

THE HERALD OF HOPE

THE GLORY OF GOD

THE PROPHECIES OF EZEKIEL EXPLAINED



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Ezekiel Summarised

FULFILLED PROPHECY

● CHAPTERS 1 TO 11

Ezekiel called to prophesy to Israel after seeing visions of the Glory of God and the Throne of God. The glory leaves the Temple and the Mt of Olives

CHAPTERS 12 TO 24

Idolatrous Jerusalem to be besieged, burned, & Zedekiah removed to Babylon. The throne of David to be overturned three times & cease till Messiah reigns.

CHAPTER 25

Because Ammon, Moab, Mt Seir (Edom), and the Philistines rejoiced over Jerusalem's downfall they would be judged by Nebuchadnezzar

CHAPTERS 26 TO 28

Tyre's coastal city and Sidon to be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and the Island city later by Alexander because she rejoiced over Jerusalem's downfall. Tyre's king possessed by Satan.

● CHAPTERS 29 TO 32

Egypt to be judged by Nebuchadnezzar and desolate 40 years (570-530BC) because they failed to support Jerusalem. Tho' Pharaoh claimed to be God he will go to hell with kings of other heathen nations.

CHAPTERS 30

Ezekiel to be a Watchman to warn Israel about **FUTURE** events

FUTURE PROPHECY

● CHAPTERS 31 TO 36

Unbelieving Israel to return to the land in the **LAST DAYS** midst challenges from Arab neighbours.

CHAPTER 37

Three steps to Israel's restoration in **LAST DAYS**. Zionism (1881), Nationhood (1948), Conversion in the Tribulation (future). No longer 2 kingdoms when converted.

CHAPTERS 38 AND 39

The day of Israel's conversion when Islamic armies led by Russia, invade in first half of the Tribulation

● CHAPTERS 40 TO 48

The Millennial Temple and priestly service specified. The Dead Sea healed and the land divided among the 12 Tribes when the Glory of God returns in the **LAST DAYS**.

Part 1 - Historical Background to the Prophecy of Ezekiel

EZEKIEL lived at the time in Israel's history when the Kingdom of Judah was being removed to Babylon. The nation had sinned grievously and God's chastening had begun to fall. The instrument used to administer Divine correction was Nebuchadnezzar the king of the Babylonian Empire. Jeremiah described Nebuchadnezzar as "*the hammer of the whole earth*" (Jer.50:23) and Ezekiel called him "*the terrible of the nations*" (Ezek.30:11).

The Babylonian captivity lasted 70 years (606-536 BC) in fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecies (Jer.25:11-12; 29:10). The year 606 BC marked the beginning of the "*times of the Gentiles*" (Luke 21:24), otherwise known as the period of Gentile occupation of Jerusalem, which must continue until the second coming of Christ.

Prior to the Babylonian Empire two great nations Egypt and Assyria, had vied for universal supremacy. In 625 BC Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar, became king of the Chaldeans and joined with Cyaxares king of the Medes **in 612 BC to destroy Nineveh** which was the capital of Assyria.

The destruction of Nineveh was graphically foretold by the prophet Nahum. Its massive walls, 100 feet high, 60 miles around and 30 feet thick could not keep out the combined forces of Media and Chaldea. When Alexander the Great led an expedition to Nineveh, nearly 300 years later, he passed over the ancient remains of the city unaware that he was walking across its ruins.

Before Nebuchadnezzar became king he led his father's army against Pharaoh-necho at the battle of Carchemish near the Euphrates River about 610BC. Pharaoh-necho was defeated and Nebuchadnezzar pursued him to the border of Egypt.

The power of **Egypt was finally broken** by the Chaldeans during an invasion by Nebuchadnezzar. in 570 BC when he marched through the

land to Aswan on the border of Ethiopia (now known as Sudan). The land was left desolate for 40 years in fulfilment of Ezekiel's prophecy (Ezek.29:8 -13).

The land of Judah was invaded three times by Nebuchadnezzar (606, 597, & 586 BC), and Ezekiel was taken captive during the **second** invasion when the eighteen-year-old king Jehoiachin (Jeconiah/Coniah) surrendered. At this stage Nineveh had been destroyed 15 years but Egypt's desolations were to come 27 years later as prophesied by Ezekiel (Ezek.chs. 29 to 32). **Ezekiel dates all of his prophecies from the captivity of Jehoiachin (597 BC).**

Ezekiel, like Jeremiah, met opposition from his countrymen throughout his ministry (Ezek.3:7-9), however, he fearlessly exposed the wickedness of Israel, foretelling the imminent destruction of Judah and the surrounding nations by Nebuchadnezzar. He also described Israel's future repentance and return to the land in Messiah's millennial kingdom on earth.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF EZEKIEL

Ezekiel was taken to Babylon in the captivity of Jehoiachin in 597 BC. Jehoiachin had become King of Judah during the siege of Jerusalem when his father Jehoiakim was bound to be taken to Babylon but died before he could depart. After 3 months, at the age of 18, Jehoiachin surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar and was taken to Babylon where thirty seven years later, he was exalted above all other kings in Babylon (2 Kings 25:27-30). God preserved Jehoiachin and his children because He had promised a continuous line of the descendants of David right down to Christ, the Son of David.

Ezekiel was 30 years old when he began his ministry in the 5th year of Jehoiachin's captivity (Ezek.1:1). He concluded 22 years later in the 27th year of that captivity (Ezek.29:17). He was a priest; a descendant of Aaron (Ezek.1:3).

After Jehoiachin's surrender, Zedekiah, his uncle, was made king by Nebuchadnezzar however, he later rebelled and put his trust in Pharaoh king of Egypt. Zedekiah reigned for 11 years and in the 9th year of his reign (588 BC), Nebuchadnezzar's army besieged Jerusalem.

On the 9th day of the 4th month of his 11th year (586 BC), the besieged

city ran out of food and Zedekiah fled on horseback but was caught in the plains of Jericho. He was brought before Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah in the land of Hamath where he was judged for breaking his covenant. All the sons of Zedekiah were slain before him and then his eyes were put out. He was then put in chains and taken to Babylon where he died in prison (Jer.52:1-11).

Zedekiah left no children to continue the Davidic line which God had promised would never lack for one to sit upon the throne of Israel. The Davidic line was preserved through Jehoiachin.

Ezekiel had prophesied that Zedekiah, the “profane and wicked prince of Israel” would be judged:

“Thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: ...I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, UNTIL he come whose right it is; and I will give it him” (Ezek.21:25-27).

The throne at Jerusalem was overturned three times by Nebuchadnezzar and on the 7th day of the 5th month (586 BC) all of Jerusalem including the Temple, was burned. The walls and the houses were then destroyed (2 Kings 25: 1-9).

During the eleven-year reign of Zedekiah, the false prophets in Babylon and Jerusalem had been predicting that Babylon would soon be overthrown and the Jewish captives in Babylon would be returned to Jerusalem, contrary to Jeremiah’s prophecy that the captivity would continue for 70 years. They also predicted that Jehoiachin would be restored to the throne of Israel and the vessels of the temple returned (Jer.28:3 -4).

While the youthful Ezekiel was prophesying in Babylon, urging the people to submit to Nebuchadnezzar, the elderly Jeremiah was preaching the same message in Jerusalem, .

The false prophets, in Jerusalem and in Babylon opposed Jeremiah and Ezekiel and were believed by Zedekiah. The false prophet Hananiah even stated that Babylon would be overthrown within two years but, in fulfilment of Jeremiah’s prophesy, Hananiah died within one year. (Ezek.22:25-28; 34:1-10; Jer.28:1-11; 29:1-32).

WHEN EZEKIEL PROPHESED

Ezekiel's prophecies from chapters 1 to 24 were in the years 593BC to 589 BC -from the 5th to the 9th year of Jehoichin's captivity (Ezek.24:1-2). The siege of Jerusalem began on the 10th day and 10th month of the 9th year and Jerusalem was burned on the 7th day and 5th month of the 11th year.

Many of Ezekiel's prophecies occurred in the period 593 to 586 BC; a period of 7 years. It was 15 years later that he had his final message in 571 BC when he foretold the desolation of Egypt (Ezek.29:17 in the 27th year). Nebuchadnezzar's last campaign against Egypt was completed about 570 BC fulfilling Ezekiel's prophecy (Ezek29-32).

The land of Egypt was given to Nebuchadnezzar by God as wages for his soldiers (Ezek.29:19) who had carried out God's judgment on the coastal city of Tyre. Nebuchadnezzar had besieged Tyre for 13 years beginning in his 7th year (according to Josephus) and destroyed the coastal city in 586BC, the same year that Jerusalem was destroyed. However, the riches of Tyre were transferred to an island one kilometer off shore.

The conquest of Egypt was made easy for Nebuchadnezzar as God sent civil war to Egypt and Pharaoh-hophra was captured by his General Amasis. Prior to this the Egyptian army had been badly mauled in a war with the Cyrenians according to the historian Herodotus.

One year before (571BC) God told Ezekiel that He had

"broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt...and will cause the sword to fall out of his hand" (Ezek.30:21-22). God said: "I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and put my sword in his hand...and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down" (Ezek.30:24-25).

When Nebuchadnezzar completed the desolation of Egypt in 570BC he returned to Babylon and boasted of his achievements and the glory of his kingdom only to be struck down with insanity for seven years in fulfilment of the prophecy of Daniel given 12 months earlier (Dan 4:24-33).

Ezekiel also indicated:

"In that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth, and I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them; and they shall know that I am the LORD" (Ezek.29:21).

This prophecy refers to the fact that Jehoiachin, (the horn of the house of Israel), would be released from prison and the Jews given freedom, (the opening of the mouth), at this time under Evil-merodach.

Nebuchadnezzar reigned till 562BC and in 561BC Evil-merodach his son took the throne and exalted Jehoiachin in the 37th year of his captivity (2Kgs.25:27).

Ezekiel's final message received in 573BC (25th year), described the Millennial Temple and the return of the glory of God to Israel (ch40 to 48) which follows the nation's repentance and cleansing described in Ezekiel 39:21-29. The conversion of the nation follows the Russian/Islamic invasion described in Ezekiel 38 and 39.

Part 2 - The Theme of the Book - The Glory of God

AS WE approach the study of the Book of Ezekiel it is most important that we recognize **that the nation of Israel** is the subject of the Book. More than any other book in the Bible this book limits its scope to God's elect nation to the exclusion of all other nations. The book focuses on the reasons for the **departure** of the glory of God from the Temple in 586BC and the **events that lead to the return** of the glory of God in the last days when the nation turns to the Lord.

