

Isaiah's Little Apocalypse

Part II

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(Continued from the last issue)

Introductory Recap

In the previous issue, I pointed out that the 24th through the 27th chapters of Isaiah have been called "Isaiah's Little Apocalypse" for several reasons; mainly, because Apocalypse ("**The apocalypse** [**Ἀποκαλυψις** apokalupsis **of Jesus Christ**"), which literally means *unveiling* or *revealing*, is the real name of the book of Revelation, and in Isaiah, chapters 24 through 27, the prophet addresses many of the events contained in the Revelation. In the last issue we addressed three of those events:

- 1. World-wide judgments** in the last days
- 2. Anticipation of Christ's kingdom on earth**
- 3. The restoration of Judah**

In this issue we propose to address the following events associated with the apocalypse as Isaiah foretells in these chapters:

- 4. The [first] resurrection**
- 5. Armageddon**
- 6. Restoration of Israel**

We continue with the fourth point:

4. The [first] resurrection:

(25.8) *He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe*

*away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away **from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it.***

This, Paul gives us to know, is the resurrection of the Saints at Christ's coming. He quotes this much of Isaiah 25.8, "*He will swallow up death in victory*" in 1 Corinthians 15.54: "...then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Paul says that, for now, it is only a "saying that is written" (in Isaiah 25.8!); when it is fulfilled it will no longer be just a saying. It will be the resurrection and glorification of God's people: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:51-53)."

In Revelation 21.4, the apostle John quotes the second part of this verse, *the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces*, applying it to the eternal state after the great white throne judgment: "**And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes**; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." He anticipates this in Revelation 7.17, where he describes "...they which came out of **the great tribulation**, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

An objector says, "The Bible never says `THE' great tribulation. 'THE' is not in there."

Reply: Yes, it does say **THE** in the original, and that is what counts. The definite article is actually in the original Greek twice: once "**the** tribulation," and once "**the** great [one]." Kenneth Wuest, one of the best Greek scholars of the twentieth century, in his *The New Testament, An Expanded Translation*, 1961, renders this phrase as "**the tribulation, the great one**," contrasting this specific "**the great tribulation**" with any other

tribulation anyone will ever endure.

Of "they which came out of **the great tribulation**" John says in Revelation 7.17, "...God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," again referring to Isaiah 25.8. Before it is over, saints will have reason enough to cry, for many of them and their loved ones will suffer martyrdom: "And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled (Revelation 6:11). " "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations (Revelation 13:7)." " ...the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; **Until** the Ancient of days came, and **judgment was given to the saints** of the most High; and **the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom** (Daniel 7:21f)." The Beast will prevail against the saints UNTIL:

(a) **the Ancient of days** (Christ Jesus the Lord) came (Christ's second advent);

(b) **judgment was given to the saints** of the most High (granting the saints to rule and reign with Christ); and

(c) **the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom** ("those that wait upon the LORD. they shall inherit the earth...the meek shall inherit the earth... The righteous shall inherit the land. and dwell therein for ever...he shall exalt thee to inherit the land (Psalm 37.9, 11, 29, 34; Matthew 5.5)."

(19) *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.* God's dead men shall live, not merely "spiritually," but physically. The resurrection will be that of literal, physical bodies. Isaiah knew this would be long after he himself had died. *"together*

with my dead body shall they arise." The body dies, and the body will rise. Isaiah's including himself in the resurrection effectively tells us the Old Testament saints will be included in the first resurrection.

Job knew all these things and looked forward to Christ's second coming: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that **He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth**: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, **yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another**; though my reins be consumed within me (Job 19:25-27)."

So far from the earth's trying to retain its death-grip on the Lord's long-buried saints, it will do the exact opposite: "*The earth shall cast out the dead.*"

Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast (26.19f). At the time of the resurrection of the saints, they are invited into the bridal chambers (Hebrew, *cheder*—apartments) to wait for their beloved spouse, the Lord Jesus Christ, while He takes care of some heretofore unfinished business: **Armageddon**. Then, in these "thy chambers," they will find out exactly what the Lord meant when He said, "In my Father's house are many *mansions*: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a *place* for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (John 14:2-3)."

