

Allan MacRae, Ezekiel, Lecture 15

All we can do is hit the most important places as we tried to go into the first part of Ezekiel in more detail in order to get a general idea of approach and method. Then we have had to pass rather rapidly over a good many things. I believe I have mentioned to you that the book of Ezekiel naturally divides into four parts. I think it is good for us to have that in mind, that chapters 1-24 are the prophecies before the exile, as you of course all know, 25-32 were during the exile, and 33 and following were after the exile. The first part 1-24 is very largely a rebuke for the sin of the people, but with very few passages what we would call blessings that God had for the people. Chapters 25-32 are during the exile, during the siege. As you remember, these chapters are all dealing with the foreign nations, the aggressor nations, which God is going to punish. Then the third section 33-39 is largely made up of comforting the people, giving promises of future blessing.

This structure is more or less typical of the prophets as a whole. We have two big sections, one largely of rebuke with some passages of blessing followed by one largely of blessings with some passages of rebuke. Jeremiah, for instance, and Isaiah to some extent, are apt to give you a passage of rebuke for sin, but they see the godly among the people and realize they are implicated in the sin of the nation, and that the terrible things predicted inevitably are going to affect them. Then the prophets turn their attention from the whole nation to the godly and give them wonderful promises of the blessings God will give them later.

That quick alternation between rebuke and blessing we find frequently in Jeremiah and Isaiah, but we do not see it so much in Ezekiel, but we do have these first and third big sections. The first is largely rebuke for sin, and the third section is largely blessings that God has for his people. Then chapters 40-48 make a section by itself, which I hope to discuss in some length in the later part of the present hour.

Now, for our next assignment I would like you to write down 6 specific passages of blessing in the book. Most of them we have already looked at, and some of them we have discussed rather fully, but I think I would like you to glance at these at least before the examination to refresh your memory on them.

The first is chapter 11, verses 17-20. The second is chapter 20:41-44; the third is chapter 28:25-26. The fourth is chapter 36 verses 22-38. The fifth is chapter 37 verses 21-28. Those last two I mentioned we looked at in considerable length a couple weeks ago; and then, sixth, chapter 39, verses 25-28. We have seen that in these there are wonderful promises of God's future blessing among them. Perhaps the most frequent is the promise of re-gathering of the exiled people. On the exam I might ask for a couple of references dealing with the promise of re-gathering or I might ask you for a couple promises of a new heart for God's people. I think that you could easily have those in mind so that you can find them in your Bible and give the reference to them in case I might ask you for that. I think it's good for you to have those in mind because those are very important portions of Ezekiel's teaching.

There is a good possibility that I might ask a question about chapters 8-11, the trip that Ezekiel made to Jerusalem: whether he actually went to Jerusalem or whether this was merely a vision God gave him. I had mentioned in class, for instance, the fact that all these people were killed in the vision. It was very definitely a prophecy of the misery to come in the siege; it wasn't a number of people killed right at that time. They were killed by this angel who went back and killed all those who didn't have the mark on them. That was something he saw that was definitely a prediction of something future rather than something that happened then. So he couldn't have seen that if he had been in Jerusalem. Of course, we notice how in the vision he cut a hole through the wall of the temple, and went into the certain part and saw something. If he had actually done that I'm sure they would have called the police out and it would have been called a disturbance by the authorities. There were certain evidences I mentioned--aside

from the very fact of the mention of its being a vision--and I think it good for you to have them in mind.

Now, last time at the end of the hour we were speaking of this prophecy of Gog and Magog, which is in chapters 38 and 39. In that prophecy we notice that the second verse speaks of these people, Gog, and the land of Magog with the "chief prince" of Meshach and Tubal. Some people think "chief" as being the prince of Rosh and there's a strong philological evidence for so doing, not conclusive but strong. Whether it's the "prince of Rosh" or whether it's the "chief prince" we can't say, but I don't believe we're justified by saying "rosh" must be pointing to Russia.