When Ezekiel was called by God to prophesy he was told:

*"Son of man, I send thee to **the children of Israel**, to a rebellious nation that ... have transgressed against me" (Ezek.2:3).*

Jeremiah prophesied at the same time as Ezekiel but he was ordained "a prophet to **the nations**" (Jer.1:5).

Daniel prophesied in Babylon at the same time as Ezekiel but his prophecies concerned the "*times of the Gentiles*"; from 606BC until Christ returns to establish His kingdom.

Isaiah gave many prophecies about Assyria, Egypt, Tyre, and Babylon as they impacted on Israel but only Ezekiel was told that he was NOT sent to the nations; his prophecy was confined to Israel. God said,

*"Thou art **not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel**; ... Surely, **had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee.**" (Ezek.3:5-7).*

Throughout the 48 chapters of the Book of Ezekiel we will find prophecies to Egypt, Tyre, Ammon, Moab, Edom and the Philistines but only as they relate to Israel. These nation are judged because of their attitude to Israel.

THE VISION OF THE GLORY OF GOD BY THE RIVER CHEBAR

The theme of the glory of God runs through the Book of Ezekiel and in chapter 1 Ezekiel describes it in his vision. He saw the throne of God and the "*four living creatures*", beneath the throne of God. These mighty angels have four faces in likeness to the face of a man, a lion, an ox, and

an eagle. They also have four wings and their wings were “*joined one to another*” (Ezek.1:9) just as the wings of the golden cherubims met over the mercyseat in the Temple.

It has been noted that Christ is presented as King in Matthew (Lion), a servant in Mark (Ox), a man in Luke (the Son of man) and as the Son of God from heaven in John’s Gospel (an eagle).

In the midst of the four living creatures there was fire “*like burning coals of fire*” and from the fire “*went forth lightning*” (Ezek.1:13).

Then there were wheels within wheels that touched the earth and when the living creature moved “*the wheels were lifted up*” (Ezek.1:19). These wheels were exceedingly high and “*full of eyes*” (Ezek.1:18) and the “*spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels*” (Ezek.1:20).

Above these living creatures was

“the likeness of a throne... and upon the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it” (Ezek.1:26).

Finally, Ezekiel saw “*the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain round about*” (Ezek.1:28).

There is no doubt that Ezekiel saw the throne of God in heaven, and the mighty angels that surround the throne. The wheels are myriads of angels, spiritual intelligences, that carry out God’s purposes on earth. God is on His throne in the likeness of a man which explains why God made man in His own image.

The **rainbow**, also seen by John (Rev.4:3), indicates that although God is holy and likened to fire, He nevertheless is a covenant-keeping God who is merciful.

THE VISION OF THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE PLAIN

This second vision was seen after Ezekiel had been among the captives at Telabib by the river Chebar (Ezek.3:13). After waiting on God for seven days he was told to go into the plain where God would speak with him. There he saw his second vision of the glory of God and was told only to speak the words that God gave him.

Chapters 4 through 7 warn of the imminent threat of judgment. At this time we know from Jeremiah’s prophecy that the false prophets were

prophesying that Babylon would soon be destroyed and the captives returned to Israel. Hanaiah actually prophesied the fall of Babylon within two years (Jer.28:10-17).

In Chapter 4 Ezekiel made a model of the city of Jerusalem on a tile. Around the city were siege machines and each day he lay before the model eating a famine diet of bread mixed with cows dung and drinking only a sixth of a hin (600ml) of water.

For 390 days Ezekiel lay on his left side and ate defiled bread to signify the 390 years of the northern kingdom of Israel's disobedience. Then daily, he lay on his right side for a further 40 days signifying the years of the Judah's transgression.

In Chapter 5 Ezekiel shaved his head and beard and weighed the hair in three equal parts. One third part was burned, another third part was cut with a knife and the remaining third was thrown to the wind thus signifying how the people of Jerusalem would die when the city was besieged: a third would die of famine, a third would be slain, a third would be scattered among the nations and reproached by the heathen. Only a small amount of hair was hidden in Ezekiel's skirt to signify that a small remnant would be preserved.

In chapter 6 Ezekiel prophesies to the *"mountains of Israel ...to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys"* (Ezek.6:3). The whole land would be desolate and only *"a remnant ...shall escape the sword among the nations"* (Ezek.6:8) after which the nation would know that the LORD is God.

Chapter 7 has a simple message from God to Israel: *"The time has come" "and their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them"*

THE VISION OF THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE TEMPLE

Chapter 8 describes how Ezekiel is taken in vision by the locks of his hair and transported to Jerusalem to witness the evil practiced in

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

Chs.1 to 11 - Israel's sin causes the glory of God to depart from the Temple in 586BC

Chs.12 to 32 - Israel's sin rebuked. Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem and the surrounding nations

Chs.33 to 39 - How and when Israel is converted in the last days

Chs.40 to 48 - The construction details of the millennial Temple and return of the glory of God.

the Temple. **The glory of God was there** but the Temple was defiled. The walls were painted with images of *“every form of creeping thing”* (Ezek.8:10) depicting the gods of Egypt. He saw seventy elders burning incense to them.

At the northern gate to the Temple women wept for Tammuz the Babylonian god, the husband of the goddess of Ishtar, the fertility goddess. Tammuz was supposed to have died and departed to the underworld but was brought back each spring by the weeping Ishtar. The women were worshipping Tammuz and Ishtar.

Twenty-five men were seen standing with their backs to the Temple facing the east to worship the sun.

THE GLORY OF GOD DEPARTS FROM THE TEMPLE

In chapter 9 Ezekiel sees the glory of God **rise up from the holy place** above the ark and move to the **threshold** of the Temple.

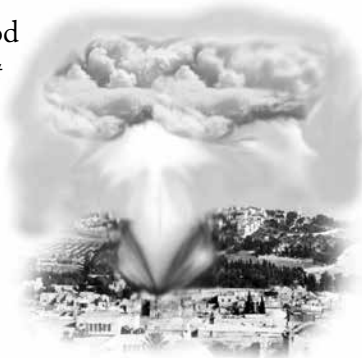
Six men appeared with swords and one of them had an inkhorn with which he went through the city placing a mark on the forehead of all those who *“sigh and cry for the abominations that be done”* (Ezek.9:4). These were spared when the men with swords passed through the city.

The man with the inkhorn moved in under the cherubims at the door of the Temple and took coals of fire and threw them over the city signifying that the city would be judged (Ezek.10:2). Ezekiel then recorded his third vision of the the glory of God and the throne above the cherubims while the light of God’s presence filled the court of the Temple. Thus we learn that **God was departing** from His Temple was about to judge the city.

THE GLORY OF GOD LEAVES THE TEMPLE

Ezekiel witnessed the departure of the glory of God from the door of the Temple to the *“door of the east gate of the LORD’S house”* (Ezek.10:19) and heard the solemn message from God that He would *“judge you in the border of Israel”* (Ezek.11:10). When a godly prince in Israel suddenly died Ezekiel cried,

“Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?” (Ezek.11:13).



The Lord assured him that even when the nation was scattered

“Although I have cast them far off among the heathen...yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come” (Ezek.11:16).

God would never forsake the covenants made with Abraham and the patriarchs and if Israel put away their idols they would be brought back to the land. God said:

“I will even gather you from the people, ... and I will give you the land of Israel ...and I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you ... and they shall be my people, and I will be their God” (Ezek.11:16-20).

Then the glory of God departed from **the eastern gate** and *“went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon **the mountain which is on the east side of the city**” (Ezek.11:13).*

The mount of Olives is most significant for that is where the Lord Jesus departed when He ascended and it is the place to which He will return at His second advent. Zechariah wrote:

“His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives ... and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west” (Zech.14:4).

From **chapter 12 to chapter 33** Ezekiel continues his prophesies concerning the sin of Israel and the judgment that would come from the Babylonian armies. He also prophesied of judgment on the surrounding nations for their treatment of Israel but when he comes to **chapters 34 through to 39** he looks forward to the day when there will be a **partial return in unbelief** amidst conflict with her neighbours (Chs. 35 to 37), followed by an invasion by the forces of Russia, Iran, Turkey, Libya and Sudan. At this time, during the first half of the Tribulation, all Israel will be saved. Ezekiel wrote:

*“Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from **that day and forward**” (Ezek.39:22).*

THE GLORY OF GOD WILL RETURN TO THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE

In chapters 40 through to 48 Ezekiel described the restoration of the Temple and nation in the millennial kingdom of Christ after His Second Advent. In chapter 43 we read:

*"Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: And, behold, **the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east...and the earth shined with his glory**" (Ezek.43:1-3).*

The glory departed from the Mount of Olives and Christ will return to the mount of Olives *"in the glory of his Father with his angels"* (Matt.16:27). Matthew also states that Jesus will come *"with power and great glory"* (Matt.24:30).

The Bible consistently teaches that Christ will return as King of kings in great glory to reign over His eternal kingdom; first for 1,000 years and then in the new earth for all eternity. During the millennium the glory of God will be visible at Jerusalem for we read:

*"And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east... and... filled the house... And he said unto me, Son of man, **the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever**" (Ezek.43:4-7).*

Isaiah informs us that the glory of God will be bright at Jerusalem:

*"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee ...the LORD shall arise upon thee, and **his glory shall be seen upon thee**" (Isa.60:1-2).*

Just as the pillar of fire gave light to Israel as they fled from Egypt so the glory of God will lighten Jerusalem in Christ's kingdom:

*"The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee **an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory**" (Isa.60:19).*

Though Israel is blinded in this present Church age she will play a central role in the events of the end of the age.

The promises of God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob must be fulfilled or God could be charged with unfaithfulness. If we cannot trust God to keep His promises to Abraham then we cannot trust Him to keep His promises to us.

We can be absolutely sure that, after the Church is raptured Israel will turn to the Lord and the promised kingdom will be established

Ezekiel Part 3 - The Throne of David to be Vacant Until Messiah Comes

Chapters 12 to 24

WHY ISRAEL JUDGED

THE vision of the departure of the glory of God was seen in 592BC which was **5 years before the destruction of the Temple** by Nebuchadnezzar in 586BC. We know this because it was given on the 5th day of the 6th month in the **6th year** of Jehoiachin's captivity (Ezek.8:1). Jehoiachin was taken captive in the second Babylonian invasion which occurred in 597BC.

From chapter 8 to chapter 18 is the record of prophecies at this time and then in the 7th year (590BC) he is given other prophecies recorded in chapters 19 to 23.

Chapters 24 and 25 were received the "*same day*" that Nebuchadnezzar began his final siege of Jerusalem on the 10th day of the 10th month in the 9th year of Jehoiachin's captivity (588BC).

Chapters 12 to 24 therefore tell of impending judgment on King Zedekiah, the false prophets and prophetesses (sorceresses), the elders, and the people.

