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## GOLD DUST AND GOLDEN STREETS:

A Parable of Particular Redemption

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Once upon a time there were two gold miners. They both worked with identical hammers, and they both dug the same mine in search of the same precious metal. But though they worked in the same mine with the same tools, searching for the same treasure, the two miners themselves were distinctively different one from another, as would be the outcome of their labors that day. The one miner dug just on the surface of things, and occasionally just beneath the surface, sparing himself the physical exertion and tedious time necessary to dig more deeply. But the other miner struck hard and worked long to dig as deeply as he could for gold. One might easily imagine that the first miner was little rewarded, while the second miner discovered much treasure.

At the end of the day, both miners brought their gold to be weighed on brazen scales. On the left side of the scales, the first miner poured out what he had mined--nine shining flakes of gold dust. The miner's eyes were dazzled as the golden flakes, sparkling and shimmering like fiery embers, slowly floated downwardly upon the left side of the brass scale. "Eureka," he exclaimed, "I have found the gold!" And indeed he had found gold, gold-dust to be sure, but gold nonetheless, nine sparkling flakes of gold-dust. He was ecstatic with joy, but his joy would soon turn into mourning.

As the second miner approached the scale, his sachet was loaded so heavily that he could not draw it by his own strength, but needed the help of twelve men and seven horses to unload his treasure. In amazement and disbelief, the first miner watched as the second miner, heavy-laden with gold, poured out his treasure and tilted the scales to the right. Golden nugget by golden nugget, golden bar by golden bar, beautiful bullion poured out upon the brazen dish until the scales could no longer bear the weight, nor could the incredulous first miner believe what his disappointed eyes told him. "That must be fool's gold!" he cried. "Nay," said the lord of the scales, an old and wise refiner of gold; "It is gold; in *truth* it is gold. He who has dug deeply has found the gold. Pour it into the furnace and heat it seven times that the Great Goldsmith may fashion vessels of honor fit for glory."

This parable of the two gold-miners illustrates the difference between those who have searched the scriptures for the truth of redemption but have come to infinitely different, even disturbingly different discoveries about redemption, discoveries immeasurably dissimilar both in volume and value. Both miners, the generalist and the particularist, have dug with the hammer of God's word, and both have dug in the same vein--the mind of God. But one has hardly broken the surface, finding only gold-dust, while the other has labored hard and long for the bullion buried deep within the dark and secret chasms of Divinely precious mysteries. The miner who has broken only the surface believes that he alone has found all the gold, that his eight grains of gold dust are the sum and substance of everything in heaven's gold mine. The other miner may unload nugget after nugget and bar after bar until the scales tip fully and finally in his favor, but the gold-dust miner will not believe the truth though heaven's coffers be poured out before his eyes. "Fool's gold!" he cries again, as he bags his gold dust, binds it with the delusion that he has all the gold, and goes to his home a poorer man.

Like nine grains of gold-dust, arguments against particular redemption must be treated as gold, beautiful and valuable because they are biblical. But if we weigh these protestations in the scales of truth, they are but dust, gold dust to be sure, but dust nonetheless when weighed in comparison to what lies on the right side of the scales. "Your shining nuggets," say they, "are not real, your glistening bars counterfeit. Our dust is all the gold there is, and with these nine particles of gold dust we shall pave heaven's highways." And what is this gold dust by which our adversaries would weigh all truth? They are nine verses of scripture from the New Testament. John 1:29, "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." John 6:51, "... the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." I John 2:2, "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world." I John 4:14, "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." I Timothy 2:6, "Who gave himself a ransom for all ...." I Timothy 4:10, "We trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men ..."; Romans 5:18, "... by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Hebrews 2:9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." II Peter 2:1, "... false teachers, denying the Lord that bought them."