But these various peoples mentioned here are definitely north of Israel they are from Asia Minor, which is north and west of Israel. There we can identify Meshach and Tubal for which we have considerable definite referencing in the ancient records that there were tribes with these names that were quite important at about the time of Ezekiel and during the previous thousand years. So we know where Meshach and Tubal were, and while some would say these names stand for Moscow and Tubals, we have Meshach and Tubal mentioned in various records from Asia Minor from that time, so I think Russia is definitely not what Ezekiel has in mind. Now, that's not to be saying that these names of these peoples that were important in those days could not be used as a figure for future people to the north. The invasion envisioned by Ezekiel might come from Russia; we can't say it couldn't, but we cannot conclusively prove it will from this passage.

Student question: Is there any etymological relationship between the words Moscow and Tubal and Meshach?

MacRae's answer: Well, Moscow, of course, is an old Slavic word. I don't know the exact etymology of Meshach. It is the name of the tribe of, well maybe more than a tribe, a large group of people that lived in the Asia Minor at that time. I think it would be pretty hard for saying that places so removed from each other had an etymological relationship. As they say, it could stand for Russia,

it could be a figure for it, but I don't think it's a specific mention of it. I think that would be purely an inference as a possibility, and as far as Tubal is concerned, Tubal is a comparably unimportant city in Russia. So, if we say that Tubal is representing this comparatively unimportant city, I would say the emphasis is against it.

Student Question: Does most evidence definitely say that Meshach and Tubal are nations of the Asia Minor?

MacRae's answer: Meshach and Tubal were nations that were in Asia Minor that were important for about a thousand years but have disappeared long ago. Now, is it possible that new nations could come bearing those names. It's possible that there could be remainders of those people that we haven't heard of for 1500 years that would again come into prominence. I would think it's more likely that they are a figurative representation of peoples that will be at the time when this vision is fulfilled with probably different names altogether.

So much then for who these peoples are. Now, when is this invasion? This is very definitely a prediction of a great invasion. When does it come? There are those who say chapters 40-48 are the picture of the millennium. That's possible, but it is questionable. But it is certain that in chapters 36 and 37 we have the picture of the millennium. There's no question that these chapters are a picture of the millennium. The millennium is a considerable portion of those few chapters, but then chapter 40 and following form a definite becoming one of the four main sections in the book. So it would seem to me that if the position in the book is going to tell of its relation to the millennium, the fact that this section is after chapters 36 and 37, which tell of the millennium, it seems to me that would be a strong reason for thinking that it probably represents something after the millennium rather than something before the millennium.

When you look at the book of Revelation you find that in Revelation there's the great picture of the millennium, which is in Revelation 20. This is the greatest New Testament picture of the millennium. The Old Testament has many

predictions of the millennium, but does not give a great idea of exactly its relations with other events. These are put together in the temporal order in the book of Revelation. There in the Revelation we have the return of Christ very clearly presented in the last part of chapter 19, and then we have the very clear picture of the millennium in the early part of chapter 20. And then it says, “When the thousand years are over” (in verse 7), “Satan will be released from his prison and go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the Earth. Gog and Magog together for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore.” That seems to me to be a very definite statement by John, the writer of Revelation, that after the millennium there will be a great invasion by Gog and Magog, and it fits with the natural interpretation, though not absolutely certain, the interpretation of Ezekiel taken by itself. So I feel that the evidence is very strong that this is not pointing to something that’s going to come anytime within the next few years; it is at least a thousand years off. That is to say, if the millennium begins tomorrow, that it would be a thousand years from now, and if the millennium should begin a thousand years from now, of course, it would be two thousand years off.

But in this account of Gog and Magog there is a very interesting statement where it says in chapter 38:11-12, “You will say, ‘I will invade a land of unwalled villages, I will attack a peaceful and unsuspecting people all of them living without walls and without gates and bars.’” Now, of course, walls and gates and bars might stand for great fortifications or they might conceivably stand for something similar such as we have now, that walls are no longer as important as they were three hundred years ago. In either case, it describes the situation that doesn’t describe any nation in the world today. I can’t imagine its describing any in the next few centuries unless we have a tremendous change in the world, a time when they’re peaceful and unsuspecting living without walls and without gates and bars. I think that idea fits much better with its being after a thousand year absolute peace when there is total freedom from fear. It sounds much more like that than for something to happen before the millennium. Before the millennium the terrible

forces of hatred and aggression that are all over the world to date will reach a climax and things will get even worse than they are today. Today is perhaps the most violent period the world has ever seen.