The nation had sealed its doom and when God sought for a man to stand in the gap for the nation He found none. He said:

*"I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but **I found none**"* (Ezek.22:30).

The situation was so bad that even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were there the nation could not be spared:

"Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness" (Ezek.14:20).

However, although God had pronounced judgment it was necessary to justify His actions in the eyes of all so that no person could accuse God

of injustice. God's judgment was not without just cause and He said
*"Ye shall know that I have not done **without cause** all that I have done..."*
 (Ezek.14:23).

SUMMARY - CHS 12 TO 24

A summary of the chapters 12 to 24 is as follows:

- Ch.12** Jerusalem's judgment was **imminent** and the King would be taken.
- Ch.13** The false prophets and prophetesses (sorcerers) are condemned.
- Ch.14** Even Noah, Daniel and Job could not save the sinful nation.
- Ch.15** Israel as God's vine, would be burned.
- Ch.16** Israel is seen as a spiritual whore worshipping the gods of the heathen. Nevertheless God will make a New Covenant with them in the last days.
- Ch.17** Zedekiah would break his oath to Nebuchanezzar and seek help from Egypt but he would die in Babylon.
- Ch.18** Israel blamed their fathers before them and God, but they would not repent.
- Ch.19** A lamentation for Josiah's sons the "*whelps*" of the lioness, their mother, Hamutal.
- Ch.20** The elders come to Ezekiel to enquire of the Lord but God will not answer. It is too late for judgment is now determined. The nation can only be restored with "*fury poured forth*".
- Ch.21** Nebuchanezzar to "**overturn**" the throne of David **three times** and it will then cease till Messiah comes to reign.
- Ch.22** Jerusalem condemned with her prophets, priests, princes and people. **There is no one to stand in the gap.**
- Ch.23** Idolatry is seen as spiritual adultery. The parable of prostitute sisters Aholah and Aholibah is a parable of Samaria and Judah.
- Ch.24** Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem and the city seen as scum in the pot. Ezekiel is not to sorrow over the death of his wife as a sign that they were not to weep over Jerusalem's destruction because it was deserved.

GOD DEFENDS HIS ACTION IN JUDGING JERUSALEM

In chapter 18 the Jews blamed their forefathers for what was coming upon them as indicated in verses 2 and 3:

“What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel” (Ezek.18:2-3).

Then they blamed God, accusing Him of being unfair:

*“Yet ye say, **The way of the LORD is not equal.** Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? **are not your ways unequal?** When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive”* (Ezek.18:25-27).

God had given every opportunity for the nation to be spared and His mercy was still freely available to every repentant sinner.

“Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?... Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin” (Ezek.18:23,30).

However, God’s longsuffering had expired and the four sore judgments of famine, wild beasts, a sword and pestilence (disease) must come (Ezek.15:21). This is a warning not to tempt God for the day of grace will expire if men harden their hearts.

KING ZEDEKIAH TO BE JUDGED

King Zedekiah is described as the *“profane and wicked prince of Israel”* (Ezek.21:25) and Ezekiel foretells how he would seek to flee from Jerusalem at night but would be caught, blinded, and taken to Babylon.

*“And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder **in the twilight**, and shall go forth: they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby: he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with his eyes. My net also will I spread upon him, and **he shall be taken in my snare:** and I will **bring him to Babylon** to the land of the Chaldeans; **yet shall he not see it**, though he shall die there”* (Ezek.12:12-13).

This prophecy was fulfilled when Zedekiah fled the city at night after the food supply ran out and he was caught in the plains of Jericho. He was taken to Riblah where he saw his sons slain after which his eyes were put out before he was taken to Babylon where he died in prison (2Kings 15:4-7) fulfilling the prophecy that he would not **see** Babylon.

In chapter 17 Ezekiel reminded the people that King Jehoiachin had already been taken to Babylon and Zedekiah had been allowed to reign after swearing allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar. But Zedekiah had

“despised the oath by breaking the covenant” (Ezek.17:18) “He rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people” (Ezek.17:15).

Thus God said:

“I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespass” (Ezek.17:20).

THE THRONE OF DAVID VACANT

A *“lamentation for the princes of Israel”* (Ezek.19:1) is given in chapter 19. The lamentation is because there would be **no king on the throne of David** after the sons of Josiah.

Josiah had been slain by Pharaoh-necho and Hamutal, his widow, raised his sons Jehoahaz (Shallum Jer.22:11), Eliakim (Jehoiakim) and Zedekiah. Hamutal is called a *“lioness”* and her sons were *“her whelps”*.

After the death of Josiah, Jehoahaz reigned for 3 months until Pharaoh-necho took him north to Riblah where his army was defending against the Babylonians. When the Egyptians were defeated by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish and pursued to Egypt, Jehoahaz was taken in *“chains into the land of Egypt”* (Ezek.19:4).

Hamutal then took another of her sons, Jehoiakim, *“and made him a young lion”* (Ezek.19:5). He reigned 11 years but rebelled and after being put in chains to go to Babylon, was slain.

Hamutal was evidently taken to Babylon with Jehoiachin, his mother, and his wives (2Kings 24:15). Though

“she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule...she was plucked up in fury...and now she is planted in the wilderness (Babylon). (Ezek.19:13).

Zedekiah was a rod of her branches but had rebelled. ie. *“fire is gone out of her branches.”* He was the last of her sons and *“she hath **no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule**”* (Ezek.19:14). Zedekiah would be the last to sit on the throne of David until Christ reigns.

In chapter 21 Ezekiel made it clear that the throne would be vacant **UNTIL Messiah came** and ruled over Israel. We read:

*“And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel...Thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown...I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, **UNTIL He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him**”* (Ezek.21:25-27).

Three times Jerusalem and the throne were be *“overturned”*. In 606BC Jerusalem was captured and Jehoiakim became a vassel king. When he rebelled, Nebuchadnezzar came again, and placed him in chains to take him to Babylon but he perished before he left Jerusalem.

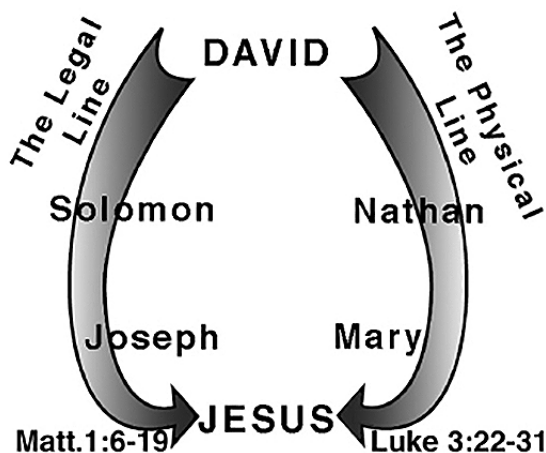
The 18-year-old Jehoiachin reigned for only 3 months and surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar in 597BC. He was taken to Babylon.

The third and final overturning of the throne of David occurred in 586BC when Zedekiah was captured.

DAVID'S LINE PRESERVED AND JEHOIACHIN RELEASED FROM PRISON

Ezekiel foretold that Jehoiachin would be released from prison at **the same time that Nebuchadnezzar received the spoils of the land of Egypt** and that conditions would be eased for the Jews in Babylon at that time. We will consider the prophecy concerning Egypt's destruction in a later article:

*“In **THAT DAY** will I cause **the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth**, and I will give thee the **opening of the mouth in the midst of them**; and they shall know that I am the LORD”* (Ezek.29:21).



While Nebuchadnezzar was struck down with madness for 7 years (Dan.4:1-37) his son Evil Merodach would have been reigning as co-regent. We read in 2Kings 15:4-7 that Jehoiachin was released from prison after 37 years by Evil Merodach just as Ezekiel had foretold. Jehoiachin was the "*horn (king) of the house of Israel*" who was permitted to "*bud forth*".

Matthew stated:

"After they were brought to Babylon, Jeconias (Jehoiachin) begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel" (Matt.1:12).

God had promised David

"There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel" (1Kings 8:25).

It was impossible for the line of David to cease otherwise the promise to David could not be fulfilled. The line of David was preserved in Babylon through Jehoiachin and his descendants right down to Joseph the husband of Mary (Matt.1:6-20).

THE THRONE RESTORED

Thus we have the promise of Gabriel to Mary who was also a descendant of David through David's son, Nathan:

"Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:31-33).

Matthew records the line of David through his son Solomon to Joseph and Luke records the Line of David through his son Nathan to Mary. These two lines of descendants converged when Joseph married Mary.

THE PURPOSE OF JUDGMENT

Even while judgment was being pronounced God reminded the nation that His purpose was to bring them to repentance and blessing. Ezekiel therefore foretold a future day when the nation would be regathered and blessed.

"As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely...with fury poured out, will I rule over you... And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that

*transgress against me... For in mine holy mountain ...there shall all the house of Israel, **all of them in the land**, serve me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings” (Ezek.20:33-40).*

Even after denouncing the whoredom (idolatry) of Jerusalem in Ezekiel chapter 16, God says:

*“**NEVERTHELESS** I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, **and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant ...and thou shalt know that I am the LORD**” (Ezek.16:60-62).*

The covenants with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David were unconditional and one day Israel will turn to the Lord, the nation will be restored to the land, and the throne of David will re-established. God said:

“My servant David shall be their prince for ever” (Ezek.37:25).

Israel's failure is not final. If God has no future for His covenant people Israel, then He cannot be trusted to keep His promises. But to the Hebrews God said:

*“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. **Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)** (Heb.10:22-23).*

*“If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet **he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself**” (2Tim.2:12-13).*

God has eternally bound Himself to keep His promises to His people and it is utterly impossible for any of His promises to fail.

*“Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, **which GOD, THAT CANNOT LIE, promised** before the world began” (Titus 1:1-2).*

God's promises to Abraham were irrevocable and eternal. After Abraham had died (Gen 25:8) God told Isaac that He would be blessed because of the promises to Abraham:

“I will perform the oath which I swear 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).

The physical descendants of Abraham must one day come into wonderful blessing and will be a blessing to all nations in the millennial kingdom after Christ returns in glory and power.

Peter was well aware of this when he preached at Pentecost and told the nation:

*"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, 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... **Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed**"* (Acts 3:19-25).

These words were spoken to the **physical seed** of Abraham and cannot be applied to the Church. They were spoken shortly after the nation had "*killed the Prince of life*". **The world awaits the day of Israel's repentance and the fulfilment of God's promises to Abraham's seed** when the nation will be blessed and be a blessing to all nations.

Ezekiel Part 4 - The Price of Cursing

Abraham's Seed

Chapter 25

CHAPTER 25 of Ezekiel's prophecy indicates what God thinks of those who hate Israel. Even though Israel is under Divine chastening the Gentiles must love them. Paul stated:

*"As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, **they are beloved for the father's sakes**. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance"* (Rom.11:28-29).

