

Chapter 8: Israel - The Type and Example

It has been said that in America, if you attend a church meeting without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, or death, you are more blessed than three billion people in the world. If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead, and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75 percent of the world. If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top eight percent of the world's wealthy. If you can read the above, you are more blessed than two billion people in the world who cannot read at all. Why is it America and the democracies of northwestern Europe are so much better off than the rest of the world? Why do we possess most of the world's wealth? Is it because of our own skill and prowess? Or is the hand of God working behind the scenes?

The fact is: God chose the children of Israel, and He chose them for a specific purpose. It was not the result of some afterthought or evolving circumstance. It was foreordained long before the birth of the patriarch Jacob. "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel" (Deut. 32:7-8). "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:26). The land and wealth that America and western Europe have attained did not come about by accident or skill. It was determined more than 3,500 years ago. The growth of the seed of Israel started out with one man and grew into a multitude of millions.

It began with a man named Abraham. God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees-a pagan society. God said to him: ". . . Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3). This promise was repeated in Genesis 17:4-8:

As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God (Gen. 17:4-8).

The promise was given in perpetuity, yet Abraham never received the promises during his lifetime. Referring to Abraham, as well as to others, Paul writes: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise" (Heb. 11:13, 39). While the promise included the land of Canaan as an inheritance, it was not limited to it by any means. The promises given to Abraham and his descendants were for the distant future.

After Abraham proved his implicit faith in God's promise that He would give him an heir (Gen. 22:1-12, Heb. 11:17-19), God made the promises unconditional. He said:

Bethel Church of God

Chapter 8: Israel – The Type and Example

. . . By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice (Gen. 22:16-18).

From the beginning, the promise was dual and was now made absolute. It is a promise of both “race and grace”-national blessings and wealth, as well as the promise of a Messiah. God swore by Himself that He would fulfill it, but He did not say when. God said He would establish His covenant with Abraham and his seed after him “. . . in their generations. . .” (Gen. 17:7). Abraham’s son was Isaac. God confirmed the covenant with Isaac when He told him: “Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 26:3-4). Some years later, the promise was confirmed to Isaac’s son Jacob. God said to Jacob: “. . . I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 28:13-14).

Some argue that these promises were limited to the land of Palestine. The word “spread” means “break out,” “break away,” or “break forth” in the Hebrew and implies much more than “. . . the land whereon thou liest . . .” Compare Romans 4:13. There would be no need to “spread abroad” if the promises were limited to the land of Palestine. This is why God told Jacob: “. . . I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land” (Gen. 35:11-12). What would be the purpose of making Jacob (Israel) into a nation and a company of nations if all that is involved is the small country of Palestine? True, the land of Palestine is promised to the seed of Abraham, but does that mean the promise applied only to that region of the world? Does the text say that no other land at any other time would ever belong to the seed of Abraham? (The reader will recall that the promises were passed down to the sons of Joseph-Ephraim and Manasseh.) Their descendants were to become a great nation and a company of nations. Did this occur during the Old Testament period? Our course not! But it did occur many years later after the ten tribes migrated into northwestern Europe and the British Isles. The historical record alone is enough to refute the notion that the promises were limited to the Holy Land.

The descendants of Israel lived many years in Egypt where they were forced into slavery. God sent Moses to deliver them. “. . . the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them” (Ex. 2:23-25). God told Moses:

. . . I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; 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 . . . Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt (Ex.3: 7-8, 10).

Three months after leaving the land of Egypt, the Israelites entered into a covenant with God. We read: “And he [Moses] took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All

Bethel Church of God

Chapter 8: Israel – The Type and Example

that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words" (Ex. 24:7-8). The purpose that God had ordained for the children of Israel was now underway. But did they really comprehend or appreciate this purpose? The answer is no. They did not recognize or comprehend that what God was doing through them represented a physical type of the gospel. Notice what the Apostle Paul wrote: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham . . . 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" (Gal. 3:8-9, 16). Here Paul points out that the promise of grace-Messiah-would come through the seed of Abraham, specifically through Judah. "For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the [Prince, ie., Christ]; but the birthright was Joseph's" (1 Chron. 5:2). By obeying God's Law, as a nation Israel was setting the example God intends for the whole world to follow eventually. This was why Moses wrote:

Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons (Deut. 4:5-9).

