

THE MIRACLE OF ISRAEL
***GOD'S UNBREAKABLE PROMISE TO ABRAHAM:
THE CONFLICT OF THE AGES***

Please open to Revelation 12:1-6, 13-17.

In these short verses we see the infernal strategy of Satan to devour, destroy, and defeat God's plan and His people. It is only one verse of a Bible full of pictures of Satan the Destroyer of God's people of Promise, The Jews!

1. When Satan heard the promise of "the seed of the woman" in Genesis 3 he immediately tried to ruin God's Word by having Cain kill Abel.
2. Seth was later born and started the godly line of promise so Satan's infernal plan was to try to inbreed demons with the godly line and totally corrupt the line of Messiah, so God saved the last pure family and drowned everyone else.
3. Satan followed the line and lured Abram into moon god worship (the same moon god as Islam worships today) and thought he won, but God called Abram and he obeyed God.
4. Then Satan's infernal strategy was to get Abram impatient and thereby to get the line defiled by Hagar the Egyptian, but God picked the son of promise as the second born (like Seth, Jacob, and so on).
5. Then the famine drove Israel to Egypt where Satan tried to kill the male children as they were born, to destroy the nation, so God killed every 1st born and led His people out in triumph.
6. Then the successive waves of Canaanites, Philistines, Arameans, Assyrians, Ethiopians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans came and tried to do Satan's infernal bidding.
7. After the Dispersion no people group has ever experienced the horrors of pogroms, extermination attempts, and outright oppression like God's People the Jews.
8. Then Hitler arrived and came within a couple of years of wiping out over half of all the Jews and their homeland!

All that to remind you that God and His Word both have the perspective of Israel¹ as the Center of Divine History. From the distant and in the recent past, as well as in the future all the way to the end - God presents Israel as the Center of Divine Prophecy in the future. As students of God's Word we should be fully aware of the significance of Mideast developments.

Israel's progress toward prophetic events should spur us on all the more to proclaim the blessings of His Gospel to a lost world, as the days draw close to His return. Because of their sin and unbelief God judged and dispersed His people Israel. The Diaspora, however, is coming to a close. In our time, even during the Church Age, the restoration of Israel is beginning to happen before our very eyes. It is something the world never expected or even dreamed would happen. The Church, even though it has possessed the Bible for all these centuries, has done much to suppress the oft-repeated biblical concept that Israel has a future in the plan and purpose of God. It's almost as though the Church has been jealous of Israel, and afraid that if it recognized Israel's future promises, it would somehow demean Christ and the Church. Nothing could be further from the truth.

THE DISTINCT DESTINIES OF THE CHURCH AND ISRAEL

It is when we as the Church recognize the true distinctiveness of the Nation of Israel in God's Plan, that the glory of the Body of Christ become evident. The Church is Christ's called-out Body, composed of believing Jews and Gentiles during this Age.

- ✓ The Church is the highest entity the Lord has created, superior to the universe, all the angels, the nations, and Israel.
- ✓ Christ our Head, our Husband, our Friend, is the Son of God Himself.
- ✓ We shall reign with Him when He rules the earth, and our 12 Founding Apostles will rule over the 12 tribes of Israel.
- ✓ The angels themselves will study us forever as the greatest exhibit of God's grace, and we will actually judge the angels.

With this is our destiny we would never trade our position in the Body of Christ with any creature in the universe! Thus we should never be disturbed over what God has promised the Jewish people. We should never be jealous over the future destiny of Israel. As Christ's Church, our finest and most distinctive hour will be when Israel is restored nationally and spiritually to the Lord at the Second Coming of Christ. We will return from Heaven with Him as His glorious Bride to rule Israel and the world. What more could we ask?

¹ Drawn from, adapted, and quoted from Tom Mc Call, Levitt Letter articles August to November 1995.

