

MR. DIMBLEBY'S CHRONOLOGY, ETC.

AS ALREADY stated, Mr. Dimbleby's solar chronology was the one acknowledged by Mr. Totten. Therefore, whatever we have said respecting its errors of one hundred and twenty-nine years applies to the calculation built upon those errors in the theories of both. But to the credit of Mr. Dimbleby's knowledge of astronomy, he found nothing peculiar to note about the time of Joshua's long day, nor any reason to count his years 354 days each from then on, so as to culminate the six thousand years over a century sooner than they could honestly be terminated, *according to his erroneous chronology*. So he allows his 6000 years to end in the year 2002 A.D.; and begins in another way to show that the seventh or great millennium of Christ's Kingdom will begin one hundred years before the sixth thousand years end – but for what reason each reader is left to *guess*. It was evidently the observance of *this inconsistency*, together with the erroneous chronology, that led Mr. Totten to his grievous error of attempting to shorten one period and stretch another to bring the two together.

Mr. Dimbleby errs, as Mr. Totten does, in beginning his "Gentile Times" with the beginning of King Nabopolassar's reign, fully twenty-five years before Nebuchadnezzar had his dream of the great image of Gentile governments, in the interpretation of which God informed him, through Daniel the prophet, that into *his* hands (not into the hands of his dead father Nabopolassar) he gave the dominion of the world. (Dan. 2:38.) So even if his chronology were corrected he would be obliged to alter the date for beginning his 2520 years of "Gentile Times" or rule; – which, by the way, he brings to an end in A.D. 1898¼ (March 1898), one year earlier than Mr. Totten. Working on the same *exact* (?), *eclipse-proved* (?) chronology, Totten begins Nabopolassar's reign with the year 3377½ A.M., and Dimbleby begins it in 3376½ A.M.

Mr. Dimbleby, knowing of Mr. Totten's failure thus far, steers clear of any danger of failure before 1898, by locating the second coming of Christ, the time of trouble, etc., *beyond* or *at the close of* his "Times of the Gentiles"

– *March 1898. He says: –*

"We must observe that our Lord places his second coming as at the end of the 'Gentile Times,' 5896¼ [1898¼ A.D.]....The coming of Christ, the conversion of the Jews, and the appearance of the saints in glory, are contingent events, all taking place *at the end* of the Gentile Times."

"The evidence is abounding and overwhelming, if we can add up figures, that the eventful period is 1898¼.... All civil governments will thus be overturned, and God rises up to make the enemies of Christ his footstool."

"Following the close of 'Gentile Times' will be the 30 years....But how great are the events of this day of Christ, or 30 years, now close at hand."

What about this "30 years?" What is it? Where does Mr. Dimbleby get it? – We reply, He claims that there are certain Jewish Times as well as "Gentile Times," with a different beginning and a different ending, – an ending 30 years after 1898¼, where he ends Gentile Times. But this is an unreasonable and untenable position, and betrays a misunderstanding of the real significance of "Gentile Times."

God passed by all the other nations of the earth and recognized only Israel. (See Amos 3:2; Rom. 3:1,2.) In Israel he placed his own throne, *typically*, and her kings represented Him; as it is written, "Solomon sat upon the [R1979 : page 110] throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father." (1 Chron. 29:23.) Yea, before the first of their kings, Saul, God considered himself Israel's King, and so declared. (1 Sam. 8:7) Under his covenant with that nation, God

promised to bless and protect them while they remained loyal to him; but to chastise them for disloyalty. He did this repeatedly, delivering them on account of sin into captivity to the Philistines, etc., and rescuing them again after they repented; but still recognizing that nation, as represented in "Judah," under the kings of David's line, ***down to the end of Zedekiah's*** reign (3522 A.M., *true Bible Chronology**). There, in harmony with his vision to Nebuchadnezzar, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (18 years previous), ***God actually removed his typical kingdom***, to permit Nebuchadnezzar's government to become universal; for it would be impossible for the Gentiles to have universal sway so long as God's Kingdom, even in a typical form, existed. The Lord marks this time and event in most explicit language, saying of Zedekiah, the last king upon the typical throne, – "Thou profane and wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come when iniquity should have an end, thus saith the Lord God: Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, **[R1979 : page 111]** overturn, overturn it [God's typical crown and kingdom on earth]; and ***it shall be no more until*** he come, whose right it is [the Christ, "Head" and "body"]; and I will give it [the crown and kingdom ***there*** overturned] unto him." (Ezek. 21:25-27.) It is for this period, during which the crown or kingdom of God is overturned in the earth, that God gives a lease of ruling authority to the Gentiles, whose "times" are seven symbolic years, or 2520 literal years. And it is during their "times" that God's people, Israel after the flesh, are trodden under foot by the Gentiles; and during the same period Israel after the spirit, "the Kingdom of Heaven, suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." (Luke 21:24; Matt. 11:12.) Hence for Gentile Times to end means for the Gentiles to cease to tread down, and for God's people no longer to be trodden down; and the treading and the being trodden must of necessity end together.