This marvelous way of life will prevail in the Kingdom of God, to be established on this earth when Christ returns. Israel was the type of that coming way of life. The message Jesus preached was the gospel of the Kingdom of God (Matt. 4:23, Mark 1:14-15). It was not a message about the person of Christ. It was a message of the coming Kingdom of God. This kingdom will be established upon the earth for 1,000 years, then for all eternity (Rev. 19:11-15; 20:4; 21:1-4). During the Old Testament period, the children of Israel were required to obey the letter of the law. They were not judged for the failure to keep it according to the spiritual intent of the law. The entire sacrificial system served as a reminder of the coming sacrifice of Christ and was done away at His death and resurrection (Heb. 10:1-4, 12-13).

But Israel failed to keep the requirements of even the letter of the law. Paul tells us:

For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when 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 when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord (Heb. 8:7-9).

Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant (1Tim 2:5, Heb. 12:24). God has taken away the first covenant in order to establish the second (Heb. 10:9). God knew in advance the inability of the children of Israel to truly obey Him. We read in Deuteronomy 5:29: "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" Joshua told the children of Israel: ". . . Ye cannot serve the LORD . . ." (Josh. 24:19). God knew in advance the outcome of the physical covenant He had established with the children of Israel, but it was merely a type, a forerunner of the spiritual covenant God would establish with all who accept Christ and are truly converted. God, through the physical nation of Israel, revealed the magnificence of His law to the world. For the first time since the Flood, men became aware of the great God of all wisdom,

Bethel Church of God

Chapter 8: Israel – The Type and Example

power, glory, and perfection. Of this law, David wrote, "I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad" (Ps. 119:96).

Equally important, however, is the fact that the entire Old Testament experience God had with Israel was for our learning.

Paul wrote:

But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come (1 Cor. 10:5-11).

Israel was the object lesson for the world to see, the record written and preserved in the sacred Scriptures, so that we may not repeat their mistakes. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). Israel was cast off, driven into exile and lost from sight-but not permanently. Paul told the Roman Christians: "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 . . ." (Rom. 11:1-2). Rather, Israel has been given the spirit of spiritual slumber. "According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear; unto this day" (v. 8). "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear" (v. 20). "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" (v.v. 25-26). "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all" (v.32).

The children of Israel were chosen for a purpose. Referring to them, Paul writes: "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the [sonship], and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen" (Rom. 9:4-5). That purpose and lesson was for us. God is now working through a spiritual Church. The physical Israel failed because they could not abide by God's requirements. The descendants of Israel, as well as the Gentiles, will be able to live in accordance with God's Law in the future. "But now hath he [Christ] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Hebrews 8:6). "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (v. 10). Physical Israel failed to anticipate the Messiah who could take away their sins. The Jews sought to attain righteousness by works of the law. Neither succeeded. By means of the New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, the true change of heart will take place, and God's purpose will be realized.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that 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, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of

Bethel Church of God

Chapter 8: Israel – The Type and Example

Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, 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. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more (Jer. 31:31-34).

Israel's national sins were Sabbath-breaking and idolatry (Ezek. 20). They were completely intractable. For these reasons, as well as others, they were taken into national captivity and deported from the land.

Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them. And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day (2 Kings 17:14-18, 23).

Judah was not far behind. They, too, turned from God and, as a nation, refused to repent. About 120 years later, God also removed them from the land. "Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight So Judah was carried away out of their land" (2 Kings 17:19-20; 25:21). "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he [Nebuchadnezzar] away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia" (2 Chron. 36:20). The northern kingdom-Israel- was conquered and carried away by three successive Assyrian invasions. The southern kingdom-Judah-was defeated and carried away by the king of Babylon. Both these captivities were only temporary in nature. The people of the northern kingdom broke away to the north and northeast, eventually migrating to northwestern Europe. Only a small number of the people of the southern kingdom returned to Palestine. As a people they, too, were scattered around the world, many of them migrating to eastern and western Europe, where many of their descendants are still found.

