

and opposed by "the prince of the kingdom of Persia," whereupon a struggle that lasts for twenty days follows. The victory would apparently have been dubious had not Michael himself come to the assistance of the messenger.

In the 11th chapter, the things noted in "The Scripture of Truth" are set forth. These things commence with the history of Persia. Four kings are foretold: Cambyses, Smerdis, Darius and Xerxes [v. 2]. Then follows a prediction of Alexander the Great, his history and his successors in "the south" (Egypt) and the north (Syria), down to the time of Antiochus Epiphanus (v. 3-29). Then follows the conquest of Syria by the Romans, "Chittim," (v. 30), with the rise of the papal power. (v. 31-89.) The character of this power and many of its corrupt doctrines are here predicted with minuteness. Then come the invasions of the Saracens (the king of the south) and of the Turks (the king of the north.) The countries to be conquered by the Turks are enumerated (v. 41-43), as are also those that were to escape. The chapter closes with a prediction concerning the end of the Turkish empire, yet to be fulfilled: "He shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him."

The first verse of the 12th chapter predicts the full deliverance of the Jewish nation through the interposition of "the great prince," Michael, an event to be looked for after the fall of "the king of the north", or the Turkish empire, and the next verses refer to the first resurrection of mankind. The book closes with some chronological statements, unintelligible even to the Prophet, himself (v. 8), but the promise is given that at the end of time many shall receive knowledge concerning these predictions (v. 4), a promise which evidently implies renewed revelations. For how could these things be known without such revelation, any more than Daniel could know them without revelation?

One thing is noticeable all through this prophetic record. Each new vision requires a new revelation from God. Daniel is constantly seeking knowledge from God concerning the right understanding of the visions given, and it is only through this means that he receives his knowledge. Continuous revelation was necessary to this the most remarkable prophet of the ancient world. So it is to us, if we want to understand the plans and purposes of the Almighty. Where there is no revelation spiritual darkness prevails, in spite of the plainest writings of God. A Belshazzar and the whole collegium of learned priests may see on the wall the: "Mene, mene, thekel, upharsin", but a Daniel, a man in constant communication with God, is required to interpret it according to its right meaning.

EZEKIEL, B. C. 595-574, was carried captive to Babylon at the first invasion of Nebuchadnezzar,

eleven years before the destruction of Jerusalem. He was contemporary with Jeremiah and Daniel, but lived some 200 miles north of Babylon on the banks of the river Chebar. Tradition has it that he was put to death by a fellow-exile whom he had rebuked for idolatry.

The predictions of this Prophet were delivered some before and some after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Before this event he calls upon the people to repent and warns them against seeking aid by the Egyptians. He assures them that the fall of their beloved city was now unavoidable. When the Chaldean king commenced his siege of the same, God revealed this to the Prophet in his exile: "Son of man," God says to him, "write thee the name of the day, even of this day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day" (24: 2). This was in the ninth year of his captivity. Three years later he received the intelligence that the city had fallen (33: 21). During this period all the predictions of the Prophet are directed against foreign nations. After he had heard of the fall of Jerusalem, his principal object in view is to comfort the people with promises of restoration and future blessings.

The closing chapters (40-48) of the book of Ezekiel undoubtedly refer to events yet future. The descriptions of the glorious building there given will no doubt once be recognized in a structure hereafter to be reared by the people of God. But as yet, like all unfulfilled predictions, much of it is obscure and cannot be understood until the light of revelation removes all obscurity therefrom.

OBADIAH, B. C. 588-583, is supposed to have prophesied during the period between the fall of Jerusalem and the conquest of Edom, five years later. On this supposition, he was a contemporary of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel.

His predictions are directed against the Edomites. And he especially points out that there was a great difference between the judgments executed upon Judah and upon Edom. For Judah should again be raised from her present fall and finally possess not only Judea, but also the land of the Philistines and that of the Edomites, while Edom should be "as though they had not been" (v. 18), a prediction that has been remarkably fulfilled to our own day. And while Edom is thus utterly swallowed up, "Saviors shall come up on Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the Lord's" (v. 21).

Three nations were foremost in afflicting the ancient people of God; viz., the Assyrians, the Chaldeans; and the Edomites. Three Prophets were commissioned by the Lord to announce the judgment upon these three nations: "Nahum foretells the destruction of the Assyrians, Habakkuk of the Chaldeans, and Obadiah of the Edomites.

THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS

As had been foretold by the Prophets, and particularly by Isaiah, the

exiled Jews were permitted to return home during the reign of Cyrus. As soon as they had reached the Holy Land, we find them uniting their efforts to re-establish the religious rites of their fathers, aided by the noble leaders, Zerubbabel, Joshua, Ezra and Nehemiah. They erect an altar of burnt offering and rebuild the destroyed temple. Then the city wall is built, and various officers appointed as circumstances required. For further particulars the reader is referred to the book of Ezra and Nehemiah.

It may be well to state here—although the remark may, to some extent, deviate from the subject under consideration—that the restoration of the Jewish nation at this time was very far from being that complete restoration to more than former privileges, liberty and glory, of which all the Prophets had spoken in such glorious terms. The promise was that the whole remnant should be delivered, even if they were as numerous as the sand on the sea shore. But from Babylon only comparatively few ever returned. The company of Zerubbabel consisted of 50,000 persons, and Ezra led 6,000 more home. The great bulk of the people that had been born in the foreign land never returned. (See Book of Esther). Again, the promise was that a kingdom should be established, with the Holy City as the capital, an everlasting kingdom governed by God Himself through Messiah. This promise has never yet been fulfilled. In fact, the Jews have never since their overthrow by Nebuchadnezzar been an independent nation, governed by rulers of their own, except during the very short rule of the Maccabees. After their return they continued to be tributary to the Persian king for about a hundred years, as a province of Syria. When Alexander had conquered Persia (Syria and Palestine with it), they fell into his hands. When the Grecian empire was divided, Palestine fell into the hands of Ptolemy Lagus as a part of the Egyptian monarchy, and it remained so for about a hundred years, when it was transferred to the kings of Syria, in which situation it greatly suffered during the frequent wars between Egypt and Syria. Antiochus Epiphanes, one of the Syrian kings, plundered the city and the Temple and enslaved the people. For about three years and a half they were reduced to worse than Egyptian thraldom. Their sacred manuscripts were burnt, and the people were compelled to sacrifice to idols. The Temple itself was dedicated to Jupiter, a statue of which was erected on the altar of God. Compare Daniel's prediction of "the little horn" (chap. 8: 9-12). Through the noble enthusiasm and patriotism of Mattathias and his sons, a struggle against the oppressor now took place which secured to the Jews years of dearly bought liberty and independence, but they were soon conquered by the Romans. Pompey marched his army into Judæa, conquered Jerusalem and made the country tributary to Rome. Herod the Great de-