

WHEN THE KING COMES BACK

by

Oswald J. Smith, Litt.D.
(Pastor of The Peoples Church, Toronto)

Copyright © 1954

edited for 3BSB by Baptist Bible Believer in the spirit of the Colportage Ministry of a century ago

~ out-of-print and in the public domain ~

CHAPTER SIX

When Ezekiel Saw the King

EZEKIEL, like all the other prophets, writes of the dispersion, the restoration and the glory of the children of Israel under the future reign of CHRIST, none of which was fulfilled at the first advent. Two thousand five hundred years have now gone by and it is still future. All awaits the coming of CHRIST and the establishment of His kingdom on earth. In that day there will be a literal fulfillment of every prediction he ever made.

Their Hearts Will Be Changed

Turn to Ezekiel 11:17-20:

"Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."

Israel, now dispersed, is to be regathered from all the countries of the world and restored to the land of Palestine.

When that great event takes place, their very hearts will be changed. Hearts that are now bitter and hard will be made soft. Such is not the condition of the Jews who, in their unbelief and hardness of heart, are how returning to Palestine.

At that time GOD will fill them with His Spirit and they will be utterly changed. Today they hate the very name of JESUS; then they will love it. Not until then will they walk in the ways of the Lord and do His will. Only then will they become His people and will He be their GOD.

They Will Be Secure

Let us read Ezekiel 34:23-30:

"And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it.

"And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.

"And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid.

"And I will raise up for them a Plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God."

CHRIST Will Be Their Prince

After drawing a beautiful picture of a regathered and restored Israel (Ezekiel 34:11-16), in language similar to that of the other prophets, Ezekiel goes on to describe the blessing and security of Israel under David, their Shepherd. That one Shepherd is CHRIST, the greater David. He will be their Prince.

Peace will be the chief characteristic of that new day; peace the like of which the world has never known before, a peace that never again will be broken.

- Wild beasts will be tame.
- The wilderness will be as safe as the village.
- To lie down and sleep in the woods will be perfectly safe.
- Rain will be plentiful. **"There shall be showers of blessing."**
- An abundant harvest will result.
- Fruit trees will be loaded.
- Famine and hunger will be unknown.

Nothing of this took place after the return from Babylon. It will all be realized when the King comes back to reign. This is millennial blessing. GOD speed the day!

They Will Be Cleansed by the Spirit

Turn to Ezekiel 36:23-38:

"The heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will cleanse you. A new heart also will give you, and a new spirit will put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

"And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel.

"Thus saith the Lord God; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and Plant that that was desolate: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it.

"Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the Lord."

They Will Be a Blessing

Israel will never be a blessing to the world until they have been restored to their own land. So here again is the repeated prediction of the regathering and conversion of GOD's people. When CHRIST returns and the Millennium dawns, Israel will be given a new heart and a new spirit, and will become obedient.

No greater prophecy has ever been given than this. Much that the other prophets reveal is here repeated and emphasized. It speaks of the heart-cleansing that will follow the restoration. Then, again, it tells of a day when there will be an abundance of everything, when famine will be unknown. No need then of taxes. That vicious system that makes so many of the honest dishonest will be gone and gone forever. There will be no need, for the earth at last will yield its increase. The curse will be lifted. What a picture of prosperity. Waste and desolate places are

now inhabited. The word "depression" has at last disappeared from the vocabulary of the human race. The population of the world will be enormously increased, and the whole land will become a Garden of Eden.

My friend, read this prophecy again. Every verse is a new revelation. Is it conceivable that it could be spiritualized? Or was it fulfilled at the time of the first advent? Is there any other way to interpret it except as it reads? How can it be understood unless it means just what it says? The fulfillment must be literal. It is a picture of the glories of Israel during the reign of CHRIST. This is millennial blessing. This is the Golden Age. This is the kingdom of GOD on earth. Israel has been regathered and converted. Iniquity has been purged away and hearts cleansed. Poverty is a thing of the past. Labor is light and fruitful. GOD is at last exalted and glorified.

Palestine has become the most beautiful land in the world, and Israel the most favored nation. Repentance will be genuine and humility real.

This then is the picture drawn by Ezekiel. This is GOD's revelation to His prophet. It is a prediction that will actually come to pass right here on earth.

Beautiful is the description, glorious the vision. This is the transfiguration continued for a thousand years. JESUS CHRIST is now King of kings and Lord of lords. Once He trod the dirt roads of earth, lowly and despised; now He is reigning on David's throne in millennial power and splendor. How we long for it! No wonder John prayed, "**Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**"

Israel Will Be Revived

Our passage here is Ezekiel chapter 37. Study it carefully. I am not going to quote it verbatim. It describes the revival that will take place in the nation of Israel when GOD brings them out of their graves among the nations, and they live again. It speaks of two sticks, Judah and Israel, and predicts that they will become one again. It portrays both a regathering and a restoration, followed by personal and national cleansing.

"David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever" (Ezekiel 37:24, 25).

This needs no explanation. It is perfectly clear.

JESUS CHRIST, here called David, is their Ruler. Israel is back in her own land. It is a time of peace. They multiply as never before, and GOD is in their midst. This is the picture of Ezekiel chapter 37. What a glorious prophecy of the age that is to be!

~ end of chapter 6 ~