What Christ is telling His people in verse 20, if we may paraphrase His proclamation to His bride, is: *You wait here, my dear, I have something to do. It will only take a moment.* It's called "**Armageddon**" and the binding of Satan. I won't be gone long. I'll be right back.

5. Armageddon: God's Indignation

These texts do not merely describe local Old Testament events of Isaiah's day; they are worldwide in scope, describing the Lord God's final judgment on a rebellious world. **The Lord's indignation** of verse 20 is described in Isaiah, chapter 34, which is world-wide: "Come near, ye **nations**, to hear; and hearken, ye **people(s)**: let the **earth** hear, and all that is therein; the **world**, and **all things** that come forth of it. For the **indignation** of the LORD is upon **all nations**, and *his* fury upon **all their armies**: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling *fig* from the fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. (34.1ff)." This is not merely describing the local tribes around the land of Israel in Isaiah's day. See other parallel passages; for instance:

(a) Jeremiah 10.10: "But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath **the earth** shall tremble, and **the nations** shall not be able to abide his **indignation**."

(b) Daniel 11.36: "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the **indignation** be accomplished: for **that that is determined shall be done**." [*That is, this is all part of God's predestinated purpose.*]

(c) "The **mountains** quake at Him, and the **hills** melt, and the **earth** is burned at His presence, yea, the **world**, and **all that dwell therein**. **Who can stand before His indignation?** and who can abide in the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by

Him (Nahum 1:5-6)."

(d) Zephaniah 3.8; "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for **my determination is** [*i.e., it is predestinated, fixed, by God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge, Acts 2.23, Ephesians 1.11*] to gather the **nations**, that I may assemble **the kingdoms**, to pour upon them mine **indignation**, even all my fierce anger: for **all the earth** shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy."

(e) Revelation 14.9-19: "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his **indignation**; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. **Here is the patience of the saints**: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, **Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth** [these are evidently the tribulation martyrs who will die rather than worship the beast; see Daniel 7.21-15, Revelation 13.7-15]; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them...Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped...And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God."

All these Scriptures lead us to:

**Where is "THE Place" of
Christ the Lord?**

Nowhere is His place more clearly set forth than in **Hosea 5.14 to 6.3**. The Scriptures develop the whys, the hows, the whens, and the wheres. The Lord Jesus Christ has

A. **His place**, as **GOD THE SON**, which is presently at the right hand of the Majesty on high:

1. "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Hebrews 1:3)."

2. "We have such an high priest, who is set on **the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens** (Hebrews 8.1)."

3. "To him that overcometh will I grant [in the future] to sit with me in **MY throne** [no saint will ever sit on God the Father's throne!], even as I also overcame, and am [at present, presently, now] set down with my Father in His throne (Revelation 3:21)."

The parallel is straightforward: the Father has His throne. The Son NOW sits on the Father's throne at His right hand. In the FUTURE, the Son WILL occupy His own throne, the throne of David as King of the Jews, no longer on the Father's throne; and His saints will sit at His right hand on His throne, even as He presently sits at His Father's right hand.

4. He is presently seated on His Father's throne, NOT His own throne:

(a) He is now in **His place** for a set or fixed time, which is at the

Father's right hand until He grants repentance to Israel and the acknowledging of the truth: "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for **to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins** (Acts 5:30f)."

(1) This is not "*spiritual Israel*," a term that occurs nowhere in the Bible. It is really, truly, literal, national **Israel**.

(2) This is not the "gospel church" among the Gentiles, which fact is covered well enough in Acts 11.18: "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God **also** to the **Gentiles** [as contrasted to **Israel**, 5.30f] granted repentance unto life." Acts 5.30-31 refers to literal **Israel**.

(3) He has not yet granted repentance to Israel, but He will.

B. After His resurrection **He returned to His place**: "I will go and **return to my place...**" (Hosea 5.15). It would not be said that He would *return* to His place had He not first *left from* His place. His sojourn on earth as the God-man, the son of David, the son of Abraham, the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, from the time of His virgin birth until His ascension (Acts 1.9-11) is alluded to by Christ's statement in Hosea, (1) I will **GO** [to earth] and (2) **RETURN** [to my place at the Father's right hand].