THE FUTURE DIVINE SCHEDULE

The modern miracle of the restoration of Israel, although mostly in unbelief, is but the prelude of even more climactic developments. The world will continue on without the believing Church inexorably toward its time of judgment and the wrath of God. The first event on this timetable of judgment appears to be the war described in Ezekiel 38-39, known as Gog and Magog. As we have seen earlier, the world is moving ever closer to the alignments there described. The scenario of the nation to the extreme north joining with Persia, Ethiopia and Libya, seems quite plausible with the Russo-Islamic alliance that is currently shaping up against Israel. It is well within the realm of reality that what Ezekiel described over 2,500 years ago could be mobilized quickly in today's world, and set the stage for the Antichrist and the Tribulation.

THE JEWS SURVIVE THE SATANIC NAZI HOLOCAUST AND CREATE ISRAEL

By 1947, we believe God had organized the restoration of the Jewish nation through Zionism, and its allies in Dispensational Christianity and the British Mandate of Palestine. In full and desperate opposition, Satan attempted to thwart the divine plan of the restoration of Israel. He used the enormous disruptions of World War II, and the Nazi Holocaust, which singled out the Jewish people as greatest enemy, destined for total extermination. However, the Chosen People miraculously survived all of this, were streaming into British Palestine by the thousands from Europe, and had come to the dramatic moment of declaring their independence before the world. Once again Israel would become a living nation among the family of nations after a Diaspora of nineteen centuries.

ARABIC ISLAM IS THE NEW SATANIC ENEMY OF REVIVED ISRAEL

The infant nation's immediate attention first had to be given to the Arab neighbors, and Arabic Islam became the next tool in the hands of Satan to keep Israel from prospering, now that it had survived the Holocaust to become a nation. The Arab nations did not recognize or accept the U.N. partitioning of Palestine into Jewish and Arab sections. As soon as Israel declared independence, the surrounding Arab neighbors declared war on Israel, and in the first months of its existence the Jewish people had to defend themselves with the meager weapons they had against an onslaught of the combined armies arrayed against them.

The primary motivation behind the Arab objection to the fledgling Israel was religious. This was not just a political matter, it was, in fact, a "holy war" or "jihad." The Jewish state was an offense to the sanctity of the holy sites in Jerusalem and throughout the land, according to their viewpoint. The only way this could be rectified was by forcibly removing the Jews from the land and pushing them out into the Mediterranean Sea. This was the battle cry in the Arab nations, and a recurring theme for over forty years of discord.

The fanatical Muslims could not tolerate the idea of an official Jewish presence in Palestine, especially in Jerusalem. Islam considers the Temple Mount with its famous Dome of the Rock and Al Aksa Mosque as one of the most sacred holy sites in the world, ranking behind only the central sites of Mecca and Medina.

ISLAM ATTACKS ISRAEL AND THE GOSPEL

The Arabs are the physical descendants of Ishmael, the first son of Abraham, and the vast majority of Arabs have adopted Islam as their official religion and have spread their religion to much of the world's population throughout the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Islam expresses tolerance for Judaism and Christianity, but essentially it attempts to refute the cardinal doctrines of both. It transfers to Ishmael the blessings that came through Isaac and Jacob, and disputes the deity and redemptive work of Christ. While the Muslims have generally neglected the development of Palestine throughout the centuries, with the exception of a few cities, they have jealously guarded their rights over the land from the time of the Crusades. It was one thing to dislodge the European Crusaders from the land, but the Moslems have discovered it is entirely another matter to dislodge the Jewish people who consider Israel as their religious and ancestral homeland.

To understand the hostility between these descendants of the patriarchal brothers, Isaac and Ishmael, it is necessary for the Jewish and Christian readers to understand something about the nature and history of Islam from our perspective. In some ways, the development of the religion of Islam in the seventh century was one of the great master strokes of Satan in the world. Before Islam, the vast Arab population, and much of Africa and Asia, was essentially neutral toward passive Judaism and evangelistic Christianity, although these areas had some bias toward various forms of polytheism. But with the religion of Mohammed came a conscious rejection of and negative attitude toward the unvarnished truths of the Old and New Testaments.

