

THE FUTURE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

TEXT: JEREMIAH 23:1-8

INTRODUCTION:

1. Jeremiah chapter 23 begins with a woe pronounced upon the "pastors," that is, the kings of Judah who led the people astray.
2. This refers specifically to the last four kings of Judah: Jehoahaz (Shallum -- 22:11), Jehoiakim (22:18), Jehoiachin (Coniah -- 22:24), and Zedekiah (22:1; cf. 21:1, 3, 7).
3. Instead of feeding the flock, they scattered the flock and drove them away (23:2).
4. After this message of judgment, there is a prophecy regarding the restoration of Israel (23:3).
5. This prophecy looks way beyond the return from Babylon after the 70-year captivity. It goes beyond that to the future restoration of Israel.
6. The *Scofield Study Bible* says, "The restoration here foretold is not to be confounded with the return of a feeble remnant of Judah under Ezra, Nehemiah, and Zerubbabel at the end of the 70 years (Jer. 29:10). At His first advent Christ, David's righteous Branch (Luke 1:31-33), did not "execute justice and judgment in the earth," but was crowned with thorns and crucified. Neither was Israel the nation restored, nor did the Jewish people say, "The Lord our righteousness." Cf. Romans 10:3. The prophecy is yet to be fulfilled (Acts 15:14-17).
7. Jeremiah and the other Old Testament prophets prophesied of the future restoration and conversion of Israel.
8. In 1948 the modern state of Israel was born, and it has been in the spotlight ever since.
9. It was reported in yesterday's *New York Post* that Henry Kissinger, who was the Secretary of State of the United States from 1973 to 1977, recently said, "In ten years, there will be no more Israel."
10. Mr. Kissinger may be a brilliant man but he certainly does not understand the Bible (cf. Jer. 31:31-37).
11. The modern state of Israel is a partial fulfillment of Bible prophecies, which predict a regathering of the Jews in unbelief before the judgment of the tribulation.
12. John Walvoord says, "Of the many peculiar phenomena which characterize the present generation, few events can claim equal significance as far as Biblical prophecy is concerned with that of the return of Israel to their land. It constitutes a preparation for the end of

- the age, the setting for the coming of the Lord for His church, and the fulfillment of Israel's prophetic destiny" (*Israel in Prophecy*).
13. Thomas Ice says, "Modern Israel is the result of God's direct intervention in history. I believe that those who speak contrary to this will be found to be fighting God" ("Is Modern Israel Fulfilling Prophecy?" <http://www.pre-trib.org>).

I. THE FUTURE MESSIANIC KINGDOM OF ISRAEL (23:5)

1. In contrast to the unrighteous kings described in Jeremiah chapter 22, King Jesus "shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (23:5).
2. His reign will be a "righteous" reign (23:5, 6).
3. The term "righteous Branch" (23:5) is a Messianic term which refers specifically to the Messiah's position as King of kings during the millennial kingdom (cf. Jeremiah 33:14-17).
4. Isaiah 4:2 says, "In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel."
5. Isaiah 11:1 says, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots."
6. Zechariah 3:8 says, "Behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH."
7. Zechariah 6:12 says, "Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD."
8. Jeremiah and the other prophets taught that the Messiah will sit on the throne of David (23:5).
9. Isaiah 9:7 says, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (cf. Luke 1:30-33).
10. Just last night while driving in my car, I heard a talk radio host say there never will be peace on earth and good will toward men. Sadly, he does not know the Bible!

II. THE FUTURE CONVERSION OF ISRAEL (23:6)

1. Jeremiah 23:5 and 6 have not been fulfilled, and can only be fulfilled at the second coming of Christ. Then, and only then, "Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely."

2. Romans 11:26 says, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

III. THE FUTURE REGATHERING OF ISRAEL (23:7, 8)

1. The Bible clearly teaches the restoration of Israel -- "they shall dwell in their own land" (23:8b).
2. The Bible clearly teaches the regathering of Israel (cf. Jer. 16:14, 15).
3. The LORD warned the nation Israel back in Deuteronomy 28:64 (and in other Scriptures) that He would scatter them among all the nations, "from the one end of the earth even unto the other."
4. And the LORD also told them that a remnant would return to the land. The word "remnant" is used nineteen times by Jeremiah (23:3).
5. A remnant did return to Judah after the 70-year Babylonian captivity, and the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi give us many of the details.
6. But Jeremiah and the other prophets prophesied of a greater regathering at the second coming of Christ (23:5-8).
7. Warren Wiersbe says, "The return of the Jews to their land after the Captivity was but a foreshadowing of the great worldwide regathering that will occur in the last days when 'He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other' (Matthew 24:31)" (*The Bible Exposition Commentary*).
8. Ezekiel 36:24 says, "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land."
9. Ezekiel 37:21 and 22 says, "And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; 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: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all."
10. Zechariah 13:1 says, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness."

CONCLUSION:

1. Every year Jews celebrate the passover, their deliverance out of Egypt.
2. But here in Jeremiah 23:7, 8, the LORD says their future deliverance will be far more wonderful.