C. He returned to His place **TILL** something: "I will go and return to my place, **till** they [Israel] acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early (Hosea 5:15)."

Note: It is "their offence," singular, and not "their offences" or sins, plural. Their one offence is that they did not believe their king and Messiah, but delivered Him to the Roman authorities to torture and kill by crucifixion.

Israel will never **acknowledge** their offence without God's **giving** them **repentance** to the **acknowledging** of the **truth**: "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will **give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth** (2 Timothy 2:25)."

Israel's conversion will not come by man's instructing Israel; God Himself will take care of that! See John 6.45: "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of [from] God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of [from] the Father, cometh unto me." This is **of**, or **from** God, and not merely being taught *about* God. This is in the genitive case; God is the source of the teaching. He does not *try* to teach anyone. HE effectually teaches whom He will, whenever He wills, in His own good time and not before, whatever He would have them to know.

And what is "the truth" Israel will acknowledge? That "Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"; Jesus Christ who said, "I AM THE WAY, **THE TRUTH**, AND THE LIFE: no man cometh to the Father but by ME (John 14.6)."

Continuing in Hosea: "...**till** they [Israel] acknowledge their offence, **and seek my face** (Hosea 5.15)": In nature, "There is none that understandeth, there is none that **seeketh** after God (Romans 3:11)." In grace, however, the Psalmist said, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek (Psalm 27:8)." Oh, the wonders of free, sovereign, irresistible grace!

D. Facing what seems to be imminent destruction at the hands of Satan, the Beast, and the False Prophet (and probably Iran, Syria, Russia, and their allies), **this is the time of Jacob's trouble**, which will drive Israel, in their desperation, to acknowledge their Messiah, Jesus, as Lord and cry out to Him: "...in their affliction they will seek me early (Hosea 5:15)." "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it (Jeremiah 30:7)." "For,

behold, the LORD cometh forth out of **his place**, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth (Micah 1:3)."

Hosea continues in chapter 6 with Israel's desperate words of petition to the Lord:

"Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight." Here they acknowledge it is Jehovah who has torn them (5.14), and it is He who will heal them. Note carefully, at that time they will say, "After two days will He revive us." Those two days are not Monday and Tuesday or Saturday and Sunday. **Israel** *has always been aware* of what Peter said when he restated the wisdom of the Ancients: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day (2 Peter 3:8)." Ever since Genesis 1.1 was given to **Israel** in **seven Hebrew words**, **Israel** has known that those seven words represent the seven thousand years from Adam until the consummation of all timely things as we know them, followed by entrance into the eternal state. At the time depicted in Hosea 6, they will recognize that after "two days" (the two thousand years of the "church age") Jehovah will once more revive **Israel**.

Note carefully what follows in verse 3, and note that in the King James Version (KJV) the word **if** is in italics. In the KJV, italics mean the word so marked is a word supplied by the translators because they thought it would help our understanding of the text. A supplied word is not justified in the original text. That being the case, first read the text as it is in the KJV:

"Then shall we know, *if* we follow on to know the LORD: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth (Hosea 6:1-3)." Read it again omitting the supplied word: "**Then shall we know we follow on to know**

the LORD...."

Israel will then be restored, saved with an everlasting salvation, their darkness and fears banished forever in the light of their Lord, Messiah, God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **Jehovah** manifest in the flesh.

Let us now return to Isaiah 26.21:

The earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain: This is the day of recompense to a wicked world that hates the Lord's people as much as they hate God Himself. From the blood of righteous Abel to the last martyr Satan can kill, compensation is coming, both to the ungodly and to the justified saints; but it will be compensation of a wholly different sort: "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to **recompense tribulation** to them that trouble you; And [the parallel construction is implies: *God will **recompense] to you** who are troubled **rest** with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power (2 Thessalonians 1:6-9)."*

(Isaiah 27.1) *In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.*

In that day specifically refers to the war of Armageddon, which will be over in a few minutes, or a few hours, or at most a day (Christ in Isaiah 26 calls it "a small moment")—hence it is called **the day of the Lord**.