While giving lip service to the various biblical prophets, including Moses and Jesus, and claiming vehemently to be a religion of pure monotheism, Islam

challenged most of the history and doctrine of the Scriptures. The Koran deliberately removes Israel from its historical and theological position as the Chosen Nation, and replaces it with the Arab peoples, the descendants of Ishmael. One of the major annual feasts of Islam, called ISHMAEL, demonstrates this. They actually twist the Scriptures and celebrate this feast as a commemoration of the willingness of Abraham to offer Ishmael (not Isaac). Thus, according to Islam, Ishmael (and the Arabs) displaces Isaac (and the Jews) as the Promised Seed. From that point on, Islam continues to denigrate the position of Israel, its historical possession of the Promised Land, the glory of the worship in the Jerusalem Temple, and the Messianic destiny of the Davidic dynasty.

At the same time, Islam undercuts the truths of the Gospel. The Koran considers Jesus to be a prophet, but denies the deity of Christ. Furthermore, it rejects the substitutionary atonement of the death of the Lord, as well as the validity of His resurrection. On the contrary, the Koran invents the theory that Jesus did not actually die on the Cross, but rather only "swooned," or fell unconscious, and then later recovered and pretended to have risen from the dead.

WHY ISRAEL, CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM COMPETE OVER JERUSALEM

Islam thus attempts to undermine most of the essentials of the Scriptures, and, when it became widely accepted through proclamation and conquest, the religion of Mohammed became a major problem for biblically based Judaism and Christianity. This difficulty was exacerbated when Islam occupied Jerusalem and made it one of its main holy places. Now there were three religions competing over the territorial rights to Jerusalem. Throughout fourteen hundred years, this has resulted in the Moslems wresting Jerusalem from the Byzantine Christians, the short Crusade period of European domination of Jerusalem for about 100 years, and the twentieth century phenomenon of the return of the Jewish people to the Land. Most of this time, Islam (in one form or another) has been in control of Jerusalem. Until recently, the Arabs have persuaded themselves that the Jews were no more permanent in Jerusalem than the European Crusaders. Some aspects of the current peace movement indicate that Moslem leaders, however reluctantly, may be coming to the conclusion that they will have to come to terms with a permanent State of Israel, at least for the time being.

SOVIET COMMUNISM, ULTIMATE ENEMY OF ISRAEL DURING COLD WAR

For over a hundred years God has been laying the groundwork for the restoration of Israel in preparation for the Second Coming of Christ, and Satan has been fighting that restoration every step of the way. It is an amazing thing that at the same time God was organizing the early stages of the restoration of Israel in the first quarter of this century, Satan was organizing a counter movement to try to stop the restoration and, once Israel was a nation again, to destroy it. The Lord did His work of restoration through Zionism, the British mandate over Palestine, the Balfour Declaration, and Dispensational Christianity. Satan, on the other hand, worked through the Nazi German Holocaust, Arab Moslem hostility and Soviet (and international) Communism to thwart God's restoration plan for Israel.

EARLY SOVIET SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

Remarkably, when the crucial votes were being taken in the fledgling United Nations, the Soviet Union joined with the Allies in supporting the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab sections. Many of the leaders of the new independent state of Israel had come out of Russia and Eastern Europe, and had a socialist political/economic view. The kibbutz agricultural communities appeared to many Marxists as an ideal socialist building block for society. Thus the Soviet leaders initially found many areas of compatibility with the young Israel. This friendship did not last very long, however. As Israel developed, it became strongly attached to the West, politically, economically and militarily.

THE STRANGE ALIGNMENT BETWEEN THE SOVIETS AND THE MOSLEMS

By the time of the Israeli-Arab conflict in 1956, the Soviet Union had become solidly aligned with Egypt and the other Arab nations. It is not difficult to explain how Communism was opposed to Christianity, but how is it that the atheistic Communists could cooperate so fully with the monotheistic Moslems, and vice versa? They would appear to be so antithetical that it would be impossible for them to work together.

The one thing that brought these two outwardly opposite geo-political groups together was their mutual antipathy to Israel. Millions of Jews live in Russia, and many of them wanted to emigrate to Israel. The Soviet government turned down their applications, and thousands of Jews came to be known as "refuseniks," because of the denials they were issued. Russia became the new Egypt, and the international cry arose once again, "Let My people go!" Tensions between Russia and Israel multiplied.