*Starting from this, the evidently correct starting point, the 2520 years of "Gentile Times" will, without stretching or shrinking, end with September 1914 A.D.; while, possibly, something may be expected 18

years sooner (1896 A.D.); because the announcement of "Gentile Times" was made by Daniel, and the dream representing them was given to Nebuchadnezzar, 18 years before God's typical Kingdom was taken out of the way of Nebuchadnezzar's universal sway. – See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., Chap. 4.*

But not only does Mr. Dimbleby err in separating his Jewish times of being trodden, from the "Gentile Times" of treading, but he begins them at different and wrong places. He begins his Jewish times at the end of the reign of king Jehoiakim; seven years after Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and eleven years before God removed the diadem of his kingdom and overturned it. Furthermore, although he does not use Mr. Totten's false year of 354 days in his chronology, he falls into the error of reckoning his Jewish times by that false measure, authorized nowhere and by nobody. Though his chronology and starting times are erroneous, his calculations seem to be truthful, except when he tries to bring together various prophecies which have no real connection, and there he persuades himself that the following statement is true; *viz.*, –

"I should also state that the 1260 and 1335 years make a total of 2595, – and 2595 lunar [354 day] years are 2520 solar."

Mr. Dimbleby's pencil deceived him here, by five years lacking 26 days; for 2595 lunar years, 354 days each, would represent exactly 2515 years and 26¼ days, of 365¼ days to the year. A rather bad slip for an astronomer and premier chronologist, who claims to figure out a chronology correct to the fraction of a day, and *proved* (?) by astronomy (!)

On the whole, then, Mr. Dimbleby's errors are perhaps less serious than Mr. Totten's; but still very *serious* for himself and many others: for he has a very dogmatic style, calculated to deceive many. Indeed, he almost charges that if there should be any miscarriage of *his* dates it would be because of God's unfaithfulness. For instance, in commending his findings and presentations, he says: –

"Is God going to change? Will he abandon his fidelity? Better suppose that the sun will not rise tomorrow."

Such language is not that of a teacher properly under the lead of the Lord's spirit. A teacher should present the Scriptural or other evidences, and there rest his case. Beware of any teachings "hammered in" thus. The implication is that Mr. Dimbleby's work is infallible, beyond question; sooner question God's veracity and fidelity, and sooner yet doubt the sunrise: the thing *farthest from failure is Mr. D's* chronology and figures, – which we have just shown are inconsistent in every important part. We recapitulate them here: –

(1) Errors in Chronology of one hundred and twenty-nine years. – One hundred years short in the period of the Judges of Israel. The other twenty-nine years in error are dropped by leaving the Bible record (as the standard, down to the first year of Cyrus, the end of the seventy years *desolation*) and attempting, with Ptolemy, Usher and others, to harmonize the statements of Scripture with the fragmentary statements of secular history.

(2) The error of making a period of "Jewish Times" (which the Scriptures nowhere mention) separate from "Gentile Times"; and of beginning both at wrong dates, and counting them upon his erroneous chronology, and one of them upon false (short) years.

(3) Above all the other errors his wholly unwarranted and absolutely untrue statements that prophecies begin and end on the same day of the week and month, etc., and that his chronology is proved by eclipses, exact to an hour or minute, etc. Mr. Dimbleby, as well as Mr. Totten, must know, what every person of even average acquaintance with chronology, astronomy and the Bible should know, that the Bible does not contain one solitary item that could be used by an astronomer in fixing any date; – neither with certainty nor with uncertainty.

What he has done with his chronology any one could do with any chronology. First, as Mr. Dimbleby practically does, accept Usher's

chronology – partly from the Bible and partly from secular history. Then, take your pencil, or such astronomical "tables" as are accessible to all, and say to yourself, *If* my chronology is correct, Nebuchadnezzar came to his throne in such a year; and, *if so*, I see by the "tables" that there must have been such and such eclipses, or such and such transits, that year. *If* my chronology is correct, king David ascended his throne in the year _____, so many years ago; and, *if so*, according to the "tables," there were such transits and such eclipses that year.

But all depends on the *if* of the chronology. If the chronology were astray one year, or one thousand years, astronomy would not assist in detecting the error, *unless* accurate and quite elaborate records of astronomical events are found in *connection* with the history; which is not the case with Bible history.

We could just as easily fix up a statement of solar cycles, conjunctions and transits and affix it to various items of our *truly* Bible chronology. We could claim that astronomy verified every date; and we could no doubt deceive many by such attempts, and few would see through the sophistry. But God would know it, and we would know it ourselves; and we believe that it is as dangerous for one to deceive himself as to deceive others. We advise all to be especially on guard against self deception in handling the divine Word. – 2 Cor. 4:2.

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Much more could be said in criticism of the views set forth by Messrs. Totten and Dimbleby – their misapplication and distortion of every prophetic date they attempt to handle; their expectation of a coming *man* Antichrist, etc., etc.; but we forbear for two reasons. (1) Because those who see that their chief proofs (?) and arguments are absurdities would know better than to trust in other matters to such teacher's *assertions*. (2) Because our readers already have what we believe to be the Scriptural interpretation of the various prophetic periods, and a full treatment of the Antichrist, in MILLENNIAL DAWN.

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For the sake of some, we remark that a "prophetic year" of 360 days, used to symbolize 360 years, is an arbitrary arrangement peculiar to its intended symbolic use. It is neither a Lunar year of $354\frac{1}{3}$ days nor a Solar year of $365\frac{1}{4}$ days. The fulfilment of a prophetic year would mean 360 actual or Solar years of the common reckoning.