More generally, **in that day** refers to the times surrounding Armageddon, either the events leading up to that war or following it. The context usually makes plain exactly what is under consideration. This text (Isaiah 26.19 through 27.1) can be identified with the description of

Armageddon and what immediately follows, as is described in Revelation 19.11 through chapter 20.3.

*The **indignation**...the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity (Isaiah 26.21): "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse: and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war...And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God...And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. (Revelation 19:11-21)."*

Where Eagles Are Gathered

A few comments about two New Testament verses would be appropriate here. These verses are:

(a) "For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together (Matthew 24:28), " and

(b) "And they answered and said unto him, `Where, Lord?' And he said unto them, `Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together (Luke 17:37)."

Perhaps these two verses have been abused as much as any other verse in the Bible. They have been applied to everything from the Roman legions surrounding Jerusalem at its destruction in AD 70 (because their banners had eagles upon them), to the carcass or body being that of Christ and the eagles being His people who *spiritually* feed on Him (John 6.32-58). Oh, the lengths to which people will go to avoid the truth of a text. Those ideas might give us some makeshift applications, but they have nothing whatever to do with interpreting what the texts say and mean.

(a) **Matthew 24.28** is part of Christ's answer to the questions about the signs of His coming at the end of the age, and not the coming of the Romans in the first century. Verse 27, immediately preceding this verse, says, "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; **so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**" The eagles are neither the golden eagle nor the American bald eagle, but men who should know say these are unclean birds that feed on carcasses. These are not God's children (who are likened to doves, not vultures), feeding on their Savior's dead body, which is NOT DEAD ANY MORE! These are unclean fowls, gathered to a battlefield to feed on the slain soldiers: "Her [the mother "eagle"] young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain are [the slain in battle], there is she (Job 39:27-30)."

(b) Likewise, **Luke 17.37** is part of another one of Christ's extended discourses on **His second coming**. He likens His return to the flood of Noah's day, which destroyed all the unbelievers: "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also **in the days of the Son of man** (verse 26)"; and the destruction of Sodom, "...it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and **destroyed them all** (verse 29)," Lot and his family being the only exceptions.

Neither of these passages has anything to do with either the Roman legions destroying Jerusalem or the saints' spiritually feeding on Christ. That may make for plausible although stretched *applications*, but it is faulty *interpretation*, since interpretations of verses must be sustained by their contexts. The "eagles" are, in reality, the carnivorous birds of prey in Revelation 19.17-21.

6. The Restoration of Israel (27.2-6):

Israel's ten northern tribes were not included in the restoration of Judah (Isaiah 26), because, shortly after the death of Solomon, rebellion divided the twelve tribes into two nations: the two southern tribes (Judah and Benjamin), and the ten northern tribes, who were then identified by the names of Ephraim and Israel.

When Israel is fully restored, the two sticks of Ezekiel 37.11-38 will be united in the Lord's hand to be one stick (one nation) again. We see them in prospect in Revelation 7.3-8.

Verse 2: In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. A vineyard is one of two main pictures of Israel (Isaiah 5.1-7), the other being an olive tree.

I the LORD do keep it; The Lord keeps the vineyard of Israel in (at least) two ways:

1. (verse 3): *I will water it every moment: "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation (Isaiah 12:2f)."*

2. *lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. "He will not suffer thy*

foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth **Israel** shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand (Psalm 121:3-5)."

A cynic may irreverently ask, "Oh? What about the millions killed in the Roman Empire, and during the Dark ages? What about the millions killed during the Bolshevik revolution in Russia? And what about the millions more killed during World War II? Was He keeping them then?"

Reply 1: Such a cynical challenge ignores the fact that **the Lord God Jehovah has kept the nation of Israel as a nation for two millennia, as no other nation in history has ever been preserved, and He has given Israel her land once again.** "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim (Hosea 3:4)." (This one text alone disproves the Seventh Day Adventist theory that the English peoples are "the lost ten tribes"; England and Scotland have had kings since at least the ninth century A.D.).

