**“Restoration from Babylon. Troublous Times” The Present Truth 18, 36, pp. 565, 566.**

IT seems to have been about midsummer, or late in the summer of B.C. 536, when the returned of Israel arrived in their own country, and had taken up their abode and dwelt in their cities; for their first assembly at Jerusalem for worship was at the regular annual feast of the memorial of blowing of trumpets—the first day of the seventh month. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.1}

On that day “the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem;” and under the direction of Jeshua, the highpriest [*sic*.], and Zerubbabel, and their brethren, they “builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God. And they set the altar upon his bases; for fear was upon them because of the people of those countries; and they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord, even burnt offerings morning and evening.” Ezra 3:1-3. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.2}

They could not celebrate the day of atonement—the tenth day of the seventh month—in due order, because there was no temple or house yet built; but they kept the Feast of Tabernacles (the fifteenth to the twenty-second of the seventh month), as it is written, and offered the daily burnt-offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required; and afterward offered the continual burnt-offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a free-will offering unto the Lord. From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.3}

“But the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid.” However, preparations were immediately begun for the building of the temple. Masons and carpenters were regularly employed, and set to work to prepare the stones and timber. They also established with Tyre and Zidon trade of provisions—food, drink, and oil—for cedar trees for the temple, to be brought from Lebanon by sea and delivered at Joppa, “according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.” {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.4}

This work of preparation continued till “the second month” of the “second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem,” when they actually began work in building the temple. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.5}

“And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David king of Israel. And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.6}

“And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy; so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people; for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.” {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.7}

In Gabriel’s explanation of the two thousand and three hundred days, he had said to Daniel of the rebuilding of Jerusalem, that “the street shall be built again and the wall, *even in troublous times*.” And now those troublous times began. Satan was determined to hinder, in every way that he possibly could, the establishment of the work of God in Jerusalem. He found ready instruments, in the mixed people and religion of Samaria, that had resulted from the successive transportations by Sargon, Esar-haddon, and Asswhur-banipal, kings of Assyria, before 625 B.C. As soon as the Jews had begun to build, these mixed peoples of the land of Samaria devised a scheme so to turn to their own advantage the rebuilding of Jerusalem so that, by alliance with the Jews, they could fix their power in Jerusalem and the land of Judah, as in Samaria, execute a successful revolt, set up an independent kingdom there, and dominate all the territory between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean Sea, as had been done in old time. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.8}

Accordingly when they had “heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel, then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Asshur, which brought us up hither. But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.” {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.9}

Then the Samaritans revealed their real spirit from the beginning, and showed that their interest in the God of Israel, and their “kind” offer to help in building the temple and city, was a sheer pretence to hide their rebellious intent; they “weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and *troubled them in building*, and *hired counsellors against them* [at the court of the Persian kingdom], to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia,” a period of fourteen years. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.10}

The situation was this: The Jews had the decree of Cyrus to sustain them in all that they were doing. The Samaritans knew that it was vain to try to get that decree reversed while Cyrus lived. But the funds for the building work must all pass through the imperial treasury. These hired counsellors were officials of the court and council of Cyrus, and they accepted from the Samaritans bribes to be on the watch for the affairs concerning Jerusalem, and block every procedure possible. They could hold back the supply of funds; they could delay the official applications for funds; by empty technicalities they could force tedious correspondence and delay in reports; they could prevent correspondence and even messengers from reaching Cyrus, or even Daniel;—in a thousand ways they could frustrate the purpose of the builders at Jerusalem. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.11}

Daniel was still prime minister at the court of Persia, and it was not a great while before he discovered that the work in Jerusalem was being hindered, and his own efforts hampered in the court of Cyrus, by influences and actions so subtle that it was impossible definitely to expose or successfully to check them. This caused him great and anxious concern for the work of God. Yet he spent no time in attempting to arrange, or to carry on any counter-intrigue; he appealed direct to God. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.12}

