

## “BE NOT IGNORANT OF THIS MYSTERY . . . ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED” — ROMANS 11:25, 26

This year marks the 70th Anniversary of Israel’s miraculous rebirth as a Nation! Never before has a nation been dead for nearly two thousand years and then been restored to life again in accordance with prophecies written over 3,500 years before. Yet our generation has witnessed this astounding fact. Only God could accomplish such an amazing work. Formed by the united strength of a people blessed by God, Israel is the only nation with a complete record of its past, an accurate prophetic portrayal of its present, and a complete description of its destiny.

Today this tiny country is the only stable democratic nation in the Middle East. To maintain its precarious existence it must remain constantly on the alert for terrorism, military attacks, political hostility and even intense criticism from its own people. The United States, the first country to acknowledge Israel’s existence as a Nation, is oftentimes vague and fickle in its support.

As a people, the Jews have suffered and endured greatly for millennia; yet viewed from the standpoint of God’s purpose for His *chosen* people, they have been extremely favored. (Amos 3:2) God’s remarkable kindness toward them cannot be fully appreciated except by examining the prophetic panorama of Israel’s birth, growth, decline, fall, exile, return, and their ultimate role in God’s Divine Plan of the Ages.

### THE BIRTH OF ONE NATION UNDER GOD

Israel’s birth as a Nation began nearly 4,000 years ago. Because of Abraham’s great faith, God blessed him with an oath-bound covenant: “I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, AND as the sand which is upon the sea shore... And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed...” (Genesis 22:17, 18) Then, because of their faith, this covenant passed to Abraham’s son Isaac and on to Isaac’s son Jacob. God recognized Jacob’s faith by changing his name to *Israel* — meaning *Prince of Jehovah*. (Genesis 32:28) At Israel’s death, his twelve sons inherited the covenant given to Abraham, but these *twelve tribes of Israel* could not then see the depth of meaning in this incredible covenant given to their great grandfather.

Within this Abrahamic Covenant, God mapped out his plan, not only for Israel, but for the entire world of mankind. *Stars* in this promise refer to the *heavenly, spiritual seed* of Abraham — and *sand*, by implication, represents Abraham’s *earthly seed, natural Israel*. (Galatians Chapters

3 & 4) Abraham’s *natural seed* — *sand upon the seashore* — is the regathered Nation of Israel, selected long ago by God to be the channel of blessings which will flow through Israel to the rest of the world.

The *heavenly seed* alluded to metaphorically in God’s promise as the *stars of heaven* are comprised of Christ and his Church — faithful Christians whom God has been selecting and developing for the last 2,000 years. (1 Corinthians 15:40, 41) The *heavenly* and *earthly seed* together will bring the blessings of health, happiness and perfection of life to the remainder of God’s human family. God’s promise to Abraham has been in process and WILL fully be accomplished, in due time.



### DOES THIS MEAN THAT THE JEWS WILL RECOGNIZE JESUS AS THEIR MESSIAH?

Many Christians cannot understand why the Jews ever rejected Jesus as their Messiah. At Jesus’ first advent, the Nation of Israel was under the dominion of the Roman government. The Jews fully expected their Messiah would come as a mighty warrior, like King David, and would bring them the victory over their Roman yoke. They did not consider the prophetic description of their Messiah which portrayed him as a meek and lowly

peacemaker who would give his life as “*an offering for sin.*” Isaiah 53:10

Another important consideration which caused the Nation to stumble was that the religious rulers were jealous of Jesus’ popularity among the people. They sought every opportunity to make him look ignorant of the Law and the Prophets. They blinded the minds of those who were not *Israelites indeed*. (John 1:47) Because Israel as a Nation trusted in their religious rulers and not in God’s holy prophets, Jesus said: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee... Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” (Matthew 23:37, 38) By the end of Jesus’ earthly ministry, the chief priests had caused the multitudes of the Nation to cry out, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” — “...his blood be on us, and on our children.” (Mark 15:11-14; Matthew 27:25) Oh, what a terrible curse they brought upon themselves as a Nation. Even to this day, the Jews can only escape this curse and the curse of the Law by having the merit of Christ’s blood applied to them.

Because of Jesus’ pronouncement of desolation upon the Nation, many Christians have the idea that Israel lost its *chosen* status when they, as a Nation, did not accept him as their Messiah. But God foreknew this long



before it happened and did not allow this failure to debar the natural seed of Abraham from God's covenant. The Apostle makes clear the fact that, although the majority of the Jewish Nation lost a *spiritual* privilege 2,000 years ago, the *earthly* promise still belongs to them. (Romans 11) It will be the Nation of Israel, through their resurrected prophets of old, which will be the instrumentality to fulfill the promise to bless all the families of the earth. "And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning; after that shalt thou be called, The city of righteousness, the town that is faithful." Isaiah 1:26

Because we have faith in the fulfillment of all God's prophecies, we can also have faith that the Nation of Israel will one day embrace Jesus as their Messiah. The restoration of the Jews to the Holy Land and the establishment of a successful, democratic Nation, after 2,000 years of oppression and exile, is a clear sign that God's Word in prophecy can be trusted.

