**“The Throne of David” The Present Truth 6, 8.**

E. J. Waggoner

**THE JEWISH PEOPLE REJECT CHRIST**

The history of the kingdom of Judah was somewhat different. Some of the kings were as wicked as any of the kings of Israel, and some of them were men of eminent piety. There was a succession of apostasies, of judgments, and of repentance and apostasy. Toward the close of its history the prophet Jeremiah said: “Thus said the Lord unto me; Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people, whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by the which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem; and say unto them, Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates; Thus saith the Lord: Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction. And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto Me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but hallow the Sabbath day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall remain for ever.” Jeremiah 17:19-25. {PTUK April 10, 1890, p. 121.1}

A few remarks concerning God’s purpose with Israel may be in place here. He chose Abraham because Abraham had a heart to serve him, and would keep the light of God’s truth from dying out. He called the Israelites out from Egypt, so that they might serve Him; and He made them the depositories of His holy law, in order that they might hold up the standard of truth to the surrounding nations. In numerous places we learn that provision was made that the strangers who wished to serve the Lord could become a part of Israel, and heirs of the promise equally with the descendants of Abraham. If the children of Israel had been true to their high calling, and had not departed from God, or, having departed and repented, had remained faithful, they would ever have continued as a nation. And the text that we have just read indicates that in that case Jerusalem itself would have stood forever as the capital of the kingdom. What transformation it would have undergone to make it suitable for the eternal habitation of the saints, we cannot tell. On the other hand, the following judgment, if they should depart from God, was uttered by Jeremiah: “But if ye will not hearken unto Me to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.” Jeremiah 17:27. {PTUK April 10, 1890, p. 121.2}

These warnings were not heeded. In Jeremiah, chapters 25 and 27, we find the announcement of their captivity, because of their refusal to obey God. This was the complete overthrow of the kingdom of Judah. Although after seventy years of captivity, all who wished were given full liberty to return to Jerusalem, and the city and the temple were rebuilt, no king since that time has ever sat upon the throne of Israel. The Jews were in Babylon till that empire was overthrown by the Medes and Persians, B.C. 538. Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia, gave them permission to return to their own land, but they had no king, and they existed only through the sufferance of the kings of Persia. Alexander the Great showed them favours, and to him they acknowledged allegiance. When the empire of Greece was divided at the death of Alexander, they were subject by turns to different kings until finally they turned to the rising Roman power for complete protection, and remained subject to them as long as they had any existence as a nation. But before we speak of their final fate, we must look at a prophecy concerning the kingdom, which was uttered by Ezekiel toward the last of Zedekiah’s reign. {PTUK April 10, 1890, p. 121.3}

After foretelling the invasion by the king of Babylon, the prophet said: “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.” Ezekiel 21:25-27. {PTUK April 10, 1890, p. 121.4}

In this prophecy the history of the world from that time until the end of time is briefly told. When the diadem was removed from the head of Zedekiah, the kingdom passed into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Not simply the narrow limits of the kingdom over which Zedekiah ruled, but all the kingdoms of the earth, or, rather, the dominion of the whole earth, was given to Nebuchadnezzar. See Jeremiah 27:5-7; Daniel 2:37, 38. Then, said the Lord, “I will overturn, overturn, overturn it.” Three kings reigned in Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar, and then the first overturning took place, and the empire of the world passed into the hands of the Medes and the Persians. (See Ezra 1:2.) This took place B.C. 538. The Persian Empire, for the Median portion was overshadowed by the Persian element, lasted for 297 years, until B.C. 331. Then the second overturning took place, and the empire of Greece had the universal control in the earth. See Daniel 2:39. After the death of Alexander the empire was divided into four parts, each striving for supreme control; but by the year 168 B.C. the third overturning had taken place, and the world came under the dominion of the Romans. This was to be the last overturning, said the prophet, “until He come whose right it is,” when it should be given to Him. The one whose the earth is by right, is Christ, for the Father has said to Him, “Ask of me, and I shall give thee... the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.” Psalm 2:8. Moreover, Christ has purchased the possession by bearing the curse which came upon it in consequence of Satan’s maliciousness, and which constituted the evil one’s sole claim to it. Thus He bought Satan’s technical and usurped claim, and became sole heir to the whole world. {PTUK April 10, 1890, p. 121.5}

But the promise to give the dominion to Christ did not have reference to His first advent, as will appear from the following:- {PTUK April 10, 1890, p. 121.6}

1. At the first advent of Christ the Romans ruled the whole world (Luke 2:1); and that empire continued, powerful and undivided, for nearly four hundred years afterward. Although the Jews rejected Jesus, they had not the power to put him to death, and He was formally condemned and executed by the Romans. {PTUK April 10, 1890, p. 121.7}

2. Just before His crucifixion, Jesus wept over Jerusalem, saying, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Matthew 23:37-39. {PTUK April 10, 1890, p. 121.8}

The rejection of the Messiah filled up the cup of the iniquity of the Jewish nation. “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” John 1:11. If they had accepted Him, they might, even at that late day, and after so many apostasies, have still remained the chosen people of God, through whom the nations of the world should be enlightened, and around whose standard of the faithful would flock. As Jesus thought of what they might have been if they had received Him, He wept, saying, “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.” Luke 19:42. {PTUK April 10, 1890, p. 121.9}

Never again would the tribes go up to Mount Zion, the joy of the whole earth; no longer should the gorgeous temple be called a house of prayer for all nations. When Christ uttered that last cry upon the cross, “It is finished,” the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, showing that their house was left and to them desolate. Less than forty years later (A.D. 70), the Romans besieged Jerusalem and utterly destroyed it, fulfilling the words of Christ recorded in Matthew 24:2, and Luke 19:43, 44. This destruction, which marked the utter extinction of the Jewish people as a nation, also prefigured the final destruction of all that reject the gospel. E. J. W. {PTUK April 10, 1890, p. 121.10}