By those hired counsellors, the Samaritans had got their schemes to working at the court of Cyrus in the latter part of the second year of Cyrus. On the third day of the first month of the third year of Cyrus, Daniel began his appeal to God in fasting and mourning and prayer. This he continued three full weeks, before he was positively informed that his appeal was heard. Yet his appear *was* heard, the very first day. But the adverse influences at the Persian court were so strong that Gabriel dared not leave the presence of the king. And these adverse influences were just then so determined and so persistent that every possible thing was done, every conceivable device was employed, and every moment of the time was occupied, during the whole of that three weeks, in the endeavour to turn Cyrus from his true course and to frustrate the purpose of God concerning Jerusalem. To defeat the subtle devices and continued efforts of the enemy, Gabriel must be ever watchful. He continued thus three full weeks. Daniel continued his earnest praying. Still the angel could not leave the presence of the king. Yet Daniel’s prayer must be answered by Gabriel in person. It was a crisis in the cause of God in the earth. Then Michael, the first of the heavenly princes, came to help him. This secured victory; the enemy’s siege was broken, and Gabriel went to Daniel by the river Tigris. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 565.13}

His own words in explanation of the three weeks delay are these: “Fear not, Daniel; for from *the first day* that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, *thy words were heard*, and I am come *for thy words*. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia, *withstood me* one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, the first of the princes, came to help me; and I kept the victory with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee know what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for the vision is yet for many days... Knowest thou why I am come unto thee? And now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia.... But I will show thee that which is noted in the Scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things but Michael your prince.” Daniel 10:2-4, 12, 13, 20, 21. Verse 12, margin, and Luther’s Translation. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 566.1}

Thus, through prayer and faithfulness to God, Daniel and his people were victorious against all the machinations of Satan and his instrumentalities. And so shall it ever be. The heavenly agencies are always ready to co-operate with the faithful ones of earth to-day, as in the days of Daniel, Jeshua, Zerubbabel, and their companions. Prayer to God, that obtains the co-operation of heavenly messengers, is even to-day worth infinitely more in securing the co-operation or restraint of the powers of earth, than could be all the political wire-pulling and lobbying that could ever be employed. The hearts of kings are in the hand of the Lord, and only He can move them right. {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 566.2}

Daniel must have died shortly after this vision, for in the vision the last words of the angel are, “Thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.” Cyrus lived five years longer. But though the Samaritans and their hired counsellors continued all this time their work of weakening the hands of the Jews, of hindering them and frustrating their purpose in building, they never succeeded in stopping the work. The “victory” of Daniel and the heavenly ones still “kept” with Cyrus the king of Persia, though the work went on still in “troublous times.” {PTUK September 4, 1902, p. 566.3}

 **“Restoration from Babylon. The Success of the Samaritans” The Present Truth 18, 37, pp. 579, 580.**

AT the death of Cyrus king of Persia, Cambyses his son, the Ahasuerus of Ezra 4:6, immediately succeeded to the throne of the empire. The Samaritans who had so persistently carried on their work of obstruction by hired counsellors and otherwise “all the days of Cyrus,” continued it all the days of Cambyses—about seven years. {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.1}

At the very beginning of his reign, in addition to the work of their hired counsellors, the Samaritans took the bold step of presenting to Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, a formal and written accusation against the Jews: “In the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.” Ezra 4:6. {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.2}

There is no known record that any notice at all was taken of their accusation. Even if any notice was taken of it, it is certain that their efforts were still in vain. The victory gained over them in the three weeks’ contest at the Persian court in the first month of the third year of Cyrus, still held all the days of his son Cambyses. This shows that there was real meaning in Gabriel’s words that at the end of the three weeks’ contest at the court of Persia he held the victory with not only the king, singular, but plural,—with the kings of Persia. From this it is plain that Cambyses, the heir apparent to the throne, was in that council through that three weeks’ contest, and therefore when the contest was ended and the victory was kept, it was victory not only as respected Cyrus and the time being, but also respecting Cambyses and the years to come. The victory was kept with the kings of Persia. {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.3}

There was a second son of Cyrus, named Smerdis; but Cambyses caused him to be secretly murdered. Indeed, this was accomplished with so much secrecy that the great body of the people believed that he was still alive. This gave opportunity for conspiracy and the rise of a usurper, whose real name was Gomates, but who claimed before the people to be Smerdia, the son of Cyrus. This occurred at the capital of Persia while Cambyses was absent on his expedition in the conquest of Egypt. The original account runs thus:— {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.4}

