



The Gospel of Luke 21:24, 27.

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."



key to this Biblical prophecy

the times of the Gentiles



the fulfillment

The era in which most residents of Israel would be non-Jews [Gentiles] is called the 'times of the Gentiles'. The 'times of the Gentiles' would be fulfilled when the Jews were allowed to return to Israel to settle there.

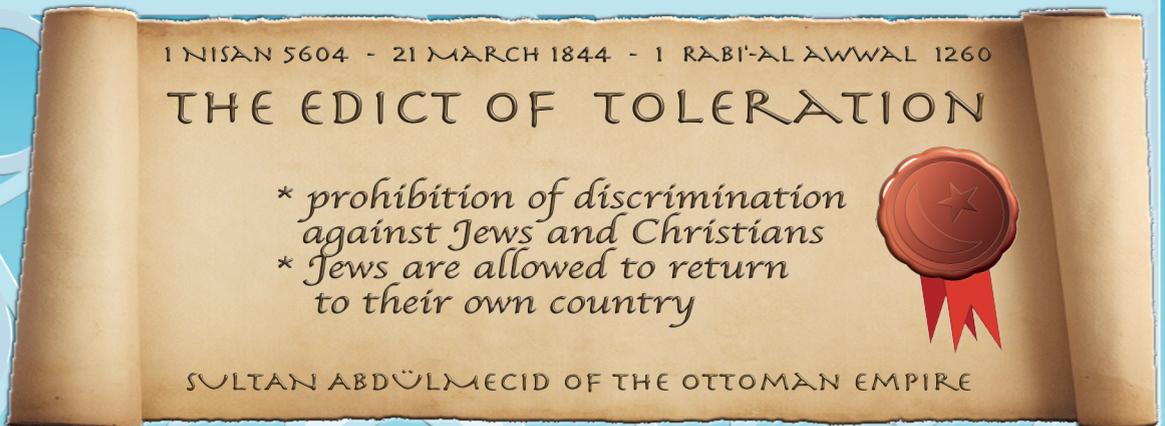
Explanation

In 66 AD, which is just a few decades after Jesus spoke these prophetic words of Luke 21:24, the Jews took up arms against their Roman occupiers. However, between 70 and 73 AD, the Romans struck down the Jewish rebellion and in the process they destroyed their capital Jerusalem and their most precious sanctuary in this city: the temple.

Thousands of Jews were brought from Israel to Rome and sold as a slave or gladiator. Others either fled or were driven out of their country and ended up scattered across the Mediterranean countries. The Romans changed the name of Israel to "Syria-Palestine" and categorically forbade the Jews by law from ever returning to their own country. The 'Times of the Gentiles' had begun.

All the foreign forces that occupied Israel after Rome upheld that strict Roman law. Even when Israel was finally incorporated into the powerful Ottoman Empire in 1517, this law remained unchanged: the Jews were therefore still not allowed to return to their own land where their roots were and where much of their Old Testament history took place.

This centuries-long exile of the Jews from their homeland finally came to an end when the Ottoman sultan Abdülmecid, after heavy English diplomatic pressure, signed the Edict of Tolerance on 1 Rabi'al-Awwal in 1260 AH (= Anno Hegirae = Latin for 'hidjra'), which is March 21, 1844 on the western (Gregorian) calendar.



With the signing of the Edict of Tolerance, the return of the Jews to their homeland started. This fulfilled the 'times of the Gentiles' and it symbolically also 'cleansed' the sanctuary of the Jews. About fifty years later, the Jews were once again the largest population group in Jerusalem.

The return of the Jews to Israel also fulfilled a prophecy of the Prophet Daniel (8: 13-14). In that prophecy, Daniel predicted not only that the Jews would be driven out of their land again, but also that 'after twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings' that banishment would come to an end, and that only afterwards 'the sanctuary would be cleansed'. And this time, as Ezekiel 37:22 prophesied, Judah and Israel were united and "no more two nations".

Luke (21:27) prophesied that at the time of the return of the Jews to their own country, the Son of Man would appear 'with great power and glory'.

In 1844 the Báb (which means 'the Gate') declared that He was the Promised One.

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