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GOD'S WORD CONCERNING ISRAEL

S. H. WILKINSON.

*I desire to call attention to the Lord's unchangeable purpose in the people of Israel as declared in **Seven Divine Utterances** in all of which God speaks through his prophets in the first person singular, and applies the confirmation of some indisputable fact, either from Nature or History, to the statement made.

First Statement—God regards the people of Israel with changeless benevolence.

CONFIRMATORY FACT—*The immobility of the mountains.*

'For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith Jehovah that hath mercy upon thee' (*Isaiah 54:10*).

Second Statement—The chastisement (involving scattering and judicial blindness) of Israel, though prolonged and severe, is but temporary.

CONFIRMATORY FACT—*The immunity of the earth from a second flood.*

'For this is as the waters of Noah unto Me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee' (*Isaiah 54:9*).

The meaning of this passage is clearly seen in the immediate context.

* The nation of Israel is very much 'in the news' these days, and whatever other interest it arouses in the minds of those who take time to think, at least for the earnest Bible Student it is of special interest in view of the many prophetic Scripture references concerning this unique nation. This article though written some length of time ago has a message for us to-day, for 'The Coming of the Lord draweth nigh', and it is related both to the Church of God as well as to the people of Israel, each in distinctive manner and time.

'For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid My face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith Jehovah thy Redeemer' (*Isaiah* 54:7, 8).

Third Statement—God will never cast off the people of Israel.

CONFIRMATORY FACT—*The immeasurability of the heavens and the impenetrability of the earth.*

'Thus saith Jehovah: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Jehovah' (*Jeremiah* 31:37).

Fourth Statement—The Covenant made with David, by which a ruling posterity was assured to him, is irrefragable.

CONFIRMATORY FACT—*The fixity of the earth's diurnal motion.*

'Thus saith Jehovah: If ye can break My covenant of the day and My covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also My covenant be broken with David My servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne' (*Jeremiah* 33:20, 21).

Fifth Statement—God will magnify and dignify the posterity of David and of the tribe of Levi.

CONFIRMATORY FACT—*The innumerability of the stars and the immeasurability of the sand on the seashore.*

'As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the seed of David My servant and the Levites that minister unto Me' (*Jeremiah* 33:22).

Sixth Statement—The promises concerning the land and the people of Israel will be literally fulfilled to that same land and people.

CONFIRMATORY FACT—*The literality of the judgments which have fallen upon the land and people.*

'And it shall come to pass that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down and to

destory, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith Jehovah' (*Jeremiah 31:28*).

'For thus saith Jehovah: Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them' (*Jeremiah 32:42*).

In the absence of any contradiction in Old or New Testaments, these statements dispose of the popular theory that the Christian Church is the legitimate heir to the promises to Israel. Romans 4:16, while *including* believing Christians in the Abrahamic promises, does not *transfer* the promises to the Church; while Ephesians 3:6 makes Gentiles 'fellow-heirs' and 'partakers' of Gospel promises, not monopolizers, in either case.

Seventh Statement—The continued existence of the people of Israel (the miracle of history) is Divinely guaranteed and maintained.

CONFIRMATORY FACT—*The regularity of planetary and tidal motion.*

'Thus saith Jehovah, which giveth the sun for light by day and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of Hosts is His name: If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever' (*Jeremiah 31:35, 36*).

It will be observed that none of the above statements contain any symbolic or obscure language; that the facts from Nature or history are used as assurances, not as mere illustrations, and that the terms employed carry great emphasis. Particularly is this the case in the sixth statement (*Jeremiah 31:28 and 32:42*), where the Hebrew words for 'like as' and 'so' are of determinative force, and must compel every logical and truthful mind to exclude any 'spiritual' or figurative application, or any application, to any body other than that special nation which is the object of such singular favour of God, and therefore the object of intensest interest to those who love God.

It is blessedly true (to use Weymouth's beautiful translation of 2 Corinthians 1:20) that 'all the promises of God, whatever

their number, have their confirmation in Him (our Lord Jesus Christ); and for this reason through Him also our "Amen" acknowledges their truth and promotes the glory of God through our faith'.

But to put Israel in the place in which God puts him, to adopt the attitude of love, concern, and anticipation which characterizes God's heart and mind in respect of the literal people of Israel, is to honour the Word of God, to bring glory to God Himself and a rich reward of personal and instrumental blessing.