Thus far in our studies we have seen God's judgments pronounced against Jerusalem for her great wickedness because Ezekiel was prophesying in the period of history when the nation had passed the point of no return. Judgment was imminent.

While Ezekiel was prophesying in Babylon, Jeremiah was sounding out the same warnings at Jerusalem yet King Jehoiakim and King Zedekiah had refused to turn from wickedness. Instead, they looked to the idolatrous Egyptians for help and worshipped the idols of the heathen. The false prophets were flourishing in the land of Israel and their lies were believed by the nation.

There could be no doubt that Israel's judgment was warranted and that the final invasion by Nebuchadnezzar was justified.

The nations living on Israel's borders were heathen nations that had their own national gods. Moab's national god was Chemosh and Moabites were known as *"the children of Chemosh"* (Num.21:29).

The Philistines worshipped Dagon, the father of Baal and the Ammonites worshipped the awful god Moloch and Milcom was their national deity. Asherah, the goddess of fertility and sex, was the chief god of Tyre and was known as the "the Lady of the Sea" in view of Tyre's maritime interests.

When Israel turned to idolatry God allowed these ungodly nations to afflict His people but all of these nations hated the God of Israel and were a constant thorn in the side of Israel. When they saw the

Babylonian armies devastating the land, they rejoiced that the people of God were destroyed and the Temple burned. Animosity was not just against Jews but against the Lord God of Israel who had chosen the nation to be His

“special people unto Himself above all people that are on the face of the earth”
(Deut.7:6).

For this reason we find in chapters 25 to 31 great judgments pronounced against **Moab, Ammon, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon and Egypt**. In every case these judgments are sent because they rejoiced over Israel’s calamities or were a thorn in the side of Israel. Egypt is even judged because she failed to support Israel when Israel sinned by looking to them for help!

It is perfectly clear that Israel’s sin could not be used as an excuse for hatred against God’s people. The neighbouring nations **should have repented of their idolatry and mourned** that Israel was turning to idolatry and as a consequence had come under Divine judgment.

Today, Israel is an unbelieving nation: she is scattered among the nations and those who have returned have done so in unbelief. Secular Jews have no time for Jesus Christ and orthodox Jews may even spit on the ground in contempt at the mention of the precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ; their true Messiah. Blindly they follow tradition and refuse to accept the great prophecies that foretold Messiah’s first Advent. Missionaries are despised and persecuted in Israel today just as the apostles were despised but Paul wrote that Jews are “beloved”, not for what they are, but for the “father’s sakes”; for Abraham’s, Isaac’s, and Jacob’s sakes. When God brought



Israel out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses He told them that it was

*“because **He loved thy fathers**, therefore He chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in His sight with His mighty power out of Egypt”* (Deut.4:37).

When Ezekiel described the return of Israel in unbelief as recorded in chapter 36, he wrote:

*“Thus saith the Lord GOD; **I do not this for your sakes**, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name’s sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went”* (Ezek.36:22. Also. Ezek.36:32)

ISRAEL’S NEIGHBOURS TO BE JUDGED

So what did God think of Israel’s neighbours in Ezekiel’s day? These were the Ammonites and Moabites who descended from Lot, the Edomites who descended from Esau and dwelt in Mt Seir. The Philistines and Phoenicians (Tyre and Sidon) were located along the sea coast and Egypt to Israel’s south.

To the Ammonites God said:

*“I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the heathen; and **I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries**: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD”* (Ezek.25:7).

The Ammonites have ceased to be a people just as the Bible foretold: Arabs now occupy the land of the Ammonites and it is part of Jordan.

Why would God so punish the Ammonites? The reason is clearly stated:

*“**Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary**, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel, when it was desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity...For thus saith the Lord GOD; **Because thou hast clapped thine hands**, and stamped with the feet, and rejoiced in heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel...”* (Ezek.25:3,6).

The sins of the Ammonites were great but their attitude to God’s people brought judgment.

Similar reasprns are given for God’s judgment on the other neighbours of Israel:

*“**Because that Moab** and Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the heathen... I will execute judgments upon Moab”* (Ezek.25:8,11).

*“Because that **Edom** hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them; Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it” (Ezek.25:12-13).*

*“Because the **Philistines** have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred; Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims, and destroy the remnant of the sea coast” (Ezek.25:15-16).*

We will consider the remaining neighbours in greater detail later but the following reasons for judgment are given for

1) Tyre

*“Because that **Tyrus** hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up” (Ezek.26:2-3).*

2) Zidon

*“Behold, I am against thee, O **Zidon**... and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall have executed judgments in her...And there shall be **no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel**, nor any grieving thorn of all that are round about them, that despised them” (Ezek.28:22-24).*

3) Egypt

*“And all the inhabitants of **Egypt** shall know that I am the LORD, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. When they took hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break, and rend all their shoulder: and when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring a sword upon thee, and cut off man and beast out of thee” (Ezek.29:6-8).*

The seriousness of adopting an antagonistic or even indifferent attitude to God’s covenant people is apparent and is a solemn warning to those today who espouse the cause of Reformed Theologians and of Replacement Theology. To theologically wipe Israel out of God’s plan for the future is

open defiance against the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who is also the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; it is a wilful denial of the Word of God.

It is possible that some of these theologians are acting in ignorance having followed the view of men whom they respect but that is no excuse when every man has his own Bible to read and the views of all men, no matter how venerated, must be judged by the Word of God.

Paul asked,

*“What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? **Much every way:** chiefly, because that **unto them were committed the oracles of God.** For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar”* (Rom.3:1-4).

The blindness of Israel in this present Church age was foretold

“Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded” (Rom.11:7).

But the blindness of Israel is **temporary** and it is the Divine intention to make a *“new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah”* (Jer.31:31). At that time God will *“forgive their iniquity”* and *“remember their sins no more”* (Jer. 31:34).

Paul tells us WHEN this will occur:

*“Blindness in part is happened to Israel, **UNTIL** the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins”* (Rom.11:25-27).

To interpret the Church as spiritual Israel is an exercise in spiritual gymnastics when it comes to interpreting the great number of promises made to the nation of Israel. The literal meaning of Scripture must be abandoned and an allegorical or symbolic interpretation adopted that can mean anything depending on who is interpreting.

Amillennialism and Replacement Theology that replaces Israel with the Church, denies the covenant promises made to Israel with an alternative view that is so bent and crooked that it amounts to a blatant denial of the Word of God. It is unbelief in the promises of God and makes God a liar!

If God judged the neighbours of Israel for rejoicing at the downfall of Israel or even failing to support Israel in the time of her calamity, who's to say that that He won't judge Amillennialists who deny the mercy of God on His covenant people and tear the great promises made to Israel out of Holy writ?

JEREMIAH'S TESTIMONY

The destruction of Israel's neighbours is also prophesied by Jeremiah. Ezekiel was prophesying in Babylon at the same time as Jeremiah was at Jerusalem. He wrote:

*"Thus saith the LORD to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck, And send them to the king of **Edom**, and to the king of **Moab**, and to the king of the **Ammonites**, and to the king of **Tyrus**, and to the king of **Zidon**, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah" (Jer.27:2-3).*

Jeremiah also foretold the destruction of Egypt, Tyre and Zidon, the Philistines, Moab, Ammon, Edom, and Damascus by Nebuchadnezzar in chapters 43 to 49.

Peter tells us that *"no prophesy of the scripture is **of any private interpretation**"* because *"holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"* (2Pet.1:20-21). There can be no contradiction between true prophets of God because the same Holy Spirit inspired all His servants. **For this reason we need to become familiar with ALL the prophetic Scriptures** if we are to be able to *"rightly divide the word of truth"*.

A remarkable prophecy was made concerning Egypt in Ezek.29:19-21. God promised the spoils of the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar as **payment for the service he rendered in destroying the coastal city of Tyre.**

We know that Egypt was desolated in 570BC following Nebuchadnezzar's dream as recorded in Daniel chapter 4:1-28. Having conquered Assyria in 612BC and Egypt in 570BC he returned twelve-months later from his Egyptian campaign boasting of the great kingdom he had established. Instantly he was struck down with madness but after seven years he turned to the Lord and was restored to his throne. He died about one year later in 562BC after a 40-year reign.

Ezekiel Chapter 34 Israel's Shepherd

ISRAEL has a special relationship with God and nowhere in the Bible is this more evident than in the prophecy of Ezekiel for the prophet was commissioned to be a “*watchman to the house of Israel*” (Ezek.3:17-21; 33:1-33) and although he prophesied concerning other nations such as Tyre, Egypt, Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistines and Babylon the central theme was Israel.

Ezekiel had a vision of the Lord as the sovereign God on the throne of heaven in chapter 1 verses 26 to 28 and all the prophecy must be seen in the light of this vision. But the brightness of the glory of God's throne throne was also seen as

“the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about” (Ezek.1:28).

Thus we see that, unlike most earthly sovereigns, God is merciful to His people even when they go astray and though Israel had turned to idolatry and was to be punished by the Babylonians, finally the nation would be greatly blessed.

A MAN IN THE GLORY

When Ezekiel saw the throne of God he saw

“upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it” (Ezek.1:26).

We are thus reminded that God made man in His own image and that He sent His beloved Son in the form of a man to redeem us from our lost estate. Though God is sovereign He is approachable and desires to show mercy.

Ezekiel used the Divine title, “*Lord GOD*” 214 times out of a total of 290 times in the Old Testament. The title “*Lord*” in the lower case is “*adoni*” meaning “sovereign” and the title “*GOD*” in the upper case means “*Jehovah*” which is the special name God gave to the nation of Israel to identify Himself apart from the names of the gods of the heathen (Exod.6:3).

Israel's King is the Lord Jesus Christ and He is a “*man Christ Jesus*” upon the throne of heaven as Paul wrote:

*"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, **the man Christ Jesus**; Who gave himself a ransom for all" (1Tim.2:5-6).*

ISRAEL IN THE LAST DAYS

As we read the prophecy of Ezekiel we find it scathing concerning the sins of the nation but we also see a silver lining in the dark clouds of judgment. The prophecy that begins to a people who are in rebellion to God ends in incredible, universal, and everlasting blessing for the nation.

Psalm 136 repeats the refrain, *"for His mercy endureth for ever"* 26 times; it begins with creation and traces God's dealings with Israel showing that they are the objects of the mercy of God and from chapter 34 to the end of the prophecy we have described just HOW God will show mercy to His people in the last days.

Chapter 34 describes the Lord as the Shepherd of Israel who one day will judge the false shepherds and will one day seek out, heal, and feed His lost sheep placing David over them again in the millennial kingdom.

