

"OVERTURNED UNTIL HE COME"

– EZEKIEL 21:25-27 – SEPT. 3D. –

"Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

– Psalm 34:14.

AT THE GIVING of the Law God plainly told the nation of Israel the terms and conditions upon which they were received as His people. If they would be obedient to the Divine requirements all things would work well with them. They would be rich, prosperous, the blessed nation of the Lord. But if, on the contrary, they should neglect the Divine Statutes and become idolatrous, the Lord would oppose them and would deliver them into the hand of their enemies for chastisement, and "seven times" would pass over them. – Lev. 26:18,21,24,28.

God of course knew the end from the beginning. Nevertheless, Divine patience was manifested throughout the experiences of the nation leading up to the overthrow of Zedekiah's government – he being the last king of the line of David to sit on the throne. We have seen how evil followed good, in the kings and in the practices of the nation; and how Divine providence chastened the people, yet repeatedly brought them back from idolatry. Now had come the time for the complete overthrow of the national polity, for a period of "seven times," or seven years, as foretold by Moses. In this case, however, the years must have been *symbolic*, because frequently they had captivities of more than seven years. Accepting, then, as a fact, that these seven years or "times" were symbolic years, how long a period would they indicate?

It is an accepted fact that in Bible symbolism each day represents a year; and the Jewish year had twelve months of thirty days each. Thus each year represented, symbolically, three hundred and sixty years; and the seven years of chastisement represented $7 \times 360 = 2,520$ years.

When, therefore, we read that the kingdom would be "overturned, overturned," until Messiah should come, we are to understand that the period of the overturned condition, as a whole, would be 2,520 years, beginning with the time the crown was taken from Zedekiah – in 606 B.C. (70 years prior to the proclamation of Cyrus permitting the people to return – 536 B.C.).

A LOOK AT THE FACTS

It is always interesting and profitable to the students of the Bible to note the fulfilment of Divine predictions. It establishes faith, it makes all of God's promises more real; it assures us of Divine supervision in respect to **[R4867 : page 238]** Israel's affairs, and thus gives ground for confidence also in the supervision of the affairs of Spiritual Israel – the Church.

As we look back along the aisles of history we see the fulfilment of the declaration that the nation of Israel would be overturned and overturned. After its restoration by Cyrus, B.C. 536, it continued to have a sort of national existence for 600 years; yet in all that time it had not a king of the line of David, the line of Divine promise, and it was ruled over by the various adjoining nations; as it is written, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times (years) of the Gentiles be filled full." Some may point to the Maccabean kings. We answer that they were not Divinely appointed nor of the royal family. Does some one else remind us of the reign of Herod at the time of Jesus, at the beginning of Anno Domini? We reply that the Herods were not of the line of David – they were Edomites, or of the Esau branch, who ruled over the children of Israel as the representatives of the great Roman Empire.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

When God removed the typical kingdom of Israel and His typical throne in the world, as represented by David's family, he gave over the earthly dominion to the Gentiles; and this lease of power, as

represented in Daniel's prophecy, was to continue for "seven times" – 2,520 years. In other words, during the same period that Israel would be having "seven times" of tribulation and subjection, the Gentiles would be having "seven times" of prosperity, and both will terminate at the same time – in 2,520 years from B.C. 606 – October, A.D. 1914, the close of the Gentile Times. If any be disposed to dispute the exactness of these figures we need have no quarrel, but simply say that any difference in the calculation must of necessity be but small – possibly one year, possibly twenty years – but in so long a period how trifling would be such a variation.

What we are specially interested in is the facts of the case, and what will occur when this long period terminates.

(1) The facts are as already noted in Israel's case, a national subserviency for nearly seven hundred years, and a national destruction for more than 1,800 years; and so far as the Gentiles are concerned, a prosperity for 2,520 years, as follows: – for (a) Babylon, the first Universal Empire; (b) Medo-Persia, the second Universal Empire; (c) Grecia, the third Universal Empire, and (d) Rome, the fourth Universal Empire. According to the Scriptural view of the matter this fourth Universal Empire is still represented in the Papacy and the various so-called Christian governments of the world. These have practiced and prospered during this long period of Israel's subjection and the overturned condition of God's typical kingdom.

(2) The next thing in order, following the expiration of the "seven times" (2,520 years, to 1915 A.D.), will be the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom and its recognition by the children of Israel, and the blessing of all the families of the earth.

The date, October, 1914, and the setting up of Christ's Kingdom, let us remember, have nothing whatever to do with the burning of the world, as some surmise. On the contrary, they have to do with the blessing of the world; they mark the beginning of what St. Peter styles "The times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the

mouth of all His Holy Prophets since the world began." – Acts 3:19-23.

=====