These nine scriptures, like particles of gold-dust on the scales of truth, constitute the whole weight of that argument set forth against particular redemption by those who think that the gold lies on the surface. No matter that

the microscope of careful study reveals that John the Baptist did not say that the Lamb of God "taketh away the sins of the world," but rather "the sin of the world," or that the Beloved Apostle's affirmation of Christ as a universal propitiation pointed to the inclusion of elect Gentiles as opposed to elect Jews alone in the great work of redemption. No matter that Paul described Christ as a ransom for all "to be testified in due time," or that Paul's discussion of justification in Romans 5 views Christ as the federal head of all the elect as Adam was the federal head of all humanity; no matter that Paul qualified Christ's Saviorhood to "specially them that believe," or that Peter understood that Christ, as the last Adam, had become, not the Lord, but the sovereign despot of ungodly heretics who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. No matter that the Greek word for "man," anthropos, is absent in Hebrews 2:9, or that St. John does not consistently use *cosmos* as a numerical term. "No," say they, "do not look upon these golden grains with a sharp and careful microscope; don't dig beneath the surface; don't fashion complex theological ideas which boggle the mind and confuse the dim and undiscerning eye. Nay, by these nine grains of gold-dust all truth must be weighed. Nothing else matters, not your many nuggets, not your heavy bars of theological bullion. These nine scriptures prove that Christ died for every person in the entire human race throughout all history, from Cain to Judas, from Mohammed to Buddha, from Pharaoh to Hitler, from Jezebel to the anti-Christ." And by this brief and light argument they hope to overthrow anyone who disagrees with them, no matter what so heavily may rest upon the other side of the scales. But like the disappointed and disbelieving miner who walked away from the scales with only gold dust, opponents of particular redemption sprinkle their gold in their feather-light sachets, bind their light treasures with thin thread, and turn away with a handful of dust, poorer than they could have been, yet all the while believing that they hold all the gold. But surely there is a better vein for the silver, and a deeper place where the gold is mined.

But look upon the right side of the scales. We too have our gold dust, nine golden grains and more! "Be merciful, O LORD," old Moses prayed, "unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed" (Deuteronomy 21:8).

And what of the man after God's own heart? How understood he the blood? "Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles. . . . Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities" (Ps.25:22; 130:7-8). That prophet which spake of the bloody cross with sharpest eye and clearest tongue, says of the suffering Messiah that "He was taken from prison and from judgement: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the

transgression of *my people* was he stricken. . . . He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify *many*; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of *many*, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:8, 11-12). John the Baptist's father, old blind Zacharias, saw the truth clearly and spoke the truth aright when his eyes were opened to it, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel," said he, "for his hath visited and redeemed his people. . . . To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins" (Luke 1:68, 77). Levi the tax collector understood the relationship between value and purchase, and heard the Son declare, "I came not be to ministered unto, but to minister; and to give my life a ransom for many"; and, finally at the First Supper, He said to his disciples, "Drink ye all of it; for this cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins"; (John 10:11, 15; Matthew 20:28; 26:28). Praise to the apocalyptic Lamb rises from the ancient elders and cherubim for he "hast redeemed them from the earth and from among men . . . out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation" (Revelation 5:9; 14:3-4). Yes, we too have our gold dust, but it sparkles not alone, like the last few stars of dawn, but in a *galaxy* golden.

Three heavy bars tip the scales to a redemption perfect and complete: the first bar, the terminology of particular redemption; the second, the theology of particular redemption; and the third golden bar, the typology of particular redemption.

The first golden bar by which we weigh the truth of particular redemption is the terminology of the cross, such terms as redemption, atonement, propitiation, and reconciliation.

