

A Vision of the Future

Key Verse: *“Lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.”*
—Jeremiah 30:3

Selected Scripture:
*Jeremiah 30:1-3,
18-22*

many failings.—Rom. 11:28

In these prophecies, Israel is also an example of the entire world of mankind who, like the Jewish nation, have fallen short of keeping God’s righteous laws. It is God’s desire for “all men [Jew and Gentile alike] to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” (I Tim. 2:4) Therefore, as we consider the prophetic words of the Lord’s prophet, we should keep in mind this dual application—to Israel, and also to the world in general.

Speaking through the prophet, the Lord in the Key Verse of our lesson says that he “will bring again the

IN OUR LESSONS FOR THIS

month, we will examine several prophetic statements from the Book of Jeremiah which outline some of the blessings and provisions of God that will accompany the coming Messianic kingdom. In these prophecies, Israel and Judah—the two divisions of the Jewish nation which resulted following the death of King Solomon—are specifically identified as being the recipients of these blessings. This is because they were God’s covenant people during Old Testament times, and “beloved for the fathers’ sakes,” despite their

captivity of my people.” A similar phrase is used again in verse 18. At first glance, these words do not sound at all like a blessing, but a further punishment. However, the words “bring again” are more properly translated “turn back” or “turn away”—the thought being that God will “turn back” the captivity of his people. For over twenty-five centuries, Israel and its people were captive to other nations. Jesus said they were to be “trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”—Luke 21:24

Much evidence shows us that in 1914, and as a result of World War I, these “times of the Gentiles” were fulfilled, and Israel’s captivity to these nations was “turned back.” Quoting further from our Key Verse, God said that after their captivity was ended, he would “cause them to return to the land that I gave to their father, and they shall possess it.” The Balfour Declaration of 1917 allowed the Jews to do just this—return to the land—and only thirty-one years later, in 1948, Israel became a sovereign nation once again.

Although the foregoing presents an important perspective of Jeremiah’s words, there is still a larger prophetic viewpoint that we wish to point out. It is one which will be fulfilled in Messiah’s kingdom, and will affect not just the nation of Israel, but all mankind. Israel’s many centuries of captivity to Gentile nations was, in many ways, an example of the captivity man has suffered under since the sin of our first parents. It is the captivity to sin, suffering, and death, from which none have been able to escape, despite the best efforts of science and medicine.

God, however, just as he promised Israel their eventual release from captivity, has also promised mankind liberation from the bondage of sin and death. Jesus, in providing the ransom merit, secured that release for Adam and all his progeny. The purpose of Christ’s coming kingdom will be to fully bring about the end of man’s captivity. ■