Another thing to mention in this connection is chapter 39 where it speaks of the results of the attack of Gog and Magog. It says in verses 9 and 10, “Then those who live in the towns of Israel will go out and use the weapons for fuel and burn them up. The small and large shields, the bows and arrows, the war clubs and spears, for seven years they will use them for fuel.” Well, if you had a big invasion today, and the invasion was defeated, I don’t think you could take the remains of the tanks and the various instruments of war and use them for fuel. They would be unusable for that purpose. Now of course there is much in this prediction that is in figurative language, but yet this does fit much better with a condition after the millennium when they have beaten their swords into the plowshares and their spears into the pruning hooks, and the nations have not learned war for a thousand years. Then a great invasion might go back to using wooden armor, and wooden instruments. So that also fits with this being after the millennium far better than in the period before.

Student Question: Would you say that maybe sometime in the future we will be able to use weapons as a source of fuel?

MacRae’s answer: They will not have armaments; they will not learn war anymore. They will have beaten their swords into the plowshares, their spears into pruning hooks. For a thousand years there will be absolute peace and therefore if people are to build up a big invasion, they will revert to using very primitive weapons. Now that is rather hypothetical, but I think it is a further evidence that the picture is of conditions at the end of the millennium rather than the beginning. I would not be dogmatic on this point; I just think these evidences are well worth considering and I think the reference in Revelation makes it quite clear that Gog and Magog is after the millennium than before.

Well now, so much for chapter 38 and 39, and then we have this big section

in chapters 40-48. We will not be able to look at this in detail, but we want to say a few words about it. It starts in the 25th year of the exile. We have had dates very frequently through the book. I believe the tenth year or the eleventh year, or at least the twelfth, I forget the exact number--is the highest number we've had before this except for the brief section about Egypt that definitely was inserted later here because it would go with what was already said about Egypt. But except for those few verses, Ezekiel is arranged chronologically. Situations are set in a certain year for this and a certain year for that, and so on. Then we've had a big break. There was a period of at least ten years, maybe fifteen, from which we have no revelation from Ezekiel. Then we have this, quite distinct, in the 25th year, "And on that day the hand of the Lord was on me and he took me in visions of God. He took me to the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain." (Ezek. 40:2). So, we have here something that is similar to chapters 11-12: Ezekiel out there in exile being taken in the visions of God to the land of Israel.

Now, God took him there and Ezekiel saw certain things, and the things he saw were quite different from what he had seen the previous time. The previous time he saw the land in misery, that was in rebellion against God with idolatry and wickedness in it. He saw how God was going to punish Jerusalem and destroy it, and he saw a vision of the Spirit of the Lord departing from the city. Now he goes again in a vision, while he was then describing what was actually happening at the time. He saw one man whom he gave the name of, who died there, and I think there is no question that this was an actual thing that occurred at that time when he was seeing the vision. And God caused that to happen in order to give a further evidence to the people that Ezekiel was a true prophet. When this man died in Jerusalem Ezekiel would be able to tell them about it in Babylon, but they would not hear the news and they would hear it from Jerusalem for a few weeks later after the message came across the desert. And so, that vision in chapters 8-11 showed what had already happen then in Jerusalem.

Now, this vision very definitely does not show what is happening then in

Jerusalem. What is it a vision of? Well, there have been various answers to it. I have to say that, as a whole from 40-48, that this is a great vision which has many truths in it. Much of it is figurative and just exactly what as a whole it means, I do not think we can be dogmatic about it. It may be that a time will come when we will be able to see exactly how it fits, or it may be sort of a figurative dream gathering together things from various periods and more particular giving us a vision of great spiritual truths.

There are various ideas. The first idea that many have taken from it is that it is an architectural drawing. It is a picture given Ezekiel to tell the people how to rebuild their temple when they would return. It gives the details of how they should rebuild the temple and of the wonderful life that they would live after they return from exile.

