

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Times and Seasons

Times and Seasons - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/8/13 9:13

Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah, his companions, and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven ... Dan 2:18

Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding; he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we asked of you, for you have made known to us the king's matter." Dan 2:20-23

Dan 2:21 -

And he changeth the times and the seasons - The object of this is to assert the general control of God in reference to all changes which occur. The assertion is made, undoubtedly, in view of the revolutions in empire which Daniel now saw, from the signification of the dream, were to take place under the Divine hand. Foreseeing now these vast changes denoted by different parts of the image Dan_2:36-45, stretching into far-distant times, Daniel was led to ascribe to God the control over "all" the revolutions which occur on earth. There is no essential difference between the words "times" and "seasons." The words in Chaldee denote stated or appointed seasons; and the idea of times "appointed, set, determined," enters into both. Times and seasons are not under the control of chance, but are bounded by established laws; and yet God, who appointed these laws, has power to change them, and all the changes which occur under those laws are produced by his agency. Thus the changes which occur in regard to day and night, spring and summer, autumn and winter, clouds and sunshine, health and sickness, childhood and youth, manhood and age, are under his control. Such changes, being in accordance with certain laws, may be regarded as "appointed," or "set," and yet the laws and the revolutions consequent on them are all under his control. So in regard to the revolutions of empire. By the arrangements of his providence he secures such revolutions as he shall see it to be best should occur, and in all of them his high hand should be regarded. The words "seasons" and "times" are of frequent occurrence in Daniel, and are sometimes used in a peculiar sense (see the notes at Dan_7:12, Dan_7:25), but they seem here to be employed in their usual and general signification, to denote that "all" the revolutions which occur on earth are under his control.

He removeth kings, and setteth up kings - He has absolute control over all the sovereigns of the earth, to place on the throne whom he will, and to remove them when he pleases. This was doubtless suggested to Daniel, and was made the foundation of this portion of his hymn of praise, from what he was permitted to see in the disclosures made to him in the interpretation of the dream. He then saw (compare Dan_2:37-45) that there would be most important revolutions of kingdoms under the hand of God, and being deeply impressed with these great prospective changes, he makes this general statement, that it was the prerogative of God to do this at pleasure. Nebuchadnezzar was brought to feel this, and to recognize it, when he said Dan_4:17, "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will; he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

Dan_4:32, Dan_4:35. This claim is often asserted for God in the Scriptures as a proof of his supremacy and greatness. "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south: but God is the judge; he putteth down one, and setteth up another," Psa_75:6-7. Compare 1Sa_2:7-8. Thus he claimed absolute control over Sennacherib to employ him at his pleasure in executing his purposes of punishment on the Hebrew nation Isa_10:5-7, and thus over Cyrus to execute his purposes on Babylon, and to restore his people to their land, Isa_45:1, following See also Isa_46:10-11. In this manner, all the kings of the earth may be regarded as under his control; and if the Divine plan were fully understood it would be found that each one has received his appointment under the Divine direction, to accomplish some important part in carrying forward the Divine plans to their fulfillment. A history of human affairs, showing the exact purpose of God in regard to each ruler who has occupied a throne, and the exact object which God designed to accomplish by placing "him" on the throne at the time when he did, would be a far more important and valuable history than any which has been written. Of many such rulers, like Cyrus, Sennacherib, Pilate, Henry VIII, Edward VI, and the Elector of Saxony, we can see the reason why they lived and reigned when they did; and doubtless God has had some important end to accomplish in the development of his great plans in the case of every one who has ever occupied a throne.

He giveth wisdom unto the wise ... - He is the source of all true wisdom and knowledge. This is often claimed for God in

n the Scriptures. Compare Pro_2:6-7 :

“For the Lord giveth wisdom;
Out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.
He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous;
He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.”

See also 1Ki_3:9-12; Exo_31:3. God claims to be the source of all wisdom and knowledge. He originally formed each human intellect, and made it what it is; he opens before it the paths of knowledge; he gives to it clearness of perception; he preserves its powers so that they do not become deranged; he has power to make suggestions, to direct the laws of association, to fix the mind on important thoughts, and to open before it new and interesting views of truth. And as it would be found, if the history could be written, that God has placed each monarch on the throne with a distinct reference to some important purpose in the development of his great plans, so probably it would be seen that each important work of genius which has been written; each invention in the arts; and each discovery in science has been, for a similar purpose, under his control. He has created the great intellect just at the time when it was needful that such a discovery or invention should be made, and having prepared the world for it by the course of events, the discovery or invention has occurred just at the time when, on the whole, it was most desirable that it should.

Albert Barnes

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