God punished both Israel and Judah, but He did not destroy them. Speaking of Israel, the prophet Hosea wrote: "My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations" (Hos. 9:17). Amos adds: "Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD. For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth" (Amos 9:8-9).

Notice the following passages:

Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever (Jer. 31:35-36).

Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the

Bethel Church of God

Chapter 8: Israel – The Type and Example

nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished (Jer. 46:28).

And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD (Ezek. 20:38).

But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away (Isa. 41:8-9).

For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off (Isa. 48:9).

For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure (Ps. 135:4).

For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God (2 Sam. 7:24).

And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you (Judges 2:1).

For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed (Mal. 3:6).

The children of Israel broke the covenant relationship with God. But because of His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He spared His people. They, along with the Gentiles, will be privileged to enter into a New Covenant relationship after Christ returns. They did not vanish from the face of the earth, as some believe. The house of Israel was the recipient of the promises of race; the house of Judah, the nation that brought forth the Great Lawgiver-the Messiah (1 Chron. 5:2).

The entire Old Testament experience teaches us the inability of Israel to abide by the physical requirements of the Law. Jesus Christ came to magnify the law, to make it honorable (Isa. 42:21), to give it a spiritual dimension, and to give man the power to live it by means of the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament experience was a necessary lesson that man must receive the help of God in order to fulfill His will. Jesus said: ". . . I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). By accepting His sacrifice and repenting, man can receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. He then can start on the path of spiritual growth and true obedience to God.

The physical nation of Israel was a type of the government of God. God is now preparing a people to be future priests and kings who will rule with Christ when He returns (Rev. 20:6). Rather than building a physical kingdom, Christ is now building a spiritual Church. The Church is now the spiritual house of God (1 Pet. 2:5). Those called to the Truth today are the spiritual children of God. Nationality is of little importance. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:26-29). Paul speaks of the spiritual creation-the new man, ". . . which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:10-11). "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that

Bethel Church of God

Chapter 8: Israel – The Type and Example

of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. 2:28-29). "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new [creation]. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:15-16).

The prophet Jeremiah foretold the time when God will make a new covenant with His people.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that 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, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, 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. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more (Jer. 31:31-34).

The two houses of Israel have never reunited since the division at the time of Rehoboam. The prophet Ezekiel foretold the time when they will be again united, this important text cannot be overemphasized. It is absolute biblical proof that the Jews are not the house of Israel, and that the two houses did not unite when the Jews returned from Babylon.

Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these? Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand 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 And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them (Ezek. 37: 16-19, 22, 24).

Notice again carefully. David will be king over them. That never happened in the past. These texts are a prophecy for the future. They speak of a time when David will be resurrected. When will this take place? It will occur at the time of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:23)! This is when the New Covenant with the two houses of Israel will be inaugurated. Until that time they will remain separate.

This is what God has to say regarding the Jews:

And now therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: And they shall be my people, and I will be their God And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me (Jer. 32:36-38, 40).

When the Jews returned to Palestine under Ezra and Nehemiah, they remained intact as a nation until the time of the Romans. Even then, they manifested only a shadow of their former glory. Because of their

Bethel Church of God

Chapter 8: Israel – The Type and Example

rebellion, the Romans eventually destroyed the nation and drove them from the land. The Jews in Palestine today are only a small minority of the Jews worldwide. More Jews reside in some western cities than are found in Palestine. Jeremiah, in the text above, talks of a time when Judah will be restored and will enter into a new covenant relationship with God. Certainly that cannot apply today, as the Jews to this day refuse to accept Christ as the Messiah. And they certainly do not “dwell safely,” but with constant bloodshed and the threat of war hanging over them.

Hosea spoke of this same time—the time when the two nations will be joined.

Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel (Hos. 1:10-11).

This text, like the others, is a reference to the time when the New Covenant will be established with the children of Israel, that is, both houses. During the Millennium, Christ will rule over the nations of the earth (Rev. 19:15). Notice this time period described:

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 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 he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: 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 (Isa. 2:2-4).