There are many features of this vision that do not fit with the temple that was actually built when the people returned, and there are some features of it which are very difficult to imagine just how they would fit with the geographical conditions as the land is today. So while some have said, “This is an architect’s drawing for what they should do,” and others have said, “No, it is a picture of what the Israelites ought to do when they get a chance and they may still do sometime”—it is hard to fit that in because many of the figures and pictures in it are doubtless figurative; they’re very hard to imagine in literal form.

There are some who have said, “This is a picture of the actual conditions in the millennium.” There again I have a great hesitation. There are things in it which may very well describe some specific details in the millennium. There are other matters that are very hard to fit with the geography or with any situation, and that makes us feel that much of the vision is figurative.

There are some who say, “It is a picture of great spiritual truth that relates to the church of Christ”—which is, of course, the true believers, the true Israel—from which the bulk of the natural Israel was, as Paul says, “was grafted out, but will be grafted in again later.” Paul said, “They are not all of Israel that are of

Israel” (Romans 11:26). Now much of it can be explained along that line, but there are other points where I feel there is great difficulty in explaining it all together along that line. At present then, I have to say that there may be truth in all these approaches to this prophecy. There certainly are many spiritual truths in it: there is much in it that is of great interest, but I believe that in general it is one of the hard sections of the Scripture to explain in detail. Now that’s so much for the general dealing with chapters 40-48.

Now there are three specific things in it that I find of particular interest that I would like to call to your attention at this time. One of them is the matter of the return of the glory of God. You remember that in chapter 10 we read how Ezekiel in his vision saw the glory of God departing from the temple. In chapter 10:15-16 and 18-19 we read, “Then the Cherubim rose upward. These were the living creatures I had seen by the Kebar River.” Moving onto 18, “Then the glory of the LORD departed from over the threshold of the temple and stopped above the cherubim. While I watched, the cherubim spread their wings and rose from the ground, and as they went, the wheels went with them. They stopped at the entrance to the east gate of the Lord’s house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.” Then in the next chapter, chapter 11:22-27 we read: “Then the cherubim, with the wheels beside them, spread their wings, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. The glory of the LORD went up from within the city and stopped above the mountain east of it. The Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the exiles in Babylonia in the vision given by the Spirit of God.” So we have a picture of the Spirit of God departing, the glory of God departing from the temple previous to the exile. In this section now in chapter 43, we find an account of its returning. Chapter 43: “Then the man brought me to the gate facing east, and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory. The vision I saw was like the vision I had seen when he came to destroy the city and like the visions I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown. The glory of the

LORD entered the temple through the gate facing east.” So there is a picture here of the Lord’s glory, which had departed in the other picture, returning to the temple. Of course, this is not a physical leaving and returning. It’s quite obvious—it is a figurative picture of God withdrawing His presence from those who have proven faithless to Him and a picture of His returning. We can take it in a symbolic sense of the person who turns away from God and the glory of God departing and the glory returning to him when he turns his whole heart to the Lord. We can take it as a picture of events that have happened at different times in the history of the church. We can take it as a picture of the fact that God was going to depart from the Israelites and that, as Paul said, they are to be grafted in again as those who are truly the people of God. And so it’s very interesting to note the picture and to note the spiritual truth that we can get from it.

Now on chapter 44: in 1929 before there was much of a Jewish settlement in Jerusalem—today it’s largely a Jewish city but there wasn’t much of a Jewish settlement in Jerusalem in 1929--in 1929 I sat on the Mount of Olives where some chairs were put out and there was a small group, well I guess maybe 100 people were sitting there, and the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem gave us a message at Easter time. As he spoke, we could look right down at the valley and then at the hill beyond us where we could see on top of that hill the great wall that surrounds the temple area. Within that area there is the great Shrine of Omar and the great El Aksa mosque on the site where the temple originally stood. But there’s the great wall of the city, and the temple area is right next to that wall. The speakers read to us chapter 44 that begins, “Then the man brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, the one facing east”—that would be facing the Mount of Olives where we were sitting. And he said, “And it was shut. The LORD said to me, 'This gate is to remain shut. It must not be opened; no one may enter through it. It is to remain shut because the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered through it. The Prince himself is the only one who may sit inside the gateway to eat in the presence of the Lord. He is to enter by way of the portico of the gate and go out

