

Is God Finished with Israel?

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Acts 15:13-17; Romans 11:25-31

INTRODUCTION: Is God forever finished with Israel as a nation? Some say He is; others say He is not. Who is correct?

Note: Generally speaking, the a-millennialist says He is. According to his view, God rejected Israel when Israel rejected Christ; Thus, He turned to the church. The church is now Israel, and the promises made to Israel are fulfilled in the church.

1. James declared God is not finished with Israel, Acts 15:13-17. These words are his interpretation of Amos 9:8-12.

(1) God will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob. Is the church ever called the "house of Jacob"?

(2) The tabernacle of David is said to be fallen down. Can it ever be said that the spiritual throne of Christ is fallen down?

2. Paul concurred God is not finished with Israel, Romans 11:25-31. His interpretation is in harmony with that of James.

(1) Israel was blinded for a time that the full number of God's elect among the Gentiles might be brought in, Cf. Romans 11:10, 11. God is now taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name. This work will end when the full number is brought in; hence, the phrase "the fullness of the Gentiles" Cf. Luke 21:24, "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.”

(2) All Israel then shall be saved. “And so (houtu, thus, in this manner) in V. 25 references the preceding statements in Vs. 12, 15, 23, 24.

Note: These inspired N. T. interpretations of the O.T. Scriptures show us God is not forever finished with Israel as a nation. These interpretations, then, must guide us in our interpretation of other O. T. prophecies.

PROPOSITION: GOD IS NOT FINISHED WITH ISRAEL!

FOUR REASONS WHY HE IS NOT FINISHED WITH THIS NATION:

I. GOD IS NOT FINISHED WITH ISRAEL BECAUSE OF THE PROMISE HE MADE TO ABRAHAM.

1. The aspects of the promise, Cf. Genesis 12:1-3. Everything promised must be given.

(1) The land. Time and again God’s promise to Abraham linked with “the land.”

(2) The nation. Only one nation is ever in view in this promise; the church is not a nation in a literal sense, Cf. 1 Peter 2:9, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”

(3) The blessings. Five blessings are enumerated here.

2. The specificity of the promise, Cf. Genesis 15:1-5, 18-21. The land is geographically identified.

(1) Israel has never possessed all this land. What Israel inherited under Joshua and what they have today is much smaller than what God promised.

(2) Israel must have all this land someday, or Moses will be proved a false prophet, Cf. Deuteronomy 18:22, "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him." The marvel of all true prophecy is the specificity of it. Cf. Ezekiel 26:3-5, "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD: and it shall become a spoil to the nations." The specific details of the prophecy concerning Tyre are similar to that concerning Israel and the land it is inherit. We must not minimize the details of prophecy.

Note: It is difficult to spiritualize the land. The land is physical.

II. GOD IS NOT FINISHED WITH ISRAEL BECAUSE ISRAEL HAS NEVER POSSESSED ALL THE LAND GOD PROMISED THEM.

1. The first land promised to Israel that of Canaan, Cf. Genesis 12:1, 4-7; 15:16; Exodus 3:8, "And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites." The twelve spies sent only to this land, Cf. Numbers 13:17, "And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain:"

2. The land inhabited by Israel enlarged at the request of two and one-half tribes, Cf. Numbers 32:5, 33-42. Why did God give permission for this extension to the promised land? Was it not because this area was included in the all the land God had promised to Israel?

3. The Six Cities of Refuge limited to the land divided to Israel by Joshua, Cf. Numbers 35:9-15; Joshua 20:7-9. If Israel inherited land all the way to the Euphrates River, why were there no cities of refuge set aside in that area?

Note: What about Joshua 21:45? "There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." Does the all that came to pass refer to the land of Canaan or all the land promised in Genesis 15:18? The Book of Judges reveals Israel had not even occupied all of Canaan during the life of Joshua, Cf. Judges 1:19-36.

Note: What about 1 Kings 4:21? "And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life." Reigning temporarily over other nations is not the same as possessing the land as one's own. Cf. Genesis 15:18, "In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy

seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:" Deuteronomy 11:24, "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be." Deuteronomy 11:31, "For ye shall pass over Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein." Deuteronomy 12:10, "But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety;"

III. GOD IS NOT FINISHED WITH ISRAEL BECAUSE OF THE COVENANT HE MADE WITH ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB,

Cf. Ezekiel 16:60, "Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant."

1. A confirmed covenant cannot be disannulled or made void, Cf. Galatians 3:15-17, "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." God cannot promise to do something He will not do.

2. A broken covenant would reflect against God. Therefore, He keeps His covenant with Israel for His name's sake, Cf. Ezekiel 36:21, 22, "But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went. Therefore say unto

the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went."

Note: Nothing Israel ever did in all their history disannulled God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This covenant typifies His everlasting covenant with His Son, Cf. Hebrews 13:20, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant," If one of God's covenants could be broken due to human sin, what would prevent another from being broken for the same reason? Cf. Jeremiah 33:20, 21, "Thus saith the Lord, If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers."

IV. GOD IS NOT FINISHED WITH ISRAEL BECAUSE HE WILL YET REGATHER THEM INTO THEIR LAND.

1. He will gather them out of all countries, Cf. Deuteronomy 30:4, 5, "If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." Ezekiel 20:34, "And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out." Ezekiel 20:42, "And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers." The re-gathering of the Jews into their land following the Babylonian exile was only from Babylon, Ezra 2:1, "Now these are the

children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city;"

2. He will give them all the land promised to Abraham, Cf. Ezekiel 48:1-35. That land reaches from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River.

Note: Israel will not be given all this land until God re-gathers them into it. Then the prophecy of Ezekiel 47:10 will be fulfilled. "And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi even unto Eneglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many."

Note: What has the church to do with land? This world is not the church's home. The church has never been promised it would receive a certain piece of land.

CONCLUSION: GOD IS NOT FINISHED WITH ISRAEL AS A NATION.

1. This fact clearly demonstrated from both O.T. and N.T. Scriptures. This truth takes nothing away from the church or Gentile believers.

2. This fact gives us great confidence for the future. The greatest revival ever known to man awaits both Jews and Gentiles, Cf. Romans 11:12, 15, 30-36.

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