

[R4260 : page 311]

THERE HAS NOT FAILED ONE PROMISE

- / CHRON. 17:1-14. - OCTOBER 11. -

Golden Text: – "There hath not failed one word of all his good promise." – 1 Kings 8:56.

KING DAVID prospered under the Lord's blessing, and he established Israel's kingdom upon a good footing, which assured peace and respect from the surrounding nations. Living now in a palace in Jerusalem, with the tabernacle of divine service near by, the king bethought him of the incongruity of his living in a grander house than that of his God, and of the fact that the heathen built temples for their idols. The Prophet Nathan was a friend and close counselor of the king, and to him David made known his thought of building a temple. Possibly he had the suspicion that such an innovation might not be proper and that he would do well to have counsel on the subject. Doubtless the lesson of Uzzah made him more careful respecting everything purposed or done in connection with the tabernacle and its services. To the prophet the suggestion seemed a good one, reverential, proper. He endorsed it, saying, "God is with thee," therefore doubtless he will prosper you in this good thought in respect to this generous impulse of your heart.

God was doubtless pleased also with David's reverent devotion. Nevertheless he disapproved the scheme and sent to the king a message by the mouth of the prophet, "Thou shalt not build me an house." Here again we are to notice that "obedience is better than sacrifice" in God's sight. God is not dependent upon the thoughtfulness nor the negligence of mankind in respect to his arrangements, but takes an oversight. It was not the part of the divine programme that David should build the tabernacle, but that his son Solomon should do so. David and Solomon and their

surroundings were to constitute types of glorious things to come later pertaining to the antitypical David and his Kingdom. In I Chron. 22:8 and 28:3 a reason is given why David should not be the builder of the temple. He was a man of experience in fighting enemies of the Lord, [R4261 : page 311] and his people should serve to typify the battling of Christ and the Church while in the flesh. Solomon's kingdom of glory and riches and honor and peace would serve to illustrate better the Millennial Kingdom of the Christ in glory.

"THE LORD WILL BUILD THEE AN HOUSE"

The Lord explained through the prophet that he had never wished a temple – had never given a command to that effect – that this was a matter of his own choice and not neglect upon the part of the Israelites during the centuries since the Lord had established his presence with them at Mount Sinai. Then, as though to console David and to assure him that God appreciated his good intentions, the prophet was directed to recite the evidences of divine care and supervision of the king's affairs – that God had taken him from the shepherd's position and made him a prince and leader of his people, conquering his enemies before him. He assured him that such a blessing would continue with him until his name should be known amongst the great of earth. Prophetically the Lord declared also a blessing for Israel, when they should be no more oppressed nor scattered by their enemies. That prophecy had a temporary fulfilment under David and Solomon, but is to have its real accomplishment under the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

Proceeding (I Chron. 17:10) the Lord assures David that he would build a house for him – that is to say, that he would not cut his family off from the throne, as in the case of Saul. The house of David was indeed perpetuated through Solomon and continued its dominance in Judah for several centuries, but this would not completely fulfil the Lord's promise, which, although not

understood by David, was evidently meant to refer expressly to Messiah and his Kingdom.

One of the familiar titles of our Lord was, "The son of David," and this was in harmony with the expectation of all Israel – that ultimately Messiah, the Seed of Abraham, would come through the seed of David and would be the everlasting King. This promise is referred to as "The sure mercies of David." It was in accord with this expectation of the Jews that our Lord said to them, "If Messiah is the son of David, why is he also called David's Lord?" where he says, "Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Our Lord shows that David thus prophetically declared that David's son would be David's Lord or superior. "He is the root and offspring of David," through whom David and Israel and all the families of the earth shall yet be blessed.

"HE SHALL BUILD ME AN HOUSE AND I WILL ESTABLISH HIS THRONE FOREVER. I WILL BE HIS FATHER AND HE SHALL BE MY SON" – V. 12

It will be noticed that these words were primarily applicable to Solomon, who did build the typical temple; but the weight of the promise belongs to the antitype, Christ, the Messiah. He it is who will build the real [R4261 : page 312] temple of God in and through which a blessing shall proceed to all the families of the earth. It will in the highest sense of the word be "an house of prayer unto all people." During the Millennial Age, when the glorious temple of God, the Church of the living God, shall be in the glory of the Kingdom, all prayers to God and all blessings from God will pass through that glorified temple which, under another figure, Head and Body, is referred to as the Mediator between God and men. It will be remembered that while King David was not permitted to construct the temple he was privileged

to prepare for it vast treasures of gold, silver, brass, precious stones, marbles of various colors, iron and wood.