Soviet/Arab warfare against Israel reached its height in the Yom Kippur War in 1973. The parallels between this war and the early stages of the conflict prophesied in Ezekiel 38 and 39 are remarkable, and they may have been a prelude of things to come. We will also explore how, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, these great prophecies might be fulfilled by the power to the extreme north.

THE FOUR WARS

Therefore, in order to view modern world events in a biblical perspective, we have to take off the glasses provided to us by secular journalists and historians, and put on our biblical glasses that see the movements of the nations from the microscopic vantage point of Israel. Modern Israel has fought four major wars during the last fifty years, and each one has played an important role in setting the stage for the prophesied events of the Tribulation:

1. 1947-48 War of Independence: restoration of Israel
2. 1956 Suez Canal: assertion of national sovereignty
3. 1967 Six-Day War: recapture of the Temple Mount
4. 1973 Yom Kippur War: solidified West Bank occupation

Through all these wars, which were relatively minor in comparison with the World Wars but major for Israel's survival, the Satanic strategy was to destroy Israel through the Arab armies, mostly armed by the Soviet Bloc. But God protected His Chosen Nation through the sacrificial dedication of the Jewish people, and the support of the United States and a handful of other nations. If we do not recognize this titanic supernatural background behind the observable struggle, we are not looking at recent history from a biblical viewpoint. The four wars each played a significant role in the great struggle between the Lord and Satan over the preservation of Israel.

Listen to this incredible summary of all specifics God has revealed about His Chosen People of Destiny, the Jews. Just listen and soak these in, we will actually look at them one-by-one in the Scriptures as we go tonight! I'm going fast with these, but remember what I teach today is usually online by Monday night at the Discover the Book Ministries website.

1. **GOD PICKED HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY AS THE JEWS, DESCENDENTS OF ABRAHAM, CALLED ISRAEL.** God picked one man in Ur of the Chaldees and asked him to walk

hundreds of miles through the desert to a land filled with powerful kingdom states. And there in a series of revelations, the Almighty God of the Universe solemnly swore to this man a nation would descend from him that would be the Chosen People of Destiny (Genesis 15). Those People are the Jewish People, the Israelites, God's People (Deuteronomy 7:6-7).

- ✓ Genesis 12:1-3 When the nation was first founded, God promised through Abraham, "I will make of thee a great nation . . . And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:2,3).
 - ✓ Genesis 15 There is more². This climactic word is the earliest missionary mandate. The promise of God to Abraham was specifically given *in order that* he and his seed might be, through the gracious provisions of God, the avenue of carrying the same good news to every one of the 70 families on the earth listed in chapter 10.
 - ✓ Not only did Israel become a great nation under David and Solomon, but it is destined for even greater days in the future. The nations that have befriended the Jews (notably the United States and, to a lesser degree, England, France and others) have indeed been blessed. Those that have persecuted the Jews (Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Rome, Spain, Nazi Germany and others -- Russia's time is coming!) have eventually gone down to defeat and humiliation.
2. **GOD PRESENTED A LAND TO HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY THE JEWS WITH CLEARLY DEFINED BOUNDARIES** (Genesis 12:1; 13:15; 15:7, 18-21) to Abraham. He renewed that promise to Abraham's son Isaac (Genesis 26:3-5), to his grandson Jacob (Genesis 28:13), and to their descendants after them forever (Leviticus 25:46; Joshua 14:9; etc.).
- ✓ *Genesis 12:1* The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.
 - ✓ *Genesis 13:15* All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever.
 - ✓ *Genesis 15:7* He also said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it."
 - ✓ *Genesis 15:18-21* On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates— 19 the land of the

² Walt Kaiser, Jr.

Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, 20 Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, 21 Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites."

- ✓ *Genesis 26: 3-5* Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. 4 I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, 5 because Abraham obeyed me and kept my requirements, my commands, my decrees and my laws."
- ✓ *Genesis 28: 13* There above it stood the LORD, and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying.
- ✓ *Leviticus 25: 46* You can will them to your children as inherited property and can make them slaves for life, but you must not rule over your fellow Israelites ruthlessly.
- ✓ *Joshua 14: 9* So on that day Moses swore to me, 'The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever, because you have followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly.'