The concept of Redemption requires three corollaries. What is a corollary? In mathematics, a corollary is a proposition which necessarily follows after proving another proposition, such as, "... if 2+1 = 3, then 1+2 must also equal three." Another definition of a corollary is "an immediate or easily drawn consequence," or "a natural consequence or result." Now, please do not misunderstand me; I do not mean to suggest that a proper understanding of redemption is as simple as 1-2-3, or that such a highly and hotly debated truth may be discerned by mere rational processes. No, biblical truth is neither immediately nor ultimately discoverable by reason, but rather through the special and sovereign revelation and illumination of God the Holy Spirit. But redemption--grammatically, biblically, and theologically understood--does require three corollaries: three ideas which are inextricably

interwoven and necessarily and inseparably co-dependent one upon another. These ideas are bondage, ransom, and deliverance. The concept of redemption presupposes a *bondage* out of which the redeemed come, a *ransom* by which the redeemed come out of bondage, and a *deliverance* unto which the redeemed necessarily arrive because they have been ransomed from bondage. There can be no such thing as redemption without prior bondage, no such thing as redemption without sufficient ransom, and, here's the rub, no such thing as redemption without deliverance, for if deliverance from bondage is not accomplished by ransom, then either there was no ransom paid, or the ransom paid was not sufficient to deliver from bondage. More simply stated, redemption is deliverance from bondage by ransom.

Now consider the term atonement. Broken down into its three separate syllables, atonement becomes a more understandable concept--at-one-ment. The cross of Christ makes sinners to be "at one" with God, thus the idea of atonement or, better pronounced at-one-ment. The term reconciliation derives from the word reconcile, which means to bring together two previously alienated or separated entities. Of course, the separated entities are God and sinners; and reconciliation, theologically understood, means the act of bringing together God and sinners through the cross of Christ. Propitiation is also one of the crimson words of the New Testament. To propitiate means to cover over; therefore a propitiation is a covering of some kind, such as when, in the Garden of Eden, Yahweh, according to the Talmud, slew the serpent and used his beautiful skin as a covering, a propitiation, for Adam and Eve in their newly discovered nakedness.

But generalists do not really believe in redemption, atonement, reconciliation, or propitiation; oh, yes, they say they do, but they really do not. No, Arminians and other generalists do not believe in redemption, atonement, reconciliation, or propitiation except as *possibilities*. They do not believe that the blood of Christ has *actually redeemed* even one sinner, *actually accomplished at-one-ment* between God and a single rebel, *actually propitiated* the least transgression, or *actually reconciled* one alien stranger to God. Add to this the grammar of these terms in the New Testament, and the generalists' view becomes even weaker.

By "grammar" we mean how New Testament writer view redemption, atonement, reconciliation, and propitiation as finished works. The writer of Hebrews tells us that, having perfectly completed the atonement, Christ "... after he had made one sacrifice for sin forever, sat down on the right hand of God, ... For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." And what does the rough fisherman tell the elect

scattered abroad? "You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people . . . redeemed not with corruptible things such as silver and god, but with the precious blood of that Lamb slain before the foundation of the world." And the Chief Apostle cries from heaven, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God who justifies them. While they were yet sinners, Christ died for them, and reconciled them by His blood. Much more then, having been reconciled, they shall be saved!" Ah, but hell protests loudly! "The Great Transaction is not complete, the blood of Christ availeth not; the cross makes salvation only *possible*, but not *certain*." Cries another, "It is finished, *almost*; it is finished if the wicked wills of the walking dead be joined to it and make it so. But that voice which once shook the earth from Calvary's dark brow, now shakes not only earth but also the highest heaven and the lowest hell. "Be still," says he; "Be silent, all flesh," for I am "raised up out of my holy habitation. . . . Whatever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be taken from it, nor anything added to it. It is finished!"