#### "AND SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED"

Notice that even though the Nation of Israel was rejected, there were individuals who accepted and followed Jesus as their Messiah. In fact, the Apostles and the early disciples were all Jewish. It was not until three and a half years after Jesus' death that *the way* was opened up to the Gentiles (heathen) to receive Jesus as their savior. (Matthew 15:24; Acts 10:1-

35) Therefore, the desolation Jesus pronounced before his crucifixion was upon the **Nation** of Israel, and not upon **individual** Jews. Hear Jesus' own words following his pronouncement of desolation upon the Hebrew Nation: "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matthew 23:39) This was a vague prophecy upon which the Apostle Paul provided more details in Romans 11. Verses 1 and 2 start out: "Hath God cast away His people? God forbid... God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew."

The Apostle goes on to clarify the salvation of the Nation of Israel as a "mystery" to all except to those who have sincere faith in God's promises. "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this **mystery**, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, **until** the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 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: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Romans 11:25-29) What God has promised He will accomplish! (Isaiah 55:11) "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" Romans 11:15

To understand the full meaning of the Apostle Paul's explanation of God's merciful plan, it is necessary to return to the promise God gave to Abraham: "in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed..." (Genesis 22:18) In Romans 11, Paul relates this covenant to an *olive tree* which had been cut down. As stated, at Jesus' first advent, all but a small *remnant* of Jews had rejected Jesus. Having been blinded by their religious leaders, the Nation of Israel as a whole lost the first opportunity of receiving the privilege of coming into Christ as the *spiritual seed* — the *stars of heaven*. The olive tree was cut down, but natural branches were allowed to be grafted in. Because the Nation was cast off, the opportunity was then opened to Gentile believers to share with Christ in being part of

the Abrahamic *heavenly seed* of promise. These Gentiles are described as being *grafted in* to the original Abrahamic promise. These wild branches (Gentile converts) have now been in the process of being grafted into the olive tree for nearly 2,000 years. These constitute Jesus' Church who, along with him, will play a major role as the *heavenly seed* in blessing all the families of the earth. But there is a limit to the number of these wild olive branches — a "fulness of the Gentiles." When this set number comes in, when the Church of Christ is complete, then the prophecy tells us that Israel's "blindness in part" will be removed, and they will begin to recognize their Messiah. Once the body of Christ — his bride — is complete, "ALL Israel shall be saved" — ALL twelve tribes of the earthly seed.



#### A DELIVERER SHALL TAKE AWAY ISRAEL'S SINS

Now notice what Paul says in verse 26 — *there shall come a deliverer out of Zion*. Who is that deliverer? It is Christ, but not Jesus alone. Jesus shall come with his Church, his body members. *Coming out of Zion* has the thought that they are in the spirit realm — Mount Zion is higher than the natural city of Jerusalem. This *deliverer* is going to save Israel from the sins that they have inherited from father Adam and the sin of their Nation under the Law Covenant. Hebrews 12:22

In verse 27 Paul states, "for this is my covenant unto them, when I take away their

sins." This indicates that there is going to be a different, a *New Covenant* for Israel in the future. This New Covenant will be an earthly covenant arrangement for the Nation of Israel and all those who will come to God through them. "I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them... I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jeremiah 31:31-34) As Christians, we have a separate covenant with God. We have a Grace Covenant — a covenant of sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5) Christians enjoy the privilege now of sacrificing with Jesus in order to gain the opportunity to work with Jesus in the future — to bless Israel and, through Israel, to bless all people, as was promised to father Abraham.

Although the Jewish Nation lost the opportunity to be part of Christ's Church, those same Jews will each have a future opportunity to be blessed with life here on the earth. And so, in verse 32, Paul says that now, "God has concluded them all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all."

#### ISRAEL IS GOD'S PROPHETIC TIME CLOCK

What Christians should be looking for at the time of Jesus' second advent are prophetic events in preparation to receive Israel back into **full** favor with God again. And do we not see this happening in the tiny Nation of Israel today? As we trace the prophecies of Israel's rebirth, we find that Israel became a Nation again not by mere chance, but by the direct overruling providence of God. Jeremiah prophesied of the diaspora (dispersion) of Israel throughout the world which began to happen in A.D. 70. "Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not shew you favour." But now we see the reverse of this happening throughout the world! "...it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD

*liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.”* Jeremiah 16:13-15

Ever since the world entered into the period marked out as *the time of the end*, we find things moving along in Israel at an almost hectic pace. (Daniel 12:1-4) Jews from all over the world began to gather in the Holy Land in 1878. *The Balfour Declaration* opened up the way for Jews to legally claim their homeland in 1917. In 1948, as a result of Arab nations coming against Israel, a tiny ragtag army of faithful Jews took back their homeland, and Israel became a Nation among the nations! In 1967, when the Nation again was challenged by all of the surrounding Arab armies, Israel recaptured the city of Jerusalem! Jews no longer need wail at the Western Wall of the Old City, *“Next year in Jerusalem!”* — for that time is now! This year, the United States government boldly implemented what it had mandated years ago, that Jerusalem is Israel’s capital. The U.S. Embassy was officially moved into Jerusalem from Tel Aviv, and other nations are now beginning to follow suit. See Zechariah Chapter 12.