3. **GOD PROCEEDED TO BRING HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF**

DESTINY TO THE PROMISED LAND. It is a historical fact that God brought these "chosen people" into the "Promised Land," an amazing story of miracles in itself.

- ✓ *Exodus 6: 7-8* I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. 8 And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD."
- ✓ *Deuteronomy 7: 6-9* For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. 7 The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. 8 But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. 9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.

- ✓ *Deuteronomy 14:2* for you are a people holy to the LORD your God. Out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, the LORD has chosen you to be his treasured possession.

4. **GOD PRONOUNCED A CURSE UPON HIS UNFAITHFUL BUT CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY AS THEY WANDERED THE WORLD WITHOUT THEIR PROMISED LAND**

- ✓ *Deuteronomy 9:4* After the LORD your God has driven them out before you, do not say to yourself, "The LORD has brought me here to take possession of this land because of my righteousness." No, it is on account of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is going to drive them out before you.
- ✓ *Deuteronomy 28:64,66* God promised the children of Israel great blessing in the land of promise if they would remain faithful to Him. He also predicted great suffering, persecution and worldwide dispersion when they forsook Him. These prophecies came to pass. Some of these warnings were as follows: "The LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; . . . And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life".
- ✓ *Deut. 38:37* God warned that wherever they wandered the Jews would be "an astonishment, a proverb, a byword...a curse and a reproach" (*Deut. 38:37*). Amazingly, this has been true of the Jews all down through history, as even the present generation knows full well. Furthermore, the prophets declared that these scattered peoples would not only be slandered, denigrated, and discriminated against, but they would be persecuted and killed as no other peoples on the face of the earth. History stands as eloquent witness to the fact that this is precisely what has happened to the Jews century after century wherever they were found. God warned his chosen people of destiny if they forgot him in the promised land When the Jewish people entered the Promised Land, God warned them that if they practiced the idolatry and immorality of the land's previous inhabitants, whom He had destroyed for their evil, He would cast them out as well. That this happened is, again, an indisputable fact of history. God described how he would scatter his unfaithful but chosen people of destiny from the promised land God declared that His people would be scattered "among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other". And so it happened. "The wandering Jew" is found everywhere.
- ✓ *1 Kings 9:7* then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my

Name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples.

- ✓ 2 Chronicles 7:20 then I will uproot Israel from my land, which I have given them, and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. I will make it a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples. So far the story is hardly remarkable. Other peoples have believed that a certain geographic area was their "Promised Land" and after entering it have later been driven out by enemies. The next six prophecies, however, and their fulfillment, are absolutely unique to the Jews. The occurrence of these events precisely as prophesied could not possibly have happened by chance.
- ✓ Nehemiah 1:8 "Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations,
- ✓ Jeremiah 24:9 "And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them".
- ✓ Jeremiah 29:18 I will pursue them with the sword, famine and plague and will make them abhorrent to all the kingdoms of the earth and an object of cursing and horror, of scorn and reproach, among all the nations where I drive them.
- ✓ Jeremiah 30:11 But with all this, they would not be like so many other nations of antiquity (indeed like all other nations who were driven from their homeland). "Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee".
- ✓ Jeremiah 44:8 Why provoke me to anger with what your hands have made, burning incense to other gods in Egypt, where you have come to live? You will destroy yourselves and make yourselves an object of cursing and reproach among all the nations on earth.
- ✓ Hosea 9:17 "My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto Him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations"
- ✓ Amos 9:9 "For I will give the command, and I will shake the house of Israel among all the nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, and not a pebble will reach the ground.
- ✓ Zechariah 7:14 'I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations, where they were strangers. The land was left so desolate behind them that no one could come or go. This is how they made the pleasant land desolate.'

- ✓ Amazingly, this has been true of the Jews all down through history. Furthermore, the prophets declared that these scattered peoples would not only be slandered, denigrated, and discriminated against, but they would be persecuted and killed as no other peoples on the face of the earth. History stands as eloquent witness to the fact that this is precisely what has happened to the Jews century after century wherever they were found. The historical record of no other ethnic or national group of people contains anything that even approaches the nightmare of terror, humiliation, and destruction which the Jews have endured down through history at the hands of the peoples among whom they have found themselves, as even the present generation knows full well. The maligning, the slurs and jokes, the naked hatred known as anti-Semitism, not only among Muslims but even among those who call themselves Christians, is a unique and persistent fact of history peculiar to the Jewish people. Even today, in spite of the haunting memory of Hitler's holocaust which once shocked and shamed the world, and in defiance of logic and conscience, anti-Semitism is still alive and is once again increasing world-wide.