Reply 2: God has two peoples, not just one: an *earthly* people, Israel, and a *heavenly* or spiritual people, the church. He has kept them both. The Jews (Israel) have always been persecuted and killed, yet they have been preserved until today; the church has always been persecuted and killed until now, and will be preserved no matter what: "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter (Romans 8:35-36)." This text applies to all God's people, the earthly or natural and the church or spiritual, as evidenced in the next three chapters (9 through 11) of Romans that follow chapter 8; which three chapters, in outline form, give the history and prophetic future of national Israel:

Romans 9, Israel's past: "Esaias also crieth concerning **Israel**, Though the number of the children of **Israel** be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: (Romans 9:27)."

Romans 10, Israel's present: "But I say, Did not **Israel** know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you...But to **Israel** he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people (Romans 10:19-21)." The "foolish nation" is the church among the Gentiles, made up of elect from every nation under heaven. They are counted fools *only because* the natural mind thinks a crucified God is foolishness: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God...we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks **foolishness** (1 Corinthians 1:18-23)." "**We are fools for Christ's sake**...we are despised (1 Corinthians 4:10)."

"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: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy (1 Peter 2:9-10)."

Romans 11, Israel's future:

"I say then, Hath God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an **Israelite**, of the seed of **Abraham**, of the tribe of **Benjamin**. **God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew**. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against **Israel**... (Romans 11.1f). " It should be obvious to all that Paul is referring to national, literal Israel, and not to "spiritual Jew *Gentiles*" who suppose they are "Jews inwardly" (Romans 2.29); this is a term that applies only to God's children among the **Israelites** and not to Gentiles. None of the terms "spiritual Jew," "spiritual Jews," or "spiritual Israel" is found in the Bible.

Romans 2 is entirely about national **Jews** or national **Israel**; hence Paul's remark, "...we have before proved both **Jews** [in chapter 2] and **Gentiles** [in chapter 1], that they are all [both **Jews** and **Gentiles**] under sin (Romans 3.9).

God has always had an elect remnant within the nation of **Israel**. "Esaias also crieth concerning **Israel**, Though the number of the children of **Israel** be as the sand of the sea, a **remnant** shall be saved (Romans 9.27)."

The text from which this magazine derives its name, *The Remnant*, Romans 11.5, on the front page masthead of each issue of this publication, in context, is about **Israel** and not the church or Gentiles! "Even so then at this present time also there is a **remnant** according to the election of grace." Read it in its context. Of course, the Lord has an elect remnant among the Gentiles, who are mentioned incidentally in Romans 9 through 11, but they are not the subject here. First and foremost, chapters 9 through 11 present **Israel's** past, present, and future.

"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 [the Lord Jesus Christ], and [HE] **shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob** [Israel]: For this is my covenant unto them, **when [not IF] I shall take away their sins** (Romans 11.25-27)."

So the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel has not and will not cast away national Israel. The Lord says:

Isaiah 27.4: *Fury is not in me*: "And **in that day** thou ["thou" being **Israel**] shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me (Isaiah 12.1)."

The Lord God continues: *Who would set the **briers and thorns** against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together.* This refers to Assyria—see all of chapter 10, but especially verse 17: "And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and His Holy One [the Lord Jesus Christ] for a flame: and it shall burn and devour **his** [the Assyrian's] **thorns and his briers** in one day (Isaiah 10:17)."

(If one is serious about reading God's word, His continued reference to Assyria is a good example of why it is important to **read large portions of the Scriptures repeatedly in their context** to see God's ongoing connections such as this one.)

In reading Isaiah's first thirty-nine chapters together, if the Lord be pleased to give the reader understanding, one will see the Lord speaks in great detail about:

- Israel's breaking the conditional covenant (a typical example, Isaiah 10.1-4);
- God's sending Assyria against Israel as a tool of judgment (10.5-11, 15);
- Assyria's arrogance and presumption (10.13f); God's payback judgment on those wicked nations, particularly Assyria (10.12, 10.16-19; 23-34);
- Jehovah's absolute, total sovereignty over the Assyrian king: 10.5-7 and 10.15: "**Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood** (Isaiah 10:15)";
- The restoration and salvation of national Israel (10.20-22, 11.11-16, 12.1-6);
- The coming Savior as the seed of Jesse and David. the Lord Jesus Christ, at both His first and second coming (11.1ff), delivering the

meek to inherit the earth as promised (11.4, Psalm 37, Matthew 5.5), while "with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (2 Thessalonians 2.8; Revelation 19.15);