the same way:” And then the speaker said, “There right in front of you, you see that gate which is walled up?” – and he said, “it’s very interesting how this prophesy of Ezekiel you can see fulfilled there to the present day.” Well, I inquired later; I said, “How old is this wall?” I was told that this wall was built in the 16th century. It was built by a Turkish sultan in the 16th century. Why did he leave all the surrounding part of the wall – of a gate – walled up so nobody could go through it at that point? At all the other points there are the walls with open gates through which the donkeys and the camels and the many people go in and out, but this one is walled up. Does anybody know why Suleiman the Magnificent made a representational walled gate at that point in the 16th century? The best I was able to get was: well, there had been a previous wall there, which had largely gone to pieces to quite an extent, and the sultan replaced it with this wall, and perhaps the previous one was just like this, and that’s what led him to put it in now. Well, of course, that’s the way with many traditions, and it keeps on long after everybody forgets why it was while we still keep doing it. It was very interesting to go and to read these words in Ezekiel and to see that situation exactly like that now. Beyond that, I’m afraid I don’t know anything further about it, and I rather doubt that anybody else does at the present time.

I would say that it is altogether possible that something will be built during the millennium that will be like a temple, and that will fit the representation here. It is altogether possible but there are enough other possibilities that I would not say it was at all certain.

Now I would like to call your attention to chapter 47 – a very interesting picture here in this part of Ezekiel. In chapter 47 we read in the first few verses: “The man brought me back to the entrance to the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the temple faced east.” Now today, of course, the Shrine of Omar and the whole section is entered from the west. When I was there in 1929, no Jew was allowed to enter at all into that whole high area there. A Christian could enter it by paying \$5, but of

course any Moslem could enter in freely at that time. I don't know just what the situation is regarding that today, but I understand that Jews are giving the Moslems entire authority over the old temple area. Whether Moslems even let Jews go in today, I don't know. But I remember once I walked along that wall in the late evening after dark. It was a full moon, and the view of the mosque and of the whole city from there was extremely beautiful.

But here we read that: "The man brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the temple faced east. The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar. He then brought me out through the outside to the outer gate facing east and the water was flowing from the south side. As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured out a thousand cubits, then led me through water that was ankle deep. He measured off another thousand cubits and then led me through water that was knee deep. He measured off another thousand, led me through water that was up to the waist. He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river I could not cross because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in; a river that no one could cross. He asked me, 'Son of man, do you see this?' Then he led me back to the bank of the river. When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river. He said to me, 'This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the area where it enters the sea.'" That would be the Dead Sea of course. The Dead Sea which is so full of salt and other chemicals that when I went into it, it seemed I could just lie on my back; I didn't seem to sink at all. I tried to swim and you just couldn't swim. But a little water got into my eye and smarted like everything with the chemicals that were in it.

Now, the man said, "When it empties into the sea, the water there becomes fresh. Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh so where the river flows everything will live. Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on

both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.”

This is a very interesting picture which some say is impossible as the topography is now, because the streams there would flow out toward the west rather than to the east, and there’s no evidence to the present of any possibility of an underground stream at that point. Now that does not prove what might literally occur in the future. But certainly there’s a beautiful figurative picture here of the river, of the water of life with the trees of all kinds on both banks of the river, and their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.

We find the same picture in the book of Revelation, where we read in chapter 22: “Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.” A beautiful picture in Revelation using exactly the same figures as there are here in Ezekiel. Whether it will ever stand for a specific physical thing, nobody can be dogmatic one way or another. But certainly it is a beautiful figure of God's grace and God's blessing.

