

WHEN the Bible speaks of “Israel,” it speaks of Jacob’s descendants, those we call Jews. I realize that many speak of the church of the New Testament as “spiritual Israel,” but our studies in the prophets and in the New Testament have convinced us that in the great majority of verses where the word “Israel” is used, it refers to the literal descendants of Jacob, or the Jewish people. For instance, Romans 11 speaks of a great olive tree, which represents all of God’s people, all the faithful, whether Jew or the church. At the present time, God is working with the Gentiles, calling out from among them a people for His name. (Acts 15:14.) This is also emphasized in Romans 11:25-27, where it says, “For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob. This is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.’”

There are several things emphasized in these verses. First, Israel is blinded today to the fact that Jesus is the Messiah. Second, Israel will remain blinded, as a nation, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, or until the church is made up and completed. Third, “all Israel shall be saved” when God shall take them away from their sins.

We understand that “all Israel” means all twelve tribes will be represented, and that all the Israelites who turn to Christ shall be saved. Naturally, the wicked of Israel, as well as the wicked of the nations, shall perish.

We find that the whole Bible brings out this plan of God. God first worked with the nation of Israel. When Israel rejected Christ, God rejected Israel and turned to the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. When the church is fully made up, God will turn to Israel again, give them a last opportunity, and save those Israelites who will believe in Christ.

Now, let us see how God plans to bring this about. First, we know that the last great battle of this age is to be fought, not in Europe, nor in the United States, but in Palestine, the land of the Jewish people, where the State of Israel now stands. The reasons for the last battle of this age being fought in Palestine are that God will use the nations to punish His people Israel for their sins; also, that all nations might come to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, or valley of judgment, in Palestine.

God said, in Zechariah 14, “I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle.” What then? “Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.” God is going to take a part in the final battle, as He took part in battles of old that concerned His people. The battle, as told in Zechariah 14, will be the final battle of this age. This conflict is called the “the war of the great day of God, the Almighty,” which will take place at Armageddon, according to Revelation 16.

This gathering of the nations to Palestine at the end of the world is also described in Joel 3. “Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations . . . Let the nations be aroused And come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, For there I will sit to judge All the surrounding

nation. . . . Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.” The day of the Lord is coming. It will be a day of judgment. Truly, as these verses say, the great nations of earth shall be gathered soon to Palestine for the final conflict of this dying age.

What of the Jews who are to be in the midst of this turmoil? One of these prophecies concerning Israel is in Isaiah 66:8. “Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once?” No other nation has come into being overnight. Yet, the State of Israel did, on May 14, 1948.

Joel 3:2 also speaks of how the great nations will part God’s land, the land of Palestine, in the last days. The United Nations is made up of representatives of all the world’s great nations, and, on May 14, 1948, the United Nations declared Palestine would officially be divided into three parts: the Gaza Strip, a portion for the Jews to establish a homeland, and a portion for Jordan. Each of these three parts is prophesied in Scripture.

The State of Israel, as we have said before, is to be the focal point of the gathering of all of earth’s great nations, at the end of the world. Zechariah 14 tells us that Jerusalem will be captured. Zechariah 13 tells us that two thirds of the Jews shall be killed. Hitler killed one third of them. Jeremiah 30:7 prophesies that Israel will have to go through this terrible time of trouble because of her sins. Let us read: “Alas! for that day is great, There is none like it; And it is the time of Jacob’s distress, But he will be saved from it.” Yes, the Jews must suffer for rejecting Christ. Yet,

a remnant of them will be saved by believing in Christ.

This is taught in Zechariah 12 and 13. In Zechariah 13, we see, by prophecy, the coming of Christ, and that He will be seen by those who pierced Him—the Jews. They shall say to Him, “ ‘What are these wounds between your arms?’ Then he will say, ‘*Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*’ ” The Jews will see Christ when He comes, and will wonder at His nail-scarred hands. Then their eyes will be opened, and they will understand that Jesus, whom they crucified, is really their Messiah. How their hearts will be pricked within them! Zechariah 12 says, “they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son.”

Then, God, in His infinite mercy, shall open to them a fountain of cleansing—cleansing made possible by the blood of Christ shed years ago, and cleansing made possible by Israel’s faith in Christ when they see Him. So, “all Israel,” or all Israelites who believe, shall be saved. (Romans 11:26.)

The Bible gives many more details about Israel’s part in the last days; such as, how God will use her for His weapons of war in the final battle, and how she will become the greatest nation on earth in the new age, the age of God’s Kingdom.

Let us see, though, in all this, that the end of this world is near. Israel is a nation in Palestine, according to prophecy. Already, many last-day prophecies have been fulfilled, and are being fulfilled. Preparations are being made today for the world’s final conflict.

We wait only for the day and hour, when the triggering of this world’s last series of events will be climaxed by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

My friend, are you ready for His coming? Has your heart been cleansed of its sin? Do you believe? Have you repented? Have you been baptized in the all-saving name of Jesus Christ? Are you working for Christ? We urge you to make your stand for Him known today. Soon, as Jesus says, “night is coming when no one can work.” Only those in Christ will be changed to immortality at His coming.

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ISRAEL’S PART IN THE END OF THE WORLD



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