Christ will be in the midst of Israel (Joel 2:27), and the 12 Apostles, under King David, will rule over the 12 tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28). The world will be blessed beyond belief. God’s Spirit will be poured out in abundance.

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit (Joel 2:28-29).

Man will have access to all of God’s good graces.

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. . . (Heb. 12:22-24).

This is the time spoken of by the prophet Micah. “He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old” (Micah 7:19-20).

Let us be reminded of a few facts.

If God did not keep His promise of great national wealth and power, as well as sending the Messiah, we can have no confidence in any of God’s Word. The promises of race and grace stand or fall together. The

Bethel Church of God

Chapter 8: Israel – The Type and Example

validity of God's Word rests on the surety of these promises. That history draws a blank on what happened to the lost ten tribes of Israel is demonstrably wrong. There is ample evidence to support the hypothesis that the lost ten tribes of Israel now constitute the great western powers of the world. They were lost from sight because they lost their name and their language. Historians did not know where to look.

The culmination of God's promises to Israel-the promises of race and grace-is found in the confirmation of national power and wealth, and in the historical Jesus. The promises were given to Abraham-the friend of God (Jas. 2:23). He was the friend of God, "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" (Gen. 26:5). Abraham was an example of righteousness. Righteousness is defined as obedience to the Law of God (Ps. 119:172). The Scriptures tell us: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God" (Jas. 2:21-23). "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:8-10). "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6).

The promises were passed down to Abraham's descendants. Israel-the Old Testament Church (Acts 7:38)-was a type of the New Testament Church. The biblical record is a permanent testimony of that Church. It illustrates the results of the lack of faith and inability to live in agreement with God's requirements. The New Covenant will change all that. For the first time man will have the spiritual strength to obey God according to the spiritual intent of the law. When Christ returns, the two houses of Israel will be united and the New Covenant instituted. Millions of physical Israelites and Gentiles will enter into a spiritual relationship never known before. Spiritual Israel-the Church-will be the "Israel of God." God gave Israel the same law Abraham obeyed. Israel of old-the Old Testament Church-was required to keep this law physically. They were not judged according to the spiritual intent. The New Testament Church-spiritual Israel-is required to obey the spiritual intent of that law. This is what the Sermon on the Mount was all about. It is the heart and crux of Christianity. Yet, today, few are able to stand fast in it. Spiritual Israel-the Church-is the antitype of physical Israel. Paul said there was no profit in the flesh. Man must live by every Word of God. Man must live by the spiritual intent of the law, not the letter of the law only.

Today, various arguments of one kind or another are advanced to repudiate the call and purpose of Israel, as well as the plan of God. Some try to spiritualize away the literal meaning of the Scriptures; others apply all the promises of God to the Church and completely overlook the future. Some apply the promises to present-day governments of the earth, not realizing that the governments of this world are anything but Godly. Others refuse to acknowledge the identity of the lost ten tribes because they labor under the misconception that to do so would mean they would have to obey God's commands. They do not realize that millions of Israelites today have little interest in obeying God in anything, and that one must be called of God to really comprehend what obedience to God means. While many of these people like to call themselves Christian, they make no attempt to follow in the footsteps of Abraham-the friend of God.

The notion that the northern and southern kingdoms united after the Babylonian captivity limits God's promises to Abraham. Only a remnant of Jews returned after the Babylonian captivity. History demonstrates that millions of both Israelites and Jews have never returned. Prophecy shows they will be joined as one nation after the return of Christ. Israel of the Old Covenant failed. Israel of the New will not. Israel of the Old did not understand God's purpose. Israel of the New will understand. What needs to be understood is that obedience to God leads to blessings and prosperity. Disobedience leads to curses and

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suffering. Israel of Old is the example of disobedience. One way of life leads to salvation, the other leads to death (Rom. 6:23). Salvation itself is wrapped up in the promises that God gave to Abraham. Let us come to appreciate God's great plan and purpose. Let us come to see what God has really done for America. Let us make an effort to rededicate ourselves to Him.