But if the silver tongues of the apostles and the Son of God Himself weigh not heavily enough in the balances to convince the gainsayers, then let us lay another golden bar upon the scales of truth, the bar of biblical theology, those precious doctrines are more to be desired than gold, yea than much fine gold. Does not the doctrine of *election*, even conditional election, demand particular redemption? According to Paul, those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and predestinated unto the adoption of sons already "...have redemption through his blood." How powerfully do the words of the Good and Great Shepherd Himself corroborate Paul's doctrine the elect and the redeemed are one. Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd, and the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." But to the unredeemed Pharisees he said, "Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep." And what of the doctrine of justification? If justification be universal, how can a just God condemn one justified sinner for whom His Son's own precious blood was shed? Is God a God of double indemnity? Was the blood shed in vain?. But if justification be as Paul has described it, a *fait accompli*, then how could we possibly misinterpret Paul's question. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? . . . For whom God foreknew, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son. Moreover, whom he predestinated, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified." And what of the doctrine of Christ's work as priestly intercessor, who says by His own lips, "I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me out of the world; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and I am glorified in them"? Does the Father hear the Son always, or is the intercessory payer of Christ like Nebudchennazar's, ineffectual and helpless, a pitiful pleading for one upon whom

his heart is set to deliver from the lion's mouth, but, alas, the king's will is bound in impotence and his hand unable to do what his heart passionately desires and fervently prays? Or does our Great High Priest prevail in prayer before the throne, able to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them"? And what of the everlasting covenant of grace? Is the threefold cord quickly broken by sinners' hands and hell's devices? Or does the God of peace who raised Christ from the dead make them perfect in every good work, working in them both to will and to do his good pleasure? Shall not all those, whom the father has chosen and the Son purchased, be drawn effectually and irresistibly by the Spirit? Zechariah declares, "By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth the prisoners out of the pit." And Jesus, the surety, testator, and mediator of the better covenant says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came not down from heaven to do mine own will, but the covenant will of the Godhead, that of all which He hath given me, I should lose none of them, no not one, but raise every one to glory in the last day"! And what saith the Spirit, "As long as one coin is lost or one sheep absent from the fold, I will sweep the house and even go into the wilderness to find them. I will find a bride for the better Isaac; I will load Abraham's camels to the full, and deliver all the gifts necessary necessary to bring the bride home to her bridegroom. If she be polluted in her own blood, I will say unto her, 'Live!' I will wash away her scarlet stains her with the water of the word drawn from he wells of salvation, I will anoint her with oil.. Though she be dead in trespasses and sins, I will quicken her unto life eternal. And if, with sin, she be black as the tents of Kedar and her spirit dark, formless, and void; I, who command the light to shine out of darkness and call those things that be not as though they are, shall command the light to shine out of darkness and show her the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus. I will put golden earrings in her ears, so that when her soul's lover speaks once, she will hear him twice; I shall the adorn her hands with the bracelet of faith that she may reach out for her beloved's hand, and a chain about her neck and the diamond of grace upon her forehead that she may turn with a truly free will to gaze into the face of her beloved. I will find all Jonathan's sons for David's sake, and for the sake of the eternal covenant of love between them. I will search high and low in the barren fields of Lodebar, and though Mephibosheth be lame on both his feet, I will bring him to the palace in David's own chariot and make him one of the king's sons." Shall we declare with David, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for us; it is high we cannot attain it?" Yet there is higher knowledge still, for where the terminology and theology of redemption may weigh heavy on the scales, there is gold heavier still--the typology of particular redemption.

A type is a factual or fictional event, person, or object which represents a meaning higher and deeper than itself. Types run throughout the Old Testament, many of them typifying redemption; and every type which typifies redemption portrays a redemption particular in focus and limited in scope. Let us consider the two main redemptive types in the Old Testament, Passover and Yom Kippur.

Since we are celebrating Reformation Day, when Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses upon the door of the University of Wittenberg, it is perhaps appropriate to cast our thesis in a German term, *heilgeshichte*, which means "salvation history" or "redemption history." Indeed, the Passover is a story of redemption history, and from it we may extrapolate truths which will illumine our understanding of the redemption, and thus illumined, reflect whether we merely glisten in dust or glow like the golden city which needs no light of the sun, moon, or stars.

