

THY WORD IS TRUTH

“THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES.”

When the disciples questioned the Lord concerning when His kingdom should be established, He told them of a number of things that must come before that time.

One of these, which we are about to examine, is found in ...for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (Luke 21:23,24.)

Our Lord's words, 'until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled,' imply that the times of the Gentiles must have a definitely appointed limit; because an unlimited, indefinite period could not be said to be fulfilled. So, then, Gentile rule had a beginning, will last for a fixed time, and shall end at the time appointed.

And our object in this chapter is to show how clearly and simply both the beginning and the ending of this fixed time is shown by the Scriptures.

Zedekiah was the last Jewish king, and to him came the words of the prophet:

And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall 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, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him. (Ezek. 21:25-27.)

This prophecy was fulfilled at the beginning of the 70 years' captivity.

When Jerusalem was laid in ruins by Nebuchadnezzar's army, and though

rebuilt in the first year of Cyrus, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up. (2 Chron. 36:23.)

remained, as it has ever since, under Gentile rule. Jerusalem then began to be “Trodden under foot of the Gentiles” 70 years before the first year of Cyrus. We know that the first year of Cyrus was 536 B.C., and if Gentile rule, or “Gentile Times,” began 70 years earlier, we have 606 B.C. as the beginning of the Gentile Times, which must be fulfilled before our Lord’s kingdom is established upon earth.

To find the duration of these “Times” we turn to And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.

And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. (Lev. 26:17,18.)

Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. (Lev. 26:28.)

So we find that there are to be seven times during which “They that hate you (Gentiles) shall reign over you.”

This brings us to the question, How long a period is meant by the words “a time”? and here, too, we shall find that Scripture interprets itself. We turn first to

This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. ... All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. ... And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured

him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: (Dan. 4:24,25,28,34.)

The madness of Nebuchadnezzar, which in his dream was foretold to endure for “seven times,” really lasted seven years, so that Scripture itself interprets the phrase “seven times” to mean seven years.

But since, in the case of Israel’s seven times of punishment under Gentile rule, we know that it did not end in seven years, we must conclude that the time in that prophecy was symbolic time, namely, a year for a day. By this method we should see that Israel’s seven times were seven symbolic years, each composed of 360 year days, so that seven times would be 7 X 360 years, or a period of 2520 years.

But we must not count time a year for a day unless we have Scriptural authority for doing so, and again we turn to:

Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year. (Ezek. 4:4-6.)

And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. (Num. 14:33,34.)

Here we have our authority for counting a year for a day, but we will go still further, and find Scriptural authority for interpreting the expression “Time,” or “Times,” as a period of 360 year days.

We turn to:

And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he

shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. (Dan. 7:24-26.)

And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. (Dan. 12:7.)

These prophecies are well known to refer to the dark ages preceding the reformation, and were a period of 1260 years of literal time, or three and a half symbolic time. "A time, times, and a half," Dan. 12:7.

Let us also see:

And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. (Rev. 12:14.)

And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. (Rev. 13:5.)

And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. (Rev. 12:6.)

Here we find the same thing, the supremacy of the Romish Church, referred to in three different places, and the time of its power differently expressed in each.

In one, as a time, times, and half a time; in the next, as forty and two months; and again, as 1260 days, which we know is just a day for a year of its actual duration. It seems plain then that we are right in stating that the Gentile Times are a period of 2520 years, and since it is evident that they began in 606 B.C., it seems equally evident that the year in which they close

will be A.D. 2520 less 606, or A.D. 1914.