Chapter 35 describes how God will judge the surrounding nations that have afflicted Israel through the centuries. *"when the whole earth rejoices"* in the millennial kingdom, these enemies will be *"desolate"*.

Chapter 36 describes how God will bring Israel back to the land in the last days in order to deal with them and bring them to repentance. He promises great blessing in the land.

Chapter 37 describes the process that God will use to restore the nation and to unite both kingdoms as one nation on the mountains of Israel.

Chapters 38 and 39 describe the day when the whole nation will be humbled and come in true repentance entering into a new covenant with God. Every Jew will be restored to the land in Christ's universal kingdom.

Chapters 40 to 48 describe how Israel will be established in the land in the last days and the glory of God will return to a millennial Temple. The worship of the LORD in the millennium is described in detail as Israel becomes the centre where the presence of God will dwell. The entire prophecy concludes with the words, *"The LORD is there!"* (Ezek.48:35).

THE SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL

Chapter 34 reveals God as the Shepherd of Israel.

Israel is God's flock and God is their Shepherd. David said "*The LORD is my shepherd.*"

David saw God himself as an under-shepherd subject to the Chief Shepherd.

Psalm 80 states:

"Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth" (v.1).

The psalm goes on to pray that God would turn the nation back to Himself and deliver them from their enemies and that prayer is answered in Ezek.34.

The false under-shepherds that had been entrusted with caring for the flock had used their position to their own advantage and had no care for the flock.

When Jesus came He accused the Pharisees of "devouring widows houses" (Matt.23:14) of binding "heavy burdens and grievous to be borne" (Matt.23:4) and "compassing sea and land to make one proselyte", and make him "twofold more the child of hell" than themselves! (Matt.23:15).

These were false shepherds and the ungodly religious leaders of the nation of Israel today are to be judged before the nation is converted and returns to the Shepherd of Israel.

David was a shepherd boy defending his flock from the lion and the bear and God made him the shepherd of God's flock. God said:

"I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel" (2Sam.7:8).

David was a true shepherd. When he sinned in numbering the people and God sent a pestilence into the land and people were dying he prayed,

"These sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house" (2Sam.24:17).

It is not surprising that God said

"I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD

*will be their God, and my servant **David a prince among them**; I the LORD have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace” (Ezek.34:23-25).*

David was raised with Christ from Paradise and will rule with the 12 apostles who will sit on 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel in the millennium (Matt.19:28).

JESUS A DIVINE SHEPHERD

The Lord Jesus is the Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep. He gave His “*life for the sheep*” (John 10:11). Zechariah wrote of the Lord:

*“And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Awake, O sword, against **my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD** of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered” (Zech.13:6-7).*

Jesus quoted this verse and applied it to Himself in Mark 14:27. Jesus is the “*fellow*”, the “*associate*” of Jehovah God in the Godhead. He was ever with the Father and was sent by the Father to be the Saviour of the world.

Ezekiel saw Him on the throne in eternity past and He is now risen and seated on the same throne but as the “*man Christ Jesus*”. One day He will be King of kings on the throne of David at Jerusalem for 1,000 years before He delivers the kingdom up to the Father (1Cor.15:24) in the New Heaven and Earth.

In the Old Testament Jesus appeared as “*the Angel of the Lord*” in His pre-incarnation appearances. Angels appeared as men in the Old Testament but angels were not men. The Lord Jesus however, became truly man to be the sacrifice for our sins and while he was seen by Ezekiel in the likeness of a man on the throne of heaven today He is truly man on the throne of heaven and He says “*because I live ye shall live also!*” (John 14:19). Christ is God in human form **reigning as sovereign** on the throne with the Father.

One day soon, Christ will reign on **the throne of David on earth** (Luke 1:33) and every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD - JOHN 10

Christ is also the truly Good Shepherd who came the first time to Israel to seek that which was lost. He said:

*“Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 10:6 But go rather to **the lost sheep of the house of Israel**” (Matt. 10:5-6).*

When Christ came there were many who tried to become King and Jesus told a short “parable” (vs. 1-6) which the disciple did not understand.

Jesus said:

*“He that entereth not by the door into **the sheepfold**, but climbeth up **some other way, the same is a thief and a robber**. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. **To him the porter openeth; and the sheep bear his voice:** and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out” (John 10:1-3).*

The “sheepfold” was Israel and soon after Jesus was born Herod the Great died and Archelaus his son took over the kingdom without an appointment by Caesar. He claimed his father made the appointment before he died.

At first Archelaus tried to appear a kind king but when there was trouble at the passover he slaughtered 6,000 Jews in the Temple. When Joseph returned with Mary and Jesus from Egypt he was afraid to go into Judea and instead went to Galilee (Matt.2:22).

Finally the question of Herod’s successor had to be determined by Caesar and Archelaus went to Rome but his brother Antipas also went to contest the throne of Israel.

While Archelaus was away many rose up claiming to be King of Israel and many died. Gamaliel mentions just two of these in Acts 5:33-39; Theudas and Judas of Galilee. These were just two of a number who rose up at the time when Jesus was just a child.

Josephus wrote of “10,000s” involved in uprisings at that time (*Antiquities*, Book 17, ch.10).

There was an expectation that the time for Messiah to appear had come and Luke mentions Anna the prophetess “*spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem*” (Luke2:38).

Simeon had had revealed to him that he would not “*see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ*” (Luke 2:26).

Even 30 years later, the Pharisees asked the Lord, “*when the kingdom of God should come*” (Luke 17:20).

Satan also knew that Christ was to appear and had many false Messiahs appearing. Daniel chapter 9 could be interpreted to show exactly when Christ would present Himself to the nation as King. The only thing they did not know was, how old He would be before He did.

Therefore Jesus said,

“All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them” (John 10:8).

The true Shepherd of Israel would be recognised by the Godly sheep.

***“To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice*”** (John 10:3).

Who was the “*porter*” who opened the door for Christ to begin His ministry to Israel? John the Baptist of course! When Jesus went to John and was baptised, the Spirit descended just as God had told him it would and he knew that Jesus was the Son of God. He said he was not worthy to loose Jesus’ shoe lachets and that Christ must increase but John himself, must decrease.

John was foretold in the prophets (Isa.40:3) that he would be the

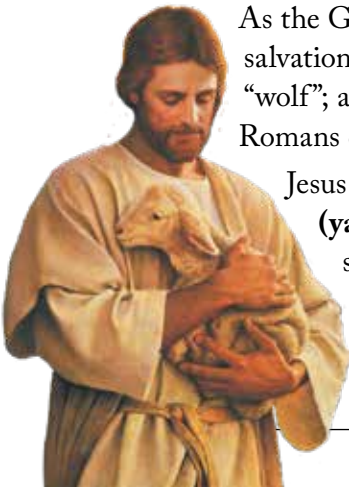
“voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God” (Isa.40:3).

John was the porter foretold to introduce the true Messiah.

As the Good Shepherd Jesus said He was the door to salvation but the false Messiah’s would be slain by the “*wolf*”; a wild beast, representing the Gentiles for the Romans came and destroyed them (John 10:12).

Jesus referred to the **sheepfold** as **the saved in the fold (yard) of Israel**; they were true “*Israel of God*” but He spoke of “*other sheep*” that were not Jews who He would lead in the future.

*“As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And **other sheep***



*I have, which are not of this fold (yard): them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be **one fold (flock)**, and one shepherd” (John10:15-16).*

The other sheep were **not Jews** and were not in the fold (yard) of Israel. Jesus was indicating that He would build His Church at Pentecost and there would be “*one FLOCK*” - not fold. **The Greek word is different. The Church is not in the fold of Israel- literal or spiritual.** But saved Jews would be in the “*flock*” of the Church along with the Gentiles for there is now “*one flock*”.

The Disciples did not understand this at the time but after Pentecost they came to see that Jews and Gentiles were **one in the Body of Christ (Eph.4:4).**

But He is also the King of Israel who will shepherd that nation in the glory of His eternal Kingdom.

The Lord Jesus is described by Peter as the **Chief Shepherd** and elders in the Church are **under-shepherds** who are to “*feed the flock of God*” (1Peter 5:2; Acts 20:28). He said:

*“When the **Chief Shepherd** shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”*

So the **Church is Christ’s flock today** and saved Jews were His sheep inside the fold of the nation of Israel.

It is important to note that the unsaved Jews in Jesus’ day were **not** His sheep. To those Jews who did not believe He said:

*“But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. **My Father, which gave them me,** is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my Father are one” (John 10:26-30).*

The Father gave the saved Jews to Jesus when OT saints became NT saints and they became Jesus’ sheep. All Christ’s sheep are eternally secure. Hallelujah!!

Note: Mormans teach that the Mormon religion in the US are the “other sheep” that were not in the fold.

The Judgment of all who Hate Israel -

Isa.34

*"Come near, ye nations, to hear... For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations... Their slain also shall be cast out, and **their stink shall come up** out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven (asteroids) shall be dissolved (lit. "melt", burn), and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host (asteroids) 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" (Isa.34:1-5).*

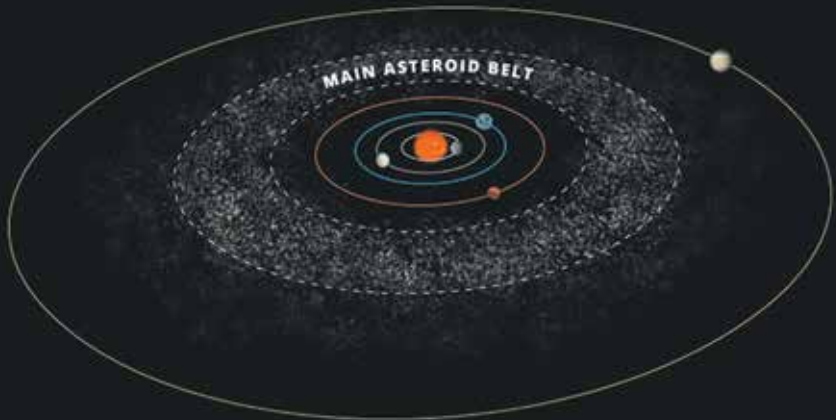
THE age in which we live will end in a blood bath of unimaginable proportions and it relates to how the nations have dealt with Israel.

THE HEAVENS ROLLED TOGETHER

The invasion of Israel by Islamic forces described in Ezekiel 38/39 is described in the above passage. In only two places in scripture do we read of the heavens being "rolled together as a scroll"; here and in Rev.6:14 when the 6th seal is broken. It is during the seal judgments that Islamic terrorism takes peace from the earth and Islam with Russia invade Israel.