5. **GOD PRESERVED HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY FROM ANNIHILATION.** God declared that in spite of such persecution and the periodic wholesale slaughter of Jews, He would not let His chosen people be destroyed, but would preserve them as an identifiable ethnic, national group. The Jews had every reason to intermarry, to change their names and hide their identity by any possible means in order to escape persecution. Probably the most important of these end-time prophecies, namely, the re-establishment of Israel as a nation in its ancient homeland. It is almost impossible that a nation could survive as a distinct nationality, regain its homeland and be recognized as a viable nation once more after being completely destroyed as an organized entity by an invading army (as Israel was by the Romans, in A.D. 70). Its people were either slaughtered or scattered from one end of the world to the other; its land occupied and ruled by aliens for over 1900 years. Israel's survival is amazing, but even more so is the fact its survival was predicted many centuries earlier. When Israel, including Judah, first went into captivity, in 588 B.C., the period known as "the times of the Gentiles" began. Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome were successive world empires and their domain included the land of Israel. After Rome destroyed the city and the temple in A.D. 70 (as predicted by Christ Himself in Luke 19:41-44), the people of Israel were scattered "among all

- people, from the one end of the earth unto the other" (Deuteronomy 28:64). Absorption by those among whom they found themselves would have seemed inevitable, so that little trace of the Jews as a distinct people should have remained today. After all, these despised exiles have been scattered to every corner of the world for 2500 years since the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. Could "tradition" be that strong without real faith in God? Against all odds, the Jews remained an identifiable people after all those centuries. That fact is an astonishing phenomenon without parallel in history and absolutely unique to the Jews. We have already noted³ what is probably the most important of these end-time prophecies, namely, the re-establishment of Israel as a nation in its ancient homeland. It is almost impossible that a nation could survive as a distinct nationality, regain its homeland and be recognized as a viable nation once more after being completely destroyed as an organized entity by an invading army (as Israel was by the Romans, in A.D. 70). Its people were either slaughtered or scattered from one end of the world to the other; its land occupied and ruled by aliens for over 1900 years. Israel's survival is amazing, but even more so is the fact its survival was predicted many centuries earlier. When Israel, including Judah, first went into captivity, in 586 B.C., the period known as "the times of the Gentiles" began. Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome were successive world empires and their domain included the land of Israel. After Rome destroyed the city and the temple in A.D. 70 (as predicted by Christ Himself in
- ✓ Luke 19:41-44 Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."), the people of Israel were scattered "among all people, from the one end of the earth unto the other" (Deuteronomy 28:64).
 - ✓ Jeremiah 30:11 I am with you and will save you,' declares the LORD. 'Though I completely destroy all the nations among which I scatter you, I will not completely destroy you. I will discipline you but only with justice; I will not let you go entirely unpunished.'
 - ✓ Jeremiah 31:35-37 This is what the LORD says, he who appoints the Sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine

³ Drawn from Henry Morris, Creation Trilogy, Appedices, electronic edition, n.p.

by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the LORD Almighty is his name: 36 "Only if these decrees vanish from my sight," declares the LORD, "will the descendants of Israel ever cease to be a nation before me." 37 This is what the LORD says: "Only if the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth below be searched out will I reject all the descendants of Israel because of all they have done," declares the LORD

6. **GOD PROMISED TO REGATHER HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY BACK TO THE PROMISED LAND AS A SOURCE OF FEAR FOR THE WHOLE WORLD**