- The restoration of Eden's peace between mankind and all animals, and between the animals themselves. At first, **all mankind and all animals were vegetarian**. *They did not eat each other* (Isaiah 11.6-9; Genesis 1.29-30);

- The conversion of the Gentile nations, not by the church or by Israel, or any "human means and instrumentality" but by Jesus Christ Himself (Isaiah 11.10);

- The *final and complete* destruction of Babylon (Isaiah 13). Babylon was never destroyed. Alexander the Great died in bed there, centuries later. In our own day, Saddam Hussein held meetings in Nebuchadnezzar's restored throne room.

Ancient Babylon is presently located in the city of Hillah, whose population was reported to be 1.73 million people in 2015.

When God *really* destroys Babylon, He says, "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be **as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah**. It shall **never be inhabited**, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged (Isaiah 13:19-22)." This is hardly a description of present-day Hillah. God has yet to destroy Babylon as He said He would. See also Jeremiah, chapters 50 and 51. "Her cities are **a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth**, neither doth any son of man pass thereby." Jehovah will make Babylon an eternal reminder of what God does to those who rebel against Him!

Please return to Isaiah 27, verse 5: *Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me.* God says, "I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him (Isaiah 57:19)." God directly creates the response of His people to Himself in them—in this case, in restored Israel. It is never a matter of what we might try to do in order to *activate* God in order to obtain a favorable response from Him; it is always what God does to activate us in a manner acceptable to Him. And why would we be acceptable to Him? Because we are HIS work, not our own. "But now, O LORD, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and **we all are the work of thy hand** (Isaiah 64.8)." "Know ye that the LORD **He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves;** we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture (Psalm 100.3)."

Isaiah continues, presenting the contrast between God's own people and the wicked: "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked (Isaiah 57.20-21)."

Worldly free-will religions say, "God is only at peace with those who first draw near to him, and you must decide to come to him." The reply to this humanism is straightforward and scriptural: Those who are afar off **simply cannot and will not** come until the Lord draws them to Himself. God the Father and God the Son are a closed circle that no one can penetrate without both the Father and the Son bringing that person into that circle: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and **no man knoweth the Son,** but the Father; **neither knoweth any man the Father,** save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will **reveal** Him (Matthew 11.27)." "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and **no man knoweth who the Son is,** but the Father; **and who the Father is,** but the Son, and he to whom the Son will **reveal** him (Luke 10:22)." All said,

knowing Christ Jesus and His Father takes the supernatural divine **revelation** from the triune Lord God (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) to the awakened, quickened sinner. "And Simon **Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.** And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for **flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven** (Matthew 16.16-17)." Yet multitudes still think their preacher does the revealing!

The Lord Jehovah, by the pen of Jeremiah (30.21), in referring to Israel's governor, says, "I will **cause** him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD. Note three things here:

(1) God's "I WILL": I will CAUSE him to draw near;

(2) God's "HE SHALL": He [the one who is the object of *God's causative will*] shall approach unto me;

(3) God's rhetorical question ("Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me?") goes unanswered; this is another way of saying that **no one engages his own heart to approach unto God.** "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him... (John 6:44)." But, like Saul of Tarsus, all the Lord's elect are far off when He begins His good work in them, and He speaks "peace to him that is far off" as well as to those whom He has already drawn near to Himself. That is one of the many differences between man's works systems and the doctrine of grace.

27.6 *He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: **Israel** shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit:* Fruit, vines, and fruit trees in the Bible are valid figures of spiritual truths (as also are thorns, thistles, and brambles). (Remember Isaiah 57.19? "I create the fruit of the

lips." Did you know our lips bear fruit?) In **that** day, this text will have a double fulfillment: First literal, and second, spiritual.