As we have already noted in our discussion of the terminology of redemption, redemption is a composite idea which requires there corollaries--bondage, ransom, and deliverance. If we are correct in our analysis of this term, then bondage, ransom, and deliverance must be part and parcel to the Passover as a type of particular redemption. And of course they are.

Israel, a type of God's chosen people, was in a state of slavery to Pharaoh and Egypt, types of Satan and the world. Moses' book *The Exodus* describes Israel's bondage in the following ways, all of which typify the bondage of the greater Israel whom Christ has redeemed. First and most obviously, the people who were in bondage were God's chosen people, Israel, and as such typify those whom Paul calls "the Israel of God," the true seed of Abraham, "for he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, but he is truly a Jew who is one inwardly." Not only were the chosen people in bondage, but they were in a state of *natural* bondage, born into this slavery; in the same way, the elect are by nature bondslaves to sin and children of wrath, conceived in sin, born in iniquity, and gone astray from the womb; and by their very fallen nature spiritually aborted, dead in trespasses and sins. Also like national Israel's bondage, our bondage is to an evil king, but one more dreadful and fierce than Pharaoh, Abaddon-Appolyon, the destroyer-king of the bottomless pit. We are of our father the devil, and the lusts of our father we will to do. Left to ourselves, we are no mere slaves to Lucifer, but his allies and enemies to God by our wicked works. We dwell in a darkness blacker than Egypt, a darkness we love, an all pervasive moral and spiritual darkness within

which we cannot kindle one spark of light. Also like the ancient Israelites, our bondage is burdensome, bitter, hard, sorrowful, oppressive, laborious, and even Divinely ordained and providentially arranged.

Our bondage is so great that, like Israel's, it cannot be broken except by miracle. So powerful was dark Egypt's evil grip upon the chosen people, that even miracles, wonders, and signs were not sufficient to deliver them; neither bloody rivers, teeming frogs, stinging lice, swarms of flies, murrain upon Egypt's herds, flaming boils upon man and beast, devouring locusts, nor a darkness that could be felt—none of these terrible miracles availed for the deliverance of God's elect. Ironically, Yahweh Himself had prophesied to Moses the granite heart and resolute will of Pharaoh, "I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand"; in fact Yahweh Himself had raised up Pharaoh and sovereignly ordained his hard and impenitent heart, that He might show His people Pharaoh's infinite wickedness, and the necessity of one miracle which alone had the power to deliver God's chosen people—the miracle of the lamb's blood.

And what of this gentle lamb, brought as a sheep to the slaughter, dumb before its shearer? This was a lamb without blemish, a male of the first year, slain not by Pharaoh's hand, nor by the hand of any Egyptian, but by the whole house of Israel, a lamb for an house, roasted with fire, bones unbroken, and its blood smeared upon the doorposts of those houses where the chosen people dwelt. No blood was sprinkled upon Pharaoh's doorway, nor upon any Egyptian dwelling; its scarlet power was a bloody banner over the chosen people alone, and neither a drop nor a morsel remained until the morning after that black night when the death angel smote all of Egypt. But not a child in Israel died. Redemption was complete and perfect.

And this lamb's blood was no mean ransom, making the salvation of Israel possible but rather certain.

Israel's God had decreed not only a ransom, but a ransom *sufficient* for all for whom it was provided, a ransom not merely sufficient for every soul among the chosen people, but a ransom *efficient* to deliver every one of them. "I am Yahweh," said Israel's God, "and I *will* bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I *will* rid you out of their bondage, and I *will* redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgements: and I *will* take you to me for a people, and I *will* be to you a God: and you shall know that I am Yahweh your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians." When the sun rose upon Egypt, the curse was universal to the non-elect; the death angel's shadow had fallen over the whole land and passed through every house; all the firstborn of Egypt lay dead, lifeless and still. What terrible wailing and weeping must have echoed in Pharaoh's palace and in the

homes of the reprobate! What wrath must have filled the hearts of the Egyptians against Israel and her God! But the lamb's blood was so powerful that day, that not a dog in Egypt moved its tongue against the chosen people! And is not Christ, our Passover, sacrificed for the greater Israel? Does not Heaven's voice still reverberate in the land, "Let my people go"? And is not the greater Lamb's blood still sufficient, yea, still efficacious, to deliver that people for whom it has been shed. Indeed, the Passover attests to a redemption perfect and complete, sufficient for all for whom it has been shed, and efficient to deliver them!