- The Bible declares that God determined to keep His chosen people separated to Himself because He would bring them back into their land in the last days prior to the Messiah's second coming. That prophecy and promise, so long awaited, was fulfilled in the rebirth of Israel in her Promised Land. It happened at last in 1948, nearly 1900 years after the final Diaspora at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by the Roman armies of Titus. This restoration of a nation after 25 centuries is utterly astonishing, a phenomenon without parallel in the history of any other peoples and inexplicable by any natural means, much less by chance. God declared that in the last days before the Messiah's second coming, Jerusalem would become "a cup of trembling...a burdensome stone for all people". At the time Zechariah uttered this prophecy 2500 years ago, Jerusalem lay in ruins and was surrounded by wilderness. And so it remained century after century. Zechariah's prophecy seemed to be utter madness even after Israel's rebirth in 1948. Yet today, exactly as foretold, a world of nearly 6 billion people has its eyes upon Jerusalem, fearful that the next world war, if it breaks out, will be fought over that tiny city. What an incredible fulfillment of prophecy! Even more impossible than the fact that a people could retain its identity without a homeland for two thousand years is the fact that they should then return and establish their ancient nation once again. Yet this is exactly what the Bible had predicted.
- ✓ Isaiah 11:11, 12 "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time [note, the second time -- the first was when He brought them back from the Babylonian captivity] to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, . . . and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth"
 - ✓ *Jeremiah 30: 10* "'So do not fear, O Jacob my servant; do not be dismayed, O Israel,' declares the LORD. 'I will surely save you out

- of a distant place, your descendants from the land of their exile. Jacob will again have peace and security, and no one will make him afraid.
- ✓ *Jeremiah 31:8-12* See, I will bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labor; a great throng will return. 9 They will come with weeping; they will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel's father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son. 10 "Hear the word of the LORD, O nations; proclaim it in distant coastlands: 'He who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.' 11 For the LORD will ransom Jacob and redeem them from the hand of those stronger than they. 12 They will come and shout for joy on the heights of Zion; they will rejoice in the bounty of the LORD—the grain, the new wine and the oil, the young of the flocks and herds. They will be like a well-watered garden, and they will sorrow no more.
 - ✓ *Ezekiel 36:24, 35-38* "'For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. 35 They will say, "This land that was laid waste has become like the garden of Eden; the cities that were lying in ruins, desolate and destroyed, are now fortified and inhabited." 36 Then the nations around you that remain will know that I the LORD have rebuilt what was destroyed and have replanted what was desolate. I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it.' 37 "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Once again I will yield to the plea of the house of Israel and do this for them: I will make their people as numerous as sheep, 38 as numerous as the flocks for offerings at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts. So will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD."
 - ✓ *Ezekiel 37:21* "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land"
 - ✓ *Hosea 3:4, 5* The "wandering Jews" were without a national home for "many days" and it seemed impossible that such prophecies as these could ever be fulfilled. Even many Bible-believing Christians thought for centuries that God was through with Israel and that all the Old Testament promises to Israel should be spiritualized and applied to the church. But now, with the return of the Jews and the re-establishment of their nation, it is evident in a unique way that God's Word means exactly what it says.

7. GOD PROPHISIED HE WOULD MAKE HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY A SOURCE OF FEAR FOR THE WHOLE WORLD WHEN THEY GET BACK TO THE PROMISED LAND IN UNBELIEF

God declared that in the last days before the Messiah's second coming, Jerusalem would become "a cup of trembling...a burdensome stone for all people" At the time Zechariah uttered this prophecy 2500 years ago, Jerusalem lay in ruins and was surrounded by wilderness. And so it remained century after century. Zechariah's prophecy seemed to be utter madness even after Israel's rebirth in 1948. Yet today, exactly as foretold, a world of nearly 6 billion people has its eyes upon Jerusalem, fearful that the next world war, if it breaks out, will be fought over that tiny city. What an incredible fulfillment of prophecy!