It's interesting that we have exactly the same figure back in the first psalm, where we read about the good man, in verse 2: “His delight is in the law of the LORD and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruits in season and whose leaf does not wither; whatever he does prospers.” So, I think it's very interesting these three beautiful spiritual figures, whether there is something literal in them, that they form a literal prediction of a physical thing. If it is clearly a figurative picture of the great blessings that God brings us, I don’t know. I don’t think we can speak dogmatically on that, but I have used it in a sermon as a very important figure of the way that we should bring forth our fruit, and each in season we should bear

different kinds of fruit. We can only bear our fruit as we keep up our closeness to the river of the water of God's grace and keep drawing from it. We not only are to bear many kinds of fruit that are important, but also the leaf does not wither and the leaves are for the healing of the nations. Both Revelation and Ezekiel say that the leaves are to be medicine.

Now those who try to insist that there can be nothing physical or literal in this picture in Ezekiel say that for various reasons, some of which are certainly valid, others are questionable. One thing they say is that this picture of the water that flows a thousand cubits--that would be about 500 yards--they say that for it to go 500 yards and then be just up to your ankles, another 500 and just up to your knees, another 500 higher up and then another 500 and you'd have to swim in it, they say that's impossible. That doesn't correspond to anything real. But it's very interesting that up in the northern end of the land of Israel near Caesarea Philippi where Peter gave his great confession, that there is a river which is just about exactly like that. It starts in out of the ground with a little bit of water and then if you go about 500 yards and there is quite a bit more and then there is more and there is more and then eventually it's a big river there.

I would think that certainly is a part of its theme. I would think that is perhaps as important a part as any for us in our present situation in the world. Whether it represents a literal thing that will be produced sometime in the future or not, it certainly has an important spiritual meaning for us today. I would feel that God wants us to be aware of the river of the water of life. He wants us to be like trees standing by that river to remember constantly that we must draw our nourishment from the grace that God gives, which He gives to very great extent through the study of his Word. We must keep drawing from that; we cannot simply stay where we are, we have to keep drawing from it. He wants us not to draw simply for ourselves, but he wants it to be a blessing for others. He wants us to bring forth fruit, and not merely one kind of fruit, but many kinds of fruit representing the various spiritual blessings that Christians should be.

But then also there's the leaves which offer the healing of the nations, and he wants us very definitely, in addition to the main things which is the spiritual blessing we should be to others, he wants us also to stand for every good thing in the world in which we live, and to try to help.

This spiritual interpretation is not, I think, to the extent that the modernists would take it. The modernists will twist anything in the Scripture. I was shocked recently to hear of a man that claims to believe in inerrancy of the Scripture but has written a commentary on Matthew in which he says that when Matthew describes the coming of the magi, he is simply building a beautiful picture based on the story of the shepherds that he found in Luke. The author has all kinds of things like this, but he still insists that he believes in inerrancy, and yet he wants to be regarded as a true evangelical. This double-speak is very common in our day, and I think it is important we be aware of it and be careful of it. Karl Barth, for instance, once said, "I believe in the virgin birth and I believe in the bodily resurrection; I believe in the bodily return of Christ," but he said, "These aren't just in the past, and have nothing to do with the future; they're the same thing, and they're here today." Well, that reduces everything to nonsense. So we have to try to learn to draw the line between that double-speak that reduces Scripture to nonsense--it is completely evil. There are literal teachings in the Scripture and there also are great spiritual lessons.

There is much that is figurative and we cannot always make complete decisions, but as we go on studying the Scripture God enables us more and more to understand it. You'll find in any part, as you study it, you will find problems; you will find questions you don't understand, perhaps where you don't know the answer that is expected. But if you find these problems and you have them in your mind, sometime when you are studying another part of Scripture you'll find the exact answer to that problem that you would have slid right over without noticing if you hadn't had that problem in mind. So as we study the Scripture, we can always be learning new truths that God has for us. But we must be careful not to

jump to conclusions and be dogmatic about those conclusions.

I have tried very carefully to say what I feel is definite in the Scripture and also identify what I feel are impossible interpretations on which we may find evidence elsewhere to lead us to be sure of it or to find we were wrong. There are problems that we don't know the answers to. There may be a problem of great importance to us at some time in our life, and God may give us the answer as we study some other portion of the Scripture that fits in a way that we would not have seen initially.

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