**“The Throne of David” The Present Truth 6, 9.**

E. J. Waggoner

**“HE IS FAITHFUL WHO HAS PROMISED”**

Although the Jewish people as a nation were rejected, God did not forget His promise. Centuries before, He had said to David that his throne shall be established, and the people of Israel should continue forever; and this promise he could not break. Said He: “My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven.” Psalm 89:34-38. Later still Isaiah had made the prophetic statement that, “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” Isaiah 9:6, 7. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.1}

Here, as in the promise made to Abraham, we find that Christ is the seed. It is through Christ that David’s kingdom is to be established forever, and when the angel Gabriel came to Mary to announce the birth of Jesus, he said of Him, “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of his father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.” Luke 1:31-33. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.2}

David understood that the promise concerning the establishment of his kingdom was to be fulfilled in this manner. On the day of Pentecost, Peter quoted the words of David in the sixteenth psalm: “Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad, moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope, for Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption,” and then he added: “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell [the grave], neither His flesh did see corruption.” Acts 2:29-31. It was this assurance that caused David, like the other patriarchs, to die in full faith that the promise would be fulfilled. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.3}

Christ knew full well that the house of Jacob and the throne of David should endure forever even while he was foretelling the utter destruction of the Jewish nation. John 18:36; Acts 1:6, 7. He was now ascended to heaven, to sit down at the right hand of God. Why He went there, and what He is doing there, will be briefly indicated by a few scriptures. Through the prophet John He said: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.” Revelation 3:21. So He has not yet received His kingdom, but sits upon His Father’s throne, which is a throne of grace (Hebrews 4:14-16), procuring pardon and salvation for all who come unto God by Him. It was this work that the prophet Zechariah foretold in these words: “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord; even He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” Zechariah 6:12, 13. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.4}

Since Christ sits upon a throne of grace, the kingdom in which He now rules must be a kingdom of grace. This is an entirely different kingdom from the kingdom of glory, and is designed to fit subjects for that kingdom. It is this kingdom of grace that is referred to in Colossians 1:12-14; Romans 14:17; Matthew 12:28; Revelation 1:9. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.5}

Those who are in the kingdom of grace may expect to suffer tribulation, because tribulation works patience, and causes the sufferer to know more of the grace of God. But the kingdom of glory will put an end to all tribulation. So Jesus comforts the despised and sorrowing little band of disciples with the words: “Fear not, little flock; for it is your father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” Luke 12:32. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.6}

James says: “Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, *and heirs of the kingdom* which He hath promised to them that love Him.” James 2:5. Here is the kingdom of which those rich in faith are only heirs; it is promised to those that love God, but they do not yet possess it. And to the same intent Peter, after mentioning the Christian graces,-faith, virtue, godliness, patience, brotherly kindness, charity, etc. “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 1:10, 11. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.7}

Thus we see that the grace of God, which is freely dispensed while Christ sits upon the throne of grace, and by means of which we are enabled to overcome (Hebrews 4:14-16), simply fits us for the kingdom of glory, into which an abundant entrance will be ministered to the faithful at the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Matthew 25:31-34. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.8}

While He sits upon His Father’s throne, it is as a priest, counseling with His Father for the peace of mankind. David tells until what time He will remain there, saying, “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on My right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool.” Acts 2:34, 35; Psalm 110:1. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.9}

When Christ was on this earth, He had not kingly power, except as He was full of grace and truth. As a representative of the kingdom of grace, He had power on earth to forgive sins. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” But the kingdom of this world was not His. If He had then possessed the kingdom, He would have destroyed His enemies, as He will do when He comes again, after He has received it. At that time He paid tribute to earthly kings; when He comes again, it will be as King of kings and Lord of lords. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.10}

From all these texts it is evident that Christ did not receive the kingdom at His first advent. Instead of having a kingdom, He had not so much as a place to lay His head. But He has ascended to the right hand of God, there to remain until the kingdom is given to Him, and His enemies are made His footstool, when He will return to rid His kingdom of His enemies, and to plant His people Israel in their own land. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.11}

The parable of the ten pounds, as recorded by Luke, was given for the purpose of teaching this very thing. Luke 19:11-15. Then follows the accounting with the servants, and the commendation of those who had been faithful; and the parable closes with these words: “But those Mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before Me.” This is so plain as to need no comment. It shows that Christ has gone to heaven to receive the kingdom, and that He will return when He has received it. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.12}

In the seventh chapter of Daniel, verses 9 and 10, there is a graphic word-picture of the Judgment in heaven, which will determine who are worthy to be raised from the dead, or to be translated, when the Lord comes. As soon as this judgment is over, Christ will receive His kingdom, as we read in the following verses: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” Daniel 8:13, 14. This is the fulfillment of the words of the angel Gabriel to Mary, when he announced the birth of Jesus, saying: “And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.” Luke 1:32, 33. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 137.13}

The throne of David is the throne that was a promise to Christ; therefore the dominion, the receiving of which is described in Daniel 7:13, 14, must be the kingdom of Israel. It was declared that His everlasting dominion should be over the house of Jacob; yet the prophet, after telling of the destruction of earthly monarchies, says: “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.” Therefore it must be that all the saints of God will constitute the people of Israel, over whom Christ shall reign. This truth has been referred to before, but now more extended positive Scripture proof is in order. {PTUK April 24, 1890, p. 138.1}

E. J. W.