1. The *literal meaning* of the texts will be the removal of the curse from the ground, when the earth will yield her abundance again, without the sweaty labor required of Adam and his descendants. The desert will once again blossom as the rose (Isaiah 35.10, as it did before Adam's transgression and the resulting curse being placed on the soil. "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 (Isaiah 4.2)." "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an **everlasting** sign that **shall not be cut off** (Isaiah 55.12-13)."

"I will also save you **[Israel]** from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways. and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. **Not for your sakes** do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. **Then** the heathen that are left round about you **shall know** that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and **I**

will do it. Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel. to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock (Ezekiel 36.29-37)."

2. The *spiritual or figurative* truth is that all God's children, including the saved of national Israel, will bear spiritual fruit: "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning. the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called **trees** of righteousness, the **planting** of the LORD, that He might be glorified...For as the earth bringeth forth her **bud**, and as the **garden causeth** the things that are **sown** in it to spring forth: so the Lord GOD will **cause** righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations (Isaiah 61.3, 10-11)." "Ephraim shall say. `What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like **a green fir tree.**" The answer of JHVH Elohim is, "From me is thy *fruit* found (Hosea 14.8)." "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance...(Galatians 5.22-23)."

Mark 10.31 says, "But many that are **first shall be last; and the last first.**" There is a divine principle here that is broader than that text and its immediate context. The cross of Christ is the turning point in humanity's history. At that point Satan's juggernaut ground to a halt as God *providentially* began undoing all the evil Satan had begun. The battle continued from the time of Christ's first coming until now and it still continues. But from the cross on, Satan is "as good as dead." (In God's eternal council, His unchangeable will, and His predestinated purpose, Satan had *always* been defeated!) When the Lord sets damage aright, notice how often He does so in reverse order:

The first thing Satan introduced in Eden was the death of humanity; the last thing God will remove from humanity is death. "Many that are **first shall be last; and the last first.**"

The captivities of **Israel** and **Judah**, in that order, and the restoration and salvation of **Judah** and **Israel**, in that order (Isaiah 26 and 27), fit this pattern (**the first last and the last first**) as do many other major turning points in human history.

The chart on page 14 (Chart is at bottom of article – LK editor) is not meant to be complete, but only cases in point. It shows in chronological order only six events (A through F) since Genesis 2, and God's undoing them in reverse order (FF through AA), following the pattern of **the first last and the last first**. (Compare A with AA, B with BB, and so on, noting the overall order). Serious readers of the Bible will think of other examples.

The empathized words in the quote of Acts 3.19ff (**when, shall come, until, since**) are timely words, prophecies of events that are yet to unfold in time.

The yet future millennial kingdom of heaven on earth, which so many ridicule, but which Christ called "The Kingdom of Heaven," includes God's removing the curse from the earth (BB), which will be a major part of God's **restitution of all things** (Acts 3.19ff), as He undoes the works of Satan in what appears to be reverse order: "...**For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil** (1John 3.8b)." The first shall be last and the last first.

"The Little Apocalypse" of Isaiah 24-27 describes only one small but important part of God's predestinated purpose, and the salvation and the restoration of national Israel in one essential part of that. The eternal result will be the glory of God Himself in His saving and perfecting His creation. "And they shall say, **This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden.**"

----CCM

A. The creation of all things—Genesis 1

B. The first curse, Death—Genesis 2.17

C. The second curse, on the ground, “for thy sake”—Genesis 3.17

D. The first city in rebellion: Babel/Babylon—Genesis 11.4

E. First to go into captivity: Israel’s 10 tribes (721 B. C.)

F. Second to go into captivity: Judah (606 B. C.)

FF. Restoration of Judah: Isaiah 26

EE. Restoration of Israel: Isaiah 27

DD. The last city God destroys: Babel/Babylon—Revelation 17,
18

CC. The curse on the ground removed: Isaiah 27.6; 35.1f; Ezekiel
36.29-35

BB. The last curse to be removed, Death—“The last enemy that shall be
destroyed is death (1 Corinthians 15.26).”

AA. The restitution of all things—Revelation 21.1,5; Acts 3.21*

**But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.
(Mark 10:31)**

***“...when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive UNTIL the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began (Acts 3.19-21).”**

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