And look yonder to the High Day of Atonement. See the golden thread that wove the high priest's garment on Yom Kippur, that same high priest who bore upon his tender breast and strong shoulders the names of the chosen people engraved in precious stones. See the golden altar of incense where Christ prays, as He said, not for the world, but for them whom the Father had given Him out of the world. Tip the scales with the heavy golden candlestick that illuminates the hidden, inner truths of those dark mysteries inside the veil of His flesh. And look within the veil, the ark of the covenant, fashioned from beaten gold and covered by the golden mercy seat and golden cherubim, whose dazzled faces stare upon the scarlet blood that was shed for the elect people. And under the blood-smeared, golden mercy seat, Aaron's rod that budded, which connotes the impartation of eternal life to all whom the Father has given the Son. See the stony law at rest and unbroken beneath the golden mercy seat, preserved perfectly under the blood that speaketh better things than Abel, a declaration of perfect justification. Within the golden ark sits the golden pot that holds the eternal manna, Christ's own life which He lay down for His sheep. Within the holiest of holies where perfect redemption rests, I hear the great, high priest; upon his tender breast and strong shoulders, the names of the chosen tribes engraved in twelve precious stones socketed in gold. Hand held high with cedar wood, scarlet wool, and hyssop, old Aaron, cries to the elect nation, "This is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you. Now ye are washed; now ye are sanctified; now ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." A mighty rushing wind rings the golden bells upon Aaron's skirt, and though demons' wings thunder like war chariots and the great red dragon himself may roar, hell's cacophony cannot quell heaven's symphony of redemption accomplished and applied.

I hear voices from time's distance, the silver tongues of preachers past now stirring--Calvin, Edwards, Spurgeon, and others who join in song with heaven's "praise to the glory of Him who redeemed them out of every kingdom and tongue and people and nation." I hear even angels' voices, ten thousand times ten thousand, saying

with a loud voice, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." And when all of heaven's angels and earth's saints have made hell to tremble and the universe to shudder so that the golden sun is confounded, the silver moon ashamed, and the diamond stars of heaven fall down in obeisance to the Lamb; just when the universe can no more bear the heavy, golden glory of a perfect redemption, there comes yet one more golden voice sweeter still, filled with the exceeding weight of eternal glory. It is the bleating and bleeding Lamb of Calvary, the roaring and resting Lion of the tribe of Judah; it is the voice of my beloved. He knows my name, for as my great High Priest he has written it upon his tender heart and upon his strong shoulders; he has put it in the book of life from the foundation of the world; yea, he has graven my name upon the palms of his hands. He calls me by my name, and I follow Him, because I am His sheep. He speaks, and the tongues of men and of angels become still and know that He is God. His voice is as the sound of many waters, and His words like seven thunders. "I am the Good Shepherd," says he, "and the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." To the Father He says, "Mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them, . . . . and I give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me before the world was."

Gold dust, left to itself, is weighed in the balances and found wanting. Gold dust belongs, not on the left side of the scale alone, but on the right side of the scale, there with the heavy golden bars o biblical terminology, Pauline theology, and the entire redemptive economy expressed in Old Testament. This is the gold on the right side of the scales, which fills heaven's coffers, and by which the Almighty Architect paves the blazing golden streets on which the redeemed walk in the holy city, New Jerusalem, that city which itself is made of purest gold.