chapter-headings, has created and perpetuated error in the Christian Church respecting prophecy for centuries.

Before concluding this division of the subject, let us sum up briefly the results of this discussion of the import of Messianic prophecy. In the Primeval age, there is no Messianic prophecy whatever, in the narrower sense of the term; that is, there is no passage which refers to a personal Messiah. In the Patriarchal and Mosaic ages, there are only germs of Messianic prophecy; that is, there are only germinal conceptions from which the Messianic idea was developed. In the Davidic age, there is also no Messianic prophecy, in the strict sense of the term; that is, there is no passage that does not refer originally to a definite historic person, "nor," as Riehm remarks, "does any single expression occur which goes beyond what, according to