As it was in David's heart to build the temple, so naturally the desire comes to the Lord's people in the present time to establish the things of the Lord and his Kingdom. Some, anxious to do this, have not taken counsel of the prophets of God to know his will, but have presumed to build up earthly institutions quite contrary to the divine intention as respects this present age. Catholicism has built wonderful institutions, which it invites the whole world to join. Various denominations have erected temples or systems, each of which claims to be God's Kingdom, God's temple, but the Lord disowns all of these and declares that he is now with his people, under temporary conditions tabernacling with those who are his wherever they may be and not wishing at the present for any such organizations as men have supposed. The Apostle expresses this when he says, "We who are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." Our conditions are not fully satisfactory, but they are all that the Lord sees best for us to have at the present time.

The Apostle calls the present condition of the Body of Christ, "Our Body of humiliation," but he assures us that at the second coming of our Lord he will "change our vile body" (our ignominious condition) so that it may be fashioned properly, as his glorious Body, as the glorious temple of the living God. Now is the time for gathering the various elements, gold, silver, precious stones, etc., which by and by shall constitute the Lord's temple. Now is the time, not only for the quarrying of the stones, but also for the shaping of them for their various positions in the temple of God. Now, as the Apostle Peter suggests, "We are living stones, to be built together for a habitation of God through the spirit." The preparation of the stones will continue until eventually all shall be properly fitted into the building. We are now under the process of shaping, being "made meet (made fit) for the

inheritance of the saints." All this is being done under the present condition of wars and strife and confusion. By and by, "Without the sound of a hammer," every stone of that glorious structure shall be fitted together, all being perfected in heart reckonedly will in the resurrection "change" be actually perfected and "changed"; as the Apostle says, "Sown in weakness, it is raised in power; sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

HIS THRONE FOREVERMORE

The throne of David and of Solomon was not perpetually established. Indeed, as heretofore shown, our Lord, according to the flesh, sprung not from Solomon's line, but descended from another of David's sons. This makes it the more evident that Christ was meant by the divine prophecies as the heir of David's throne who should establish it forever to a consummation – reigning, ruling, blessing, uplifting, bringing it into perfect accord with God. This gives us a good opportunity of noting how God hides and reveals the Truth at the same time and why it is that the "line upon line, precept upon precept," is to one flock food, refreshing, strength, and to another stumbling-blocks, etc., which, according to Higher Criticism, overthrows all confidence in the Bible as divine revelation. Thus is illustrated the saying that "one man's meat is another man's poison."

How much depends upon the attitude of our hearts! We are to "become as little children." Our Lord said, "I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." God's people are to learn the lesson of trust and patience.

"God's plans, like lilies pure and white unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold."

"THERE HATH NOT FAILED ONE WORD"

Our Golden Text is a precious one and fully corroborated by every faithful follower of the Lord who has had experience in the good way. The difficulty with those who have not had this experience is that they have not been particular to note the difference between God's promises recorded in his Word and the traditions of men, which misrepresent the Lord's promises. All about us today we see great disputations amongst the nominal Church and the impression that God's purpose is meeting with disappointment. The thought has been prevalent that God designed the various sects to build for themselves temples and to bless and convert the world. The fact that after eighteen centuries the world is far from God and his will far from being done on earth as it is done in heaven is most evident; and when it is recollected that the number of the heathen, according to public statistics, has doubled in the last century, it is no wonder that our friends, who think that they have been laboring under a divine commission to use all their efforts in converting the world, should feel disappointed.

Let us note carefully the promise as it is outlined in this lesson, namely, that the Temple of God is not to be built in this age and the world is not to be blessed now; and the construction of the Temple is not to take place until all the stones shall be prepared. So the work of blessing all the families of the earth through that Temple and its great Head, Priest and Prophet, King, Judge and Messiah cannot be accomplished until all the stones are prepared and the Temple of the Lord, the Church, has been glorified. Let us not blame God with a non-fulfilment of our expectations, but on the contrary, let us examine the Word and assure ourselves that we are not building wood, hay and stubble, which will surely be destroyed, but that we are building upon the precious promises of the Word. From this standpoint all the trials and difficulties, all the battling with the world and the Adversary,

all the adversities coming to ourselves and to others of the Lord's consecrated, are but encouraging evidences that we are the Lord's and that he is working out for **[R4262 : page 312]** us, as well as in us, his good pleasure. With this view before our mental vision the Spirit of God witnesses with our spirit that we are having exactly the experiences which his faithful should expect and that all things will work in us for our welfare – because we are his – and for the glory of his Kingdom.

"His love in times past forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink."

=====