As God’s prophetic time clock continues to progress, conflicts will continue to arise against Israel. *“Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them.”* (Jeremiah 16:15,

16) The *“fishing”* that Jeremiah spoke of was the early Zionist Movement, while the *“hunting”* was the persecuting forces throughout the world that led the Jews to face their need of returning to the Holy Land. While Zionism continues to lure Jews to return home, the blights of persecution are forceful reminders that the Jews are *strangers in a foreign land*.

Arab nations are not the only enemies of Israel. *“...in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.”* (Zechariah 12:3) The Lord is going to make Jerusalem a *burden* to all those nations who try to have control of Jerusalem. Israel is God’s Land and He gave it to the Jewish people!

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Zechariah all refer to a final attack on Israel — *Jacob’s Trouble*. Take note of three facts: (1) Israel will be attacked; (2) the attacking people will be destroyed; and (3) Israel will be saved. (Jeremiah 30:7-15; Zechariah 12:3, 9 & 14:1-3; Ezekiel 38:16 & 39:21-29) It will be in the midst of *Jacob’s Trouble* that, on bended knee, Jewish men and women of faith will, in essence, pray, *“Lord, save us for thy sake and for the Land’s sake.”* In that prayer of humility they shall see the mighty hand of their Messiah fighting their battle for them, and *“they shall look upon me whom they’ve pierced and they shall mourn for him as one who mourns for his only son and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first born.”* (Zechariah 12:10) This is the psychological moment when the Jews of faith will accept Jesus as their Messiah, even though it will cause much pain to their hearts to realize that all these centuries ago they had crucified the very one that had been sent to save them.

#### ISRAEL: AN INSTRUMENT OF GOD’S BLESSING TO THE WORLD

Once Israel as a Nation, through their prophets of old, accept the Messiah, then he will use them as an instrument of his blessing to heal the world. In preparation for this role as a channel of blessing to the world, Israel is currently being transformed from a parched wilderness into a prolific farmland. This is just the beginning of blessings which were prophesied to

come out of Israel to the entire world! Today, we see the once desert land of Israel blossoming as a rose. When Zionism began, the land could not provide food sufficient to feed its then sparse population. Now, with the population redoubled many times over, its production of citrus and other agricultural products not only satisfies its own needs, but is a major export throughout the world. The Scriptures assure us that this blessing will spread worldwide until the entire earth becomes a veritable Garden of Eden.

Blessing all the families of the earth is still future, and yet, Israel desires to bless the world even now! In June, the Israeli government reached out to Iran to help them solve their water crisis. According to Iran’s meteorological organization 95% of Iran suffers from severe drought, and Iranian farmers are unable to sustain their crops. Israel’s cutting edge technology recycles nearly 90% of its waste water, and drip irrigation targets individual plants with exactly the nutrients they need for crops. Unfortunately, Iran bans Israelis from reaching the farmers with the education they need to save their crops, and so, Israel launched a Farsi language website with free detailed plans on how Iranians can recycle their waste water and use drip irrigation techniques. While the Iranian regime shouts, *“Death to Israel!”* Israel shouts, *“Life to the Iranian people!”* Yes, Israel desires to bless all the world even now — even its enemies!



Israel truly is *God’s time clock*, and because we have witnessed the many miracles surrounding the Jews in their homeland, we can trust that Isaiah’s prophecy in Chapter 35 will fully come to pass in the near future! *“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose... Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing... And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”*

It will be in this Kingdom of God that those Jews who become *Israelites indeed*, will play a prominent part in the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise. Jerusalem will become the capital of the world: *“And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ...and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”* Isaiah 2:3, 4

What a prospect! Through Israel and her restored prophets and ancient fathers, God will restore the entire world as they humble themselves and seek guidance from His chosen people: *“Many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.”* Zechariah 8:21-23

With Jerusalem the seat of government, Israel will teach and bless all the families of earth. Eventually all who will be rightly exercised will become Israelites themselves. Having God’s Law written in their hearts, they will go on to live everlastingly in His Kingdom of perfection. What a grand and glorious privilege thus awaits Israelites who will cling to the promises of God as *His Chosen People!* Ezekiel 20:33-38; 39:21, 22; Hosea 5:15; Jeremiah 33:6-9



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