Cambyses the son of Cyrus was king.... This Cambyses had a brother, named Smerdis (Bardiga); they had the same mother and the same father. Afterward, this Cambyses killed Smerids. When Cambyses killed Smerdis, the people did not know that Smerdis was killed. Then Cambyses went to Egypt. The people became bad; and many falsehoods grew up in the provinces, as well as in Persia, as in Media, as in the other lands. And then a man, a Magian, named Gomates, from Pasargade, near the mount named Arakadris, there he arose. On the 14th day of the month Vlyakhna, thus arose: To the people he told lies, and said, “I am Smerids, the son of Cyrus, the brother of Cambyses.” Then all the people revolted from Cambyses, went over to him, and the Persians, and the Medes, and the other nations. He seized the kingdom. On the ninth day of the month Garmapada he took the royalty from Cambyses.... Gomates the Magian deprived Cambyses as well of the Persians, as of the Medians, as of the other nations; he did according to his own will, and seized the royalty over them.—*Darius*, in “Records of the Past,” Old Series, vol. VII., pp. 89, 90. {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.5}

Cambyses, returning with his army from Egypt, went as far as Syria, and was there met by one of the many heralds whom Gomates had sent into all the empire publishing the “proclamation to the troops that henceforth they were to obey Smerdis, the son of Cyrus, and not Cambyses.” Cambyses, believing now that his secret murderers of Smerdis had really played him false; and that thus Smerdis was really alive and reigning in the capital, immediately killed himself (*Darius*): “having reigned, in all, seven years and five months, and left no issue behind him, male or female.”—*Herodotus*. This was the end of July, 522 B.C. {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.6}

As before stated, Gomates, this false Smerdis, was a Magian. His usurpation was a part of the conspiracy of the Magian priests to make predominate the Median element in the mixed national religion of Media and Persia. And though Gomates the Magian reigned as Smerdis *the Persians*, yet he was but the tool of the Magians to swing back the predominant element in the imperial religion from the Persian to the original Median. The difference was more sectarian and merely priestly, than fundamental and popular; but it furnished an opportunity that was instantly seized by the Samaritans and their hired counsellors to make effective their determination to stop the work on the temple at Jerusalem. {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.7}

Accordingly, no sooner was it known in Palestine that the new king reigned, than the Samaritans wrote to him a new and extended accusation against the Jews. For this Gomates, the false Smerdis, was the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4:7-23. {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.8}

“In the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue. Rehum the chancellor and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter *against Jerusalem* to Artaxerxes the king in this sort:— {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.9}

“Then wrote Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions; the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites, and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest that are on this side the river, and at such a time.... Thy servants the men on this side the river, and at such a time. Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations. Be it known now unto the king, that, if this city be builded, and the walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings. Now because we have maintenance from the king’s palace, and it was not meet for us to see the king’s dishonour, therefore have we sent and certified the king; that search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt thou find in the book of the records, and know that this city is a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have moved sedition within the same of old time; for which cause was this city destroyed. We certify the king that, if this city be builded again, and the walls thereof set up, by this means thou shalt have no portion on this side the river.” {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.10}

That letter is a most subtle and deceptive mixture of truth and falsehood. It was true that the city of Jerusalem had in old time been rebellious and seditious to the eastern kings, and that because of that, the city was destroyed. It was true that the imperial records at Babylon would confirm all this. But it was not in any sense true that such was the intention in now rebuilding the city, or that such would be the result of its rebuilding. This attributed intention of the Jews, and this surmised result of the rebuilding of the city, was nothing else than the revealing of their own secret purpose, when at the very first they offered to join the Jews and help in the building of that very city; and which they would have carried out to the full as soon as the city should have been finished, as certainly as they had been allowed to join in the building of the city. {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.11}

Such a subtle mixture of lies and truth would have been well calculated to deceive any new king; and when it came to the false Smerdis, the tool of the reactionary priests, it only the more readily had its intended effect. “Then sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their companions that dwell in Samaria, and unto the rest beyond the river:— {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 579.12}

“Peace, and at such a time. The letter which ye sent unto us hath been plainly read before me. And I commanded, and search hath been made, and it is found that this city of old time hath made insurrection against kings, and that rebellion and sedition have been made therein. There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them. Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me. Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?” {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 580.1}

This letter was of course exceedingly gratifying to the rebellious, seditious, and officious Samaritans. Accordingly, “when the copy of king Artaxerxes’ letter was read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease by force and power.” {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 580.2}

“Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem.” Then the Samaritans laughed, and congratulated one another, and strutted, and rode around among the Jews, asserting their power. But even in the most exalted moments they never dreamed of what it really was over which they were so gleeful and so perfectly satisfied. They had no idea of what it was in reality into which they had so persistently, and at last so triumphantly, pushed themselves. In about six months there was another turn in imperial affairs. In the eighth month of his reign the false Smerdis, Gomates the Magian, was slain by Darius the Persian and six companions, and Darius the Persian, of ancient kingly race and descent, reigned in the Medo-Persian Empire. The Magian scheme was annihilated; the Persian element was once more predominant; the tide turned again in favour of the Jews, the rebuilding of the temple and the city went on, and by the power which they had invoked the Samaritans were compelled to help in the good work. This was exceedingly galling to them; but they had persistently pushed themselves into it, and there they must stay; they had been exceedingly glad when the power which they had invoked worked altogether their way; they could not fairly complain when that same power worked altogether the other way. {PTUK September 11, 1902, p. 580.3}

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**“Restoration from Babylon. The Samaritans Compelled to Help” The Present Truth 18, 38, pp. 598, 599.**

BY the presence and the messages of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the Jews were encouraged to take up again the work of building the temple of God and the wall of Jerusalem. Faith once more found her place in the hearts of the people; the land and people were blessed with prosperity and good cheer; and the work was begun and carried on with a spirit and an alacrity that meant success certainly and speedily. Yet it was not all peace. {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.1}

News of this soon reached the Samaritans, and of course set them all astir again. However, among the changes that had come in the imperial government by the death of the false Smerdis and the accession of Darius, was the change of the governor and other officials of Samaria. Rehum the chancellor and Shimshai the secretary had been displaced by Tatnai as governor and Shethar-Boznai as secretary. These men, of themselves, were fair-minded men; but there was about them the same officious Samaritan party as “companions.” These urged on Tatnai and Shethar-Boznai to go up to Jerusalem, and again call a halt upon the work there. They did so, but, being fair-minded men, they did it in a perfectly fair way. {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.2}

They asked, “Who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall?” and, “What are the names of the men that make this building?” The Jews told them that the temple had been built there many years before by a great king; that it had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; and that Cyrus had issued a decree for the rebuilding of it, and had sent back from Babylon the gold and silver vessels that belonged in the house. Yet the Samaritans tried to have them stop the work; but they would not stop. Besides, “the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius.” Ezra 5:5. {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.3}

Since they could not stop the work, the Samaritans had Tatnai and Shethar-boznai, write to Darius. They did so, but not as did Rehum and Shimshai in their deceptive mixture of truth and falsehood; they stated the case with fairness; exactly as the Jews had stated it to them. They wrote as follows:— {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.4}

“Unto Darius the king, all peace. Be it known unto the king, that we went into the province of Judea, to the house of the great God, which is builded with great stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands. Then asked we those elders, and said unto them thus, Who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls? We asked their names also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that were the chief of them. And thus they returned us answer, saying:— {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.5}

“We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded and set up. But after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon. But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon the same king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God. And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one, whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor; and said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place. Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished. {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.6}

“Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king’s treasure house, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.” {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.7}

When this letter reached Darius, he went about the matter in the thoroughly business-like way that characterised his whole reign and administration; he “made a decree” that search should be made for the records mentioned. First “search was made in the house of the books, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon.” It was not found there, nor anywhere in Babylon. The search was continued in the other capitals; “and there was found at Ecbatana, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written:— {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.8}

“In the first year of Cyrus the king the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king’s house; and also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God.” {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.9}

This being found, Darius wrote to Tatnai and Shethar-boznai and the Samaritans as follows:— {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.10}

“Now therefore, Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shetharboznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, which are beyond the river, be ye far from thence: let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place. {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.11}

“Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God; that of the king’s goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail; that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons. {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.12}

“Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this. And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem. {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.13}

“I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed.” Ezra 6:1-12. {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.14}

That settled the question for ever. Therefore Tatnai, and Shethar-boznai, and their companions, “according to that which Darius the king had sent, so they did speedily. And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus and Darius.... And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar [the twelfth month], which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king”—517 B.C. Ezra 6:13-15. {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.15}

And as soon as the house was finished, it was dedicated; and the children of Israel “kept the dedication of the house of God with joy,” and offered sacrifices “according to the number of the tribes of Israel.” And “they kept the Passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month;” “and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy; for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.” Ezra 6:16-22. {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 598.16}

The temple and worship of God was restored. Against all opposition the cause of God had triumphed so far. However, the battle was not yet over; the wall was not yet built; and this was yet to be built “even in troublous times.” {PTUK September 18, 1902, p. 599.1}

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