- ✓ Zechariah 12:2-3 "I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. 3 On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves.
- ✓ god is at work today in The saga of the jews: The Jews began to return to Palestine in small numbers in the early part of the twentieth century, and then in much larger numbers after World War I and the Balfour Declaration. Jerusalem was still under British rule, however. After World War II, the Israeli nation declared its independence in 1948 and was soon recognized by most of the nations and by the United Nations. The new city of Jerusalem indeed did go back to the Jews at this time. However, the old city, including the all-important temple site on Mount Moriah, remained in the hands of the Jordanian Arabs. In the "six-day war" of 1967, Israel finally recaptured the old city of Jerusalem, and the Israelis insist they will never let it go again. As of Christmas 2000 they have retained possession of all of Jerusalem for thirty-three long years, and there is no indication at all that the Arabs are going to recapture it.
- ✓ could god be waiting for something to happen? Yet, the Lord has not come! The times of the Gentiles are still in full sway, even though Jerusalem has apparently gone back to the Jews. However, there is one exception. This exception makes all the difference and indicates with what fine lines the Holy Spirit inscripturates His Word. Jerusalem is not, in God's judgment, a collection of houses and streets, like other cities. It is a temple where God dwells, where His people approach Him through sacrifice, and where He meets with them.

- god prophesied israel his nation would have a Future agenda in god's plan: In this context, we come to a remarkable prophecy made by Jesus Christ: "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" (Luke 21:24). Since the word "fulfilled" is the same word in the Greek as "finished," this prophecy clearly means that the times of Gentile world-rule will be ended when Jerusalem is no longer under Gentile control. But this can only be accomplished when Christ returns to banish the Gentile nations from Jerusalem and to establish His own world-kingdom capital there. Thus, the restoration of Jerusalem to the chosen people is necessarily accompanied by the coming of their Messiah to reign there. This is also clearly indicated in Zechariah 12-14 as well as other Scriptures. What does God say specifically? This may be one of the most important studies we have ever undertaken, so feel free to trace these points and verses in your Bibles as we go along!
- God has focused on 40 acres of land: As Solomon built the temple (1200x800 foot Temple Mount), God said: "I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there" (2 Chronicles 6:6). But long before this, God had first spoken through Moses: "There shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there, thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD" (Deuteronomy 12:11).
- Where is ground zero: This place was not just any place in Jerusalem; it was an exact spot, chosen by God.
 - ✓ It was on Mount Moriah (2 Chronicles 3:1) Now Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.
 - ✓ the spot which God told David to purchase from Ornan the Jebusite and to set up the altar there (1 Chronicles 21:18) Therefore, the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David that David should go and erect an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.
 - ✓ This was the same spot where Abraham had, almost a thousand years before, prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac (Genesis 22:2) Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

- ✓ These 40 acres are only a short distance from Calvary itself. This spot, to the Jews and to God, is Jerusalem! And, amazingly, this one spot is the only spot in Jerusalem still controlled by Gentiles. It is on Mount Moriah that the Arabs have built their famous Dome-of-the-Rock, the second most holy place in the Muslim world. The Jews, for political or other reasons, have not yet dared to expel the Arabs from this site, raze it, and proceed to rebuild their temple, as they surely desire to do. It is apparently by this exceedingly slender thread, therefore, that the "times of the Gentiles" are still suspended.
- ✓ As the Lord Jesus said, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matthew 5: 18).
- ✓ god declared israel his nation would have a Future agenda in god's plan: In this context, we come to a remarkable prophecy made by Jesus Christ:
- ✓ "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" (Luke 21: 24).
- ✓ Since the word "fulfilled" is the same word in the Greek as "finished," this prophecy clearly means that the times of Gentile world-rule will be ended when Jerusalem is no longer under Gentile control. But this can only be accomplished when Christ returns to banish the Gentile nations from Jerusalem and to establish His own world-kingdom capital there. Thus, the restoration of Jerusalem to the chosen people is necessarily accompanied by the coming of their Messiah to reign there.
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As over two millennia of OT history since Abraham concluded, none of the glorious promises of the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants had been fulfilled in their ultimate sense. Although there had been a few high points in Israel's history, e.g., Joshua, David, and Josiah, the Jews had seemingly lost all opportunity to receive God's favor since less than 100 years after returning from captivity, they had already sunk to a depth of sin that exceeded the former iniquities which brought on the Assyrian and Babylonian deportations. Beyond this, the long anticipated Messiah had not arrived and did not seem to be in sight. When Malachi wrote the capstone prophecy of the Old Testament, he delivered God's message of judgment on Israel for their continuing sin and God's promise that one day in the future,

when the Jews would repent, Messiah would be revealed and God's covenant promises would be fulfilled.