In both of these passages we read of asteroids falling upon the earth. In Rev.6:13 we read:

"And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind" (Rev.6:13).



In Isa.34:4 we read similar words:

“All the host of heaven (asteroids) shall be dissolved (lit. “melt”, burn), and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host (asteroids) shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree”.

Ezekiel prophesied that when the Russian/Islamic armies invade Israel in the Tribulation God will reign upon them “great hailstones, fire and brimstone” (Ezek.38:22).

When the Bible speaks of stars falling upon the earth it does not mean the stars in the galaxies but shooting stars or asteroids. There are millions perhaps trillions ranging from boulders to Ceres which is 950 km diameter. There are 200 asteroids that are larger than 100km diameter.

When small rocks enter the earth’s atmosphere they burn up as shooting stars but larger rocks strike the earth. there was a shower of rocks that struck the earth in Josua’s day when “the Lord cast down stones from heaven” upon the kings of the Amorites and “they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew” (Josh.10:11).

THE LAND WILL STINK

In only three places do we read that the land will be stinking with the dead bodies that cover the ground. In Isa.34:3we read:

“Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.”

In Joel chapter 2 we have the prophecy of the Russian/Islamic invasion of Israel and when Israel turns to the Lord God will destroy the “northern army”.

*“But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, **and his stink shall come up, and his ill savor shall come up**, because he hath done great things” (Joel 2:20).*

Ezekiel also speaks of this stench. Ezek.39:11 reads:

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamongog.”

All three scriptures have to do with the Russian/Islamic invasion.

WHY SUCH JUDGMENT?

“For it is the day of the LORD’s vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion” (Isa.34:8).

There is a reason for such awful judgment on the nations and it is to recompense the nations for their treatment of God’s chosen people Israel. From the very beginning, God promised Abraham that those who cursed Israel would be cursed (Gen.12:3). The promise is unconditional and whether Israel are righteous or unrighteous they are God’s chosen people. Ezekiel confirms this principle again and again.

The **Ammonites** were to be judged because they said, *“Aha, against My sanctuary”* (Ezek.25:3).

The **Moabites** were to be judged because they said, *“Behold, the house of Judah is like all the heathen”* (Ezek.25:8).

The **Edomites** were to be judged because *“they dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance”* (Ezek.25:12).

The **Philistines** were to be judged because they *“have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart”* (Ezek.25:12).

Tyre was to be destroyed because she said, against Jerusalem, *“Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people”* (Ezek.26:2).

Egypt was to be destroyed because when Israel looked for help they failed to support her and *“when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand”* (Ezek.29:7).

We cannot over-emphasise how serious it is to oppose Israel or to curse God’s chosen race. Even when Israel is away from God we dare not take a contrary position in relation to Israel.

God will chasten Israel and He may use nations to do it but those nations that go beyond what God intended place themselves under the judgment of God; they must see themselves as mere instruments in God’s hands and not as a bitter opponent of God’s nation.

The **Babylonians** were sent to judge Israel and Nebuchadnezzar was called God’s servant (Jer.27:6) yet the Babylonians mocked the Jews and their God and so God said:

“And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction” (Zech.1:15).

Zechariah wrote:

“He sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants” (Zech.2:8-9).

Satan controls the kingdoms of men and it is no wonder they are continually against Israel. When Satan possesses Antichrist half-way through the Tribulation it will be his chief aim to entirely wipe out the Jews and would be successful if it were not that they seek the Lord and the Lord fights for them.

Ezekiel Chapter 35 Israel's Neighbours

THERE is no doubt that chapter 34 of Ezekiel's prophecy concludes with a prophetic message of Israel in the last days. Chapter 36 through to 39 gives even more details of Israel in the last days and it would be surprising if chapter 35 did not also relate to the last days.

The message in chapter 35 is addressed to Mount Seir which was the land of Edom.

Ezekiel wrote the prophecies of ch.33:21 to the end of chapter 39 in the 12th year of Jehoiachin's captivity which was 585BC; it was the year **after** Jerusalem had been destroyed and the Temple burned.

When one who escaped from Jerusalem arrived in Babylon to tell what had happened (Ezek.33:21), Ezekiel then was given the message from the Lord. Eighteen months had passed before Ezekiel was informed of the gruesome details.

It is not surprising that the prophecy first is directed against the shepherds of Israel who had failed the people and were responsible for the judgment of God falling on the city as seen in chapter 34 but the next prophecy was concerning the Edomites from Mount Seir.

We learn from Psalm 137 that the Edomites assisted the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem. and in the Book of Esdras Zerubbabel reminds Darius the Great of a vow he had made before he became King of Persia, that he would rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem which he said,

"the Edomites burned when Judea was made desolate by the Chaldees" (1Esdras4:45).

The Psalmist in Babylon during the captivity wrote:

"Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof" (Ps.137:7).

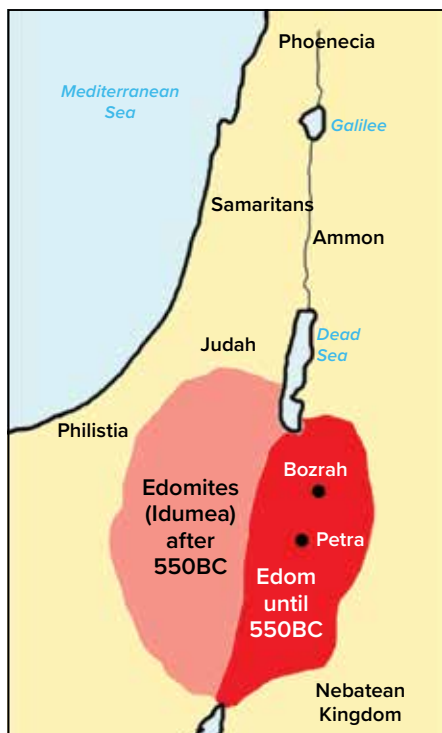
Jeremiah wrote:

"O daughter of Edom, ...thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked... he will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom; he will discover thy sins" (Lam.4:21-22).

"Concerning Edom, thus saith the LORD of hosts; Is wisdom no more



in Teman? ...If grapegatherers come to thee, would they not leave some gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough” (Jer. 49:7-9).



Bozrah would be made desolate:

*“For I have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, that **Bozrah shall become a desolation**, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes” (Jer.49:13).*

About 550BC the Nabateans, a desert people, drove the Edomites out of Mount Seir and they occupied the southern part of Judah which had been left vacant when the Jews were taken to Babylon.

When the Jews returned from Babylon they found the Edomites had occupied the land of Judah and the Persians decreed that “the Edomites should give over the villages of the Jews which then they held” (1Esdras 4:50).

Obadiah prophesied that “*there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau*” (Obad.1:18).

In the time of the Maccabees the Edomites were forced to convert to Judaism and accept circumcision. Herod the Great was an Edomite, appointed King by Caesar. In AD70, 20,000 Edomites joined the defenders for a while and then left but they have ceased to exist as a nation.

The land of Mount Seir is today occupied by Arabs who are seeking to lay claim to the whole land of Palestine and Ezekiel says they would say:

*“Because thou **hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine**, and we will possess it; whereas the LORD was there: Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will even do according to thine anger, and according to **thine envy which thou hast used out of thy hatred against them**; and I will make myself known among them, when I have judged thee”* (Ezek.35:10-11), and

*“Thus saith the Lord GOD; **When the whole earth rejoiceth**, I will make thee desolate”* (Ezek.35:14).

This takes us forward to the Millennial kingdom when the whole earth will be blessed the land of Mount Seir will be desolate so much so that Isaiah says it will be burning perpetually:

*“For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. ...for the LORD hath a sacrifice **in Bozrah**, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. ...For it is the day of the LORD’s vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. And **the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch.** It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever”* (Isa.34:5-10).

If the rivers run with pitch it suggest that just as Saddam Hussein set fire to the oil wells in Kuwait, so the oil will be on fire continually in Mount Seir.

This judgment on the land of Mount Seir will occur in the last days and the land will be desolate when “*the whole earth rejoices*” which can only be when Christ returns and reigns over the whole earth. It will be



Oil wells set alight by Saddam Hussein in Kuwait

a perpetual **reminder** of what happens to those who hate God's people Israel.

Isaiah indicates that this judgment will occur when the

*"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" (Isa.34:3-4).*

The only other time that we read of the heavens departing as a scroll is in Rev.6:14 during the 6th Seal judgment:

"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places."

This places the destruction of the Palestinians at the time that the Russian-led Islamic army is destroyed in Israel when the stench will cause people to block their noses as the dead are buried for 7 months. (Ezek.39:11-12).

After the Russian invasion of Israel the dead will be buried in a valley named Hamon-gog on the east side of the Dead Sea (Ezek.39:11); in Edom.

Today Hamas, the PLO, Hezbollah, and other Terrorist organizations are filled with hatred for Israel. The curse of the Abrahamic Covenant is on each one of them and the burning of Mount Seir will be a reminder in the Millennium.

We remember that God destroyed Sodom and the cities of the plain with fire and the entire area sank at that time. In all probability the gas resources and the oil were released to fuel the fire at that time.

We know that "*the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits*"(Gen.14:10) before Sodom was burned. **Slimepits are pitch, asphalt, or bitumin** and are associated with oil deposits. The slimepits were "bubbling up" from the ground for that is the thought in the Hebrew. When a drill enters an oil and gas deposit the oil bubbles up from the ground. It is characteristic of fossil fuels either gas, oil or bitumin.

The lesson to learn from Edom is not to curse Israel under any circumstances.

Ezekiel Chapter 36

Israel's Two Returns to the Land

THUS far in our studies in the prophecy of Ezekiel we have seen that the Book is in two major sections:

Part A from chapters 1 to 32 relates largely to the sin of the people in Ezekiel's day and the prophecies were given **BEFORE** 586BC when judgment fell on the sinning nation and the Babylonians came for the third time and destroyed both the city of Jerusalem and the Temple.

In chapter 33 Ezekiel is appointed as a watchman to warn the house of Israel for the second time; the first time was recorded in Ezek.3:17-21.

Part B from chapter 33 to the end of the Book records prophecies given **AFTER** Jerusalem was destroyed in 586BC and therefore must be future. From chapter 33 and verse 21 to the end of ch.39, the prophecy was given 18 months after Jerusalem was destroyed, in the **12th year** of Ezekiel's captivity in Babylon. Jerusalem was destroyed in the 11th year. Chapters 40 to 48 record a prophecy given in the **25th year** of Ezekiel's captivity, 572BC, and describes the Temple in the millennial kingdom after Christ's return.

Chapters 33 to 39 foretell the events that are largely still future but necessary to bring Israel to repentance and fit for the return of the Lord and so they can reign with Him in the kingdom. This preparation requires a **sovereign act of God to re-establish the nation** in the land after the Roman captivity in AD70 so that God can deal with the Jews as a nation. This has had its fulfilment in our day when Israel again became a nation in 1948.

PREPARING ISRAEL FOR CHRIST'S RETURN

Under the terms of the Palestinian Covenant described in Deut. chs.28-30, God has promised to bring the nation back to the land if, after they are scattered among the nations, they repent. However, Ezekiel prophesies that, in order for Israel to repent, a **partial return to the land in unbelief** is necessary and that this cannot be under the terms of the Palestinian Covenant.

Before Israel can be blessed under the terms of the Palestinian Covenant a number of things must occur and Ezekiel prophesied them in chapters 34 through 39:

- i) The ungodly leaders must be judged and removed. We have already seen that this is prophesied in ch.34 where the shepherds will be disposed of and the Lord will be the Good Shepherd of His people. In the millennial kingdom David will be a prince among them.
- ii) The hateful neighbours must be judged and we saw that prophesied in ch. 35. The Palestinian cause will be disposed of and judged.
- iii) There must be an unbelieving nation of Israel existing in the land and this is prophesied in chapter 36
- iv) The nation of Israel must be invaded and threatened with extinction in order to bring the Jews to their knees. But this impossible if the Jews are not a nation in the land therefore a return outside the conditions of the Palestinian Covenant must occur and this is described in chapters 36 and 37.

Ezekiel knew about the Babylonian captivity but as far as we know, had no knowledge of the Roman captivity in AD70.

Two captivities were prophesied in the Palestinian Covenant; the Babylonian captivity when Israel had a king (Deut.28:36) and the Roman captivity when they had no king (Deut.28:49-50). The Roman symbol of the eagle is mentioned in relation to the second captivity.

Israel was idolatrous when the Babylonian captivity occurred but no mention is made of idols when the Roman captivity would occur.

When the Roman captivity occurred Jews would be taken as slaves to Egypt and Josephus indicates the Roman sent Jews to work in mines in Egypt (Deut.28:68).

CHAPTER 36 -

1) THE LAND IS ADDRESSED

Chapter 36 is a prophecy addressed to the LAND of Israel:

“Son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD: 36:2 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha, even the ancient high places are

ours in possession: Therefore prophesy and say...Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which became a prey and derision to the residue of the heathen that are round about..." (Ezek.36:1-4).



2) GOD PROMISES THE LAND WILL BE FRUITFUL AGAIN

God specifically states that He will return some of them to the land in spite of their continued unbelief. It cannot be ALL of them because other scriptures teach that many will come back after the Lord returns. He states:

*"But ye, **O mountains of Israel**, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall **be tilled and sown**: And **I will multiply men upon you**, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and **the wastes shall be builded**"*(Ezek.36:8-10).





THE LAND IS BEING TILLED AND SOWN

The land that once was barren desert is today fruitful even exporting food and flowers to other nations. Israel's agricultural industry is the best in the world. Netanyahu boasts their cows are the best in the world and they are assisting other nations with their expertise.

Developing nations send their people there for 5 years training in agriculture and there were about 27,000 permits issued in 2013. In 2009 there were about 130,000 legal foreign workers in Israel.

Thousands of Date Palms at Engedi are producing dates. Drip irrigation has enabled them to make the desert blossom as the rose. Citrus fruits are exported to Europe and Russia.

Many Jews who migrated and lived in Kibbutz have moved into more high-tech jobs and foreign workers have taken their place working with Jewish supervision.

Arab labour is less reliable and employers don't always know how many will turn up each day but foreign workers from countries like Thailand are reliable and hard working.

In 2012 agricultural and fresh food exports amounted to 2.4 billion dollars. God said the land would be *"tilled and sown"*.

CITIES ARE BEING BUILT

This has been happening since 1948 and cities are being built both in Israel and the West Bank; the Negev desert is seeing cities built. Dimona in the Negev is where Israel's nuclear research and manufacture is done and the military training has its city in the Negev. Desalination plants



Beersheba



Aqaba



have provided the water for desert development. According to a Times of Israel news report in April 2017 the Israeli Government is planning to build 11 cities in the southern region. The initiative, would bring some 640,000 people to the Negev.

Truely **“the wastes are being builded”**.

THE POPULATION WOULD INCREASE

God said He would *“multiply men upon you”* ie. *upon the land*.

In 1800 there were 7,000 Jews in Palestine and 246,000 Muslims.

In 1914 there were 94,000 Jews and 525,000 Muslims.

In 1947 there were 630,000 Jews and 1.32 mill. muslims and christians.

In 2016 there were 6.5 mill Jews and 2 mill. Muslims and Christians in Israel.

In 2016 there were about 800,000 Jews living in the West Bank and 3.9 mill. Muslims living in the West Bank and Gaza.

The total population of the land in 2015 is approximately 13.2 mill. compared with 600,000 in 1900.

The prophecy of Ezekiel is being fulfilled before our eyes and God is **multiplying men** in the land but still they have not turned to the Lord.

NATIONHOOD IN THE LAST DAYS

In order for the prophecies to be fulfilled it is essential that the Jews become a nation in the land before God can deal with them nationally and turn them to Christ.



Other scriptures indicate that Israel must become a military force in the Middle East in the last days. Zechariah states the “*Judah shall fight at Jerusalem*” (Zech.14:14) and Isaiah states the “*Judah shall be a terror to Egypt*” (Isa.19:17).



This has happened in our day and will be more so in the Tribulation when God will make

“the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left” (Zech.12:6).

Israel’s air force, army and navy have the best weapons in the world including nuclear.

FIRST RESTORATION IS A SOVEREIGN ACT OF GOD

In Ezekiel 36, twice we read that the first restoration of the nation **has nothing to do with the promises of the Palestinian Covenant**; It is orchestrated by God in order to bring the nation to repentance. Israel has yet to pass through the “*time of Jacob’s trouble*” (Jer.30:7) when two thirds of those in the land will perish (Zech.13:8-9) and the remnant will cry out to Jesus Christ and be saved. God said:

*“Say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD; **I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name’s sake,** which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, **when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes**”* (Ezek.36:22-23).

And again:

*“**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**”* (Ezek.36:32).

What we are seeing today is not in response to repentance but is God moving the nations into position where he can bring Israel to see her sinfulness and bring her to repentance.

Why is God blessing Israel today? It is “*the goodness of God*” that is leading them to repentance (Rom.2:4).

THE JEWS MUST RETURN IN UNBELIEF FOR OTHER SCRIPTURES TO BE FULFILLED

Immediately after the Rapture Antichrist, as the head of the Revived Roman Empire, will make a 7-year covenant with Israel allowing the Temple to be built. At that moment Israel will be an unbelieving nation. Any saved Jews would have been Raptured. So there would have to be an unbelieving Jewish nation existing for such a covenant to be made. Soon after the Rapture there will be many Jews converted to Jesus Christ and 144,000 will begin to preach the Gospel of the kingdom. Therefore Ezekiel's prophecy of **two returns** to the land is consistent with Daniel's prophecy.

THE CNVERSION OF ISRAEL MUST OCCUR WHEN THEY ARE IN THE LAND

Ezekiel goes on to say that **AFTER** God brings Jews back to the land He will **then** bring them to repentance and salvation:

***“THEN** will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. **A new heart** also will I give you, and a **new spirit** will I put within you...And I will put **my spirit** within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And **ye shall dwell in the land** that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall **be my people, and I will be your God**” (Ezek.36:25-28).*

***“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” (Ezek.36:31).*

When will Israel be saved? **THEN! After a partial return.**

ISRAEL'S COMPLETE REGATHERING AFTER THEY ARE CONVERTED

A second regathering will occur **AFTER** Israel turns to the Lord and this is described in Ezek.36:33-36:

“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**” (Ezek.36:33-36).

These verses describe conditions AFTER Israel turns to the Lord during the Tribulation. They can only apply to the millennial kingdom.

The first return is partial and in unbelief and its purpose is to bring Israel to repentance but **the second return will occur when Christ returns** to His repentant and redeemed people Israel. Matthew indicates that the first thing the Lord will do after He returns will be to

*“send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and **gather together his elect (Israel)** from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other”* (Matt.24:31).

Ezekiel states in ch.39:28 after the nation is saved:

*“**THEN** shall they know that I am the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, **and have left none of them any more there.** Neither will I hide my face any more from them: **for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel,** saith the Lord GOD”* (Ezek.39:28-29).

This can be no other than the millennial kingdom when Israel will follow the Lord and never again turn away. Every last Jew in the world will reside in the land God gave to Abraham.

BUT ISRAEL MUST ASK!

The **first return** is a sovereign act of God and NOT in response to Israel turning to the Lord but the **second return** is in accord with the Palestinian Covenant which states that God will give them the land to enjoy when they *“return unto the Lord thy God”* (Deut. 30:2).

Nobody is saved by a sovereign act of God. God does sovereignly **seek** the lost; **all lost sheep**, but each sinner must seek the Lord to receive salvation and Israel can be no exception. After God has foretold Israel about what will happen in His foreknowledge, He then says:

*“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. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD”* (Ezek.36:37-38).

God sovereignly seeks lost sinners, be they Jew or Gentile, but sinners must voluntarily seek the Lord.

“Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon him while He is near” (Isa.55:6).

Ezekiel Ch. 37:1-14

Israel's National Resurrection

THE prophecy given in the 12th year of Jehoiachin's captivity continues with a vision of a **valley full of dry bones**; there are "*very many*" and they are "*very dry*" indicating they have been there for a very long time.

The bones were disconnected and scattered widely. Like other symbols given in Scripture, God tells us what the symbols mean. The interpretation is not left to our imagination. The Lord stated:

*"Then he said unto me, Son of man, **these bones are the whole house of Israel**: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts"* (Ezek.37:11).

Thus we know that these dry, disarranged and scattered bones represent the "**whole house of Israel**". They are not just the southern kingdom of Judah but the **WHOLE** house of Israel and include the 10 tribes of the northern kingdom that lost its nationhood years after Sargon II, king of Assyria took Samaria captive in 721BC. The southern kingdom is included.

Isaiah prophesied at the end of the first year of the reign of Ahaz king of Judah (740BC) and he said that the the king of Damascus, Rezin, and the King of Israel, Pekah, would be killed **within 2 years**. **He also prophesied** that the northern kingdom would cease to be "*a people*" **after 65 years**. It was in the reign of Ezarhaddon, king of Assyria, that Babylonians were brought into the northern kingdom and the remnants of the tribes intermingled with them and they **lost their Jewish identity becoming Samaritans**. (Ezra 4:2) but not all from the northern kingdom remained in their land; many resettled in Judah.

Those who hold the British Israel Theory teach that the ten tribes were lost and that they wandered across Europe to England and the British people are now the children of Israel with a part to play in the last days. Historic evidence indicates that Britons actually originally descended from Tarshish the son of Javan the son of Japheth whereas Israel came from the line of Shem.

ISRAEL SCATTERED

Some Jews of the northern kingdom were scattered by the Assyrians in 721BC into the cities of the Medes and in 606 to 586BC those that had migrated to Judah were taken to Babylon but the major scattering was in AD70 when Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus and in AD135 when Hadrian put down an uprising and many Jews were sold into slavery. Since that time the Jews have lived in isolated communities all over the world.

The dispersion was a **long period** as signified by the “*very dry*” bones but the prophecies indicate that Israel must have a presence in the land as a nation in the lat days and Ezekiel indicates the regathering would be in 3 stages.

BONES COMING TOGETHER

Since AD70 Jews have often lived in isolated communities, sometimes in ghettos, persecuted and expelled from one country after another until the Zionist Movement in 1881 when, tired of persecution, Jews started to return to Palestine in small but increasing numbers. At that time the land was desolate without roads, hospitals or any facilities.

In 1894 Captain Alfred Dreyfus of the French army, a Jew, was falsely accused and sentenced of giving secrets to the Germans. He was the victim of anti-Semitism and although he was later acquitted the injustice stirred Theodore Herzl, a lawyer, journalist and playwright, to write a book in 1896 entitled *Der Judenstaat* meaning, *The Jewish State*, in which he argued that until the Jews organized themselves into a nation they would not be able to defend themselves in the international community.

Herzl pictured the future Jewish state as a socialist utopia. He envisioned a new society that was to rise in the Land of Israel on a cooperative basis utilizing science and technology in the development of the Land. He raised money to promote a national state of Israel.

Religious Jews opposed the move to establish a State in the land since they believed the return to the land would occur when Messiah came. So strong was the opposition in Germany that he could not hold the 1st Zionist Congress there and had to hold it in Basle, Switzerland.

Herzl organized six Zionist Congresses between 1897 and 1903. He met

with Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany and the Sultan of the Ottoman Turk Empire without success. He had hoped the get wealthy Jews to pay off the debts of the Ottoman Turk Empire if land could be given to Jews in Palestine. He then turned to Britain and was offered land in Uganda but this was rejected at the 7th Zionist Congress in 1905 after a delegation visited Uganda.

The Zionist Movement was the fulfilment of Ezekiel's first prophecy to the scattered dry bones which came together. There were 200 Jews who came together to discuss a national home at the first Congress. Ezekiel said:

*"As I prophesied, there was a noise, and **behold a shaking**, and the bones came together, bone to his bone"* (Ezek.37:7).

Anti-Semitism was shaking the Jews into action and for the first time in hundreds of years secular community leaders of the Jews came together with a view to establishing a Jewish nation in the land of Palestine. However, it would take the greater *shaking* of the holocaust to drive the Jews back in large numbers and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 brought yet another flood of refugees.

SINEWS ON THE SKELETONS

As Ezekiel watched he saw sinews come upon the skeletons and the valley that had been full of dry, disorganized bones, became a valley of corpses with no life in them.

This prophecy was fulfilled when Israel returned to the land in unbelief and became a nation of spiritually dead Jews in 1948. Ezekiel wrote:

*"When I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: **but there was no breath in them**"* (Ezek.37:8).

It was WWI and the holocaust that **shook the Jewish people** out of their apathy and God used it to bring the Jewish State into being. Dr Chaim Weizmann was a Jewish scientist who discovered how to manufacture explosives without shipping raw materials from South America. In recognition of this assistance which turned the tide of WWI, Lord Balfour made the following declaration:

"His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use

their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

On 29 Nov.1947 the UN decided to partition Palestine as shown on the adjacent map. This isolated the Jews into three areas and was impractical. It would be impossible to protect the borders.

The boundaries of a new Jewish State changed after the war of independence and on 14 May 1948 David Ben Gurion declared Israel to be a nation among the nations of the world. The declaration was immediately ratified by USA and Russia and on 11 May 1949 the UN received Israel into its membership.

WAR OF INDEPENDENCE 29 NOV.1947 TO 20 JULY 1949

Israel was invaded by the combined forces of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Sudan on 29 Nov. 1947 and Israel was triumphant after the loss of 6,373 killed and 15,000 wounded. The Arab nations finally signed an armistice and Israel increased the area given them by the UN by 5,000 sq.km.

Before the War of Independence the Arab nations told the Palestinians to take a holiday in neighbouring countries while



they drove the Jews into the sea and hundreds of thousands took the advice. After the war they wanted to return but the Jews refused to allow them.

Several wars have been fought since but Israel has been victorious and in 1967 recovered all of the West Bank that was previously occupied by Jordan.

The Gaza Strip was recovered but later given back to the Palestinians. Today Israel is a powerful nation with 6.5 million Jews in Israel and another 800,000 in the West Bank.

The Jews are quite diverse; either secular and religious (Ultra-Orthodox, Orthodox, or Conservative). Religious Jews have large families and now make up over 40% of the population. They plan to rebuild the Temple and the *Temple Institute* has prepared the furniture, implements and priestly garments. The Temple mount however, is controlled by the Waqf, a Muslim group who resist any Jew praying on the Temple Mount.

The sinews are on the dry bones!

ISRAEL'S CONVERSION

Ezekiel was finally told to prophesy to the wind:

*"Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, **that they may live**" (Ezek.37:9).*

God said that when He has brought them into the land

*"ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, **And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live**, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD" (Ezek.37:13-14).*

The day of Israel's conversion has **not yet come** but it will come in the Tribulation. The word "*wind*" in the Hebrew is the same as the word for "*spirit*" and "*breath*" and Ezekiel prophesied that the Spirit of God would blow upon the dead Jews and breath His life into them but Israel must seek the Lord Jesus Christ first.

In chapter 36 we read that the blessings of the millennial kingdom must be sought by Israel **before** they can receive them

"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. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD" (Ezek.36:37-38).

The nation of Israel will turn to Christ when the Russian/Islamic invasion takes place in the first half of the Tribulation and this is foretold in chapters 38/39 of Ezekiel's prophecy.

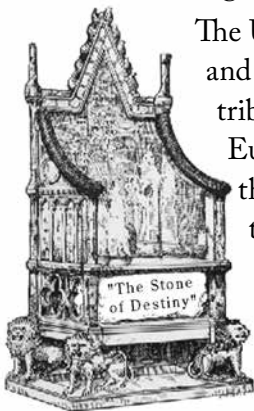
TWO STICKS, JUDAH AND ISRAEL JOINED EZEK.37:15 - 28

In the second half of the chapter Ezekiel is told to take two sticks and write on one the name, Judah and on the other, Ephraim.

These are the names of the two kingdoms of Israel; north and south which were divided in the days of Kings Rehoboam (Judah) and Jeroboam (Ephraim).

The two sticks were to be joined to become one stick in Ezekiel's hand. The message was clear that God would bring ALL the tribes of Israel back to the land and not just Judah.

After the Babylonian captivity the Jews returned to Judah and the mixed race of Samaritans occupied the land of Ephraim. This has led some to teach that only the tribe of Judah are Jews and that the northern kingdom has been lost but this is totally unscriptural.



Coronation Chair at Westminster

The United Church of God (ex. Herbert W. Armstrong) and others teach the "British Israel Theory" that the 10 tribes from the northern kingdom wandered across Europe and eventually settled in England. They claim that the throne of England is the throne of David and that the tribe of Ephraim migrated to America.

In keeping with this teaching they meet on the Jewish sabbath instead of the Lord's Day and observe the Jewish Feast days.

One group teach that Jeremiah took the two daughters of Zedekiah, the last king of Israel, to

Egypt and then to Ireland where one was married to the King of Ireland who became the king of England. Also that the stone that Jacob slept on when he fled from Esau was taken with him to Laban and returned with him when he came back.

Jeremiah was supposed to have taken this stone to Egypt and thence to Ireland and that it was the “stone of destiny” under the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey where the kings and queens of England are crowned.

Unfortunately the Scots stole the stone in 1950. It was returned in 1952. The full story is given in Wikipedia Encyclopedia and is recorded on pages 63 and 64.

The “Lost 10 Tribe Theory” is based of myths and if it was true the British and Americans will all have to return to the land of Israel.

Dr Cooper has researched over 50 manuscripts from the British museum of ancient kings of England who all trace their genealogy back to Japheth the son of Noah. Israel is descended from Shem, NOT Japheth.

WERE THE 10 TRIBES EVER LOST?

It can be shown from Scripture that the 10 tribes were never lost and there is no historical evidence to support the theory of the 10 tribes migrating to Britain.

- i) The Assyrian king Sargon II who captured Samaria in 721BC stated in his records that he took only 27,290 captives from Samaria.
- ii) After Samaria was taken captive, Hezekiah invited “*all Israel*” who were the “*remnant that escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria*” to a passover (2Chron.30:1-11).
- iii) Still later, Josiah collected money from “*all the remnant of Israel*” to repair the Temple (2Chron.34:9).
- iv) Many from the 10 tribes resettled in Judah to escape the idolatry in the north (2Chron.11:13-14).
- v) James wrote his epistle to “*the twelve tribes scattered abroad*” (James 1:1).
- vi) Jesus sent the disciples out to preach to the “*lost sheep of the house of Israel*” and they didn’t leave Palestine (Matt.10:6).

Ezekiel states that **all the tribes** of Israel will be united into one nation when they turn to the Lord. The message of the two sticks makes it clear that God

*“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... And **David my servant shall be king over them...** And they shall **dwell in the land** that I have given unto Jacob my servant... I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will ... **set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore...** And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, **when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore**” (Ezek.37:22-28).*

When Ezekiel prophesied, the Temple had been destroyed so he must have spoken of the millennial Temple which would be built when God will dwell in their midst for evermore. The Temple is described in Ezekiel chs. 40 to 43.

THE LAND DIVIDED AMONG THE 12 TRIBES

In the final chapter of Ezekiel’s prophecy he describes the division of the land in the millennial kingdom and all of the 12 tribes thier respective portions of the land

Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, and Judah will be locacated NORTH of Jerusalem (Ezek.48:1-8).

The Levites will be located at Jerusalem *“between the border of Judah and Benjamin”* in the Prince’s portion.

“The rest of the tribes” - Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun and Gad will be located SOUTH of Jerusalem (Ezek.48:23-29).

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE UK AND USA IF THEY ARE JEWS?

If the 10 tribes have been lost and become the British people then how can they be given a portion of land in the millennial kingdom?

Also, IF America and Britain equate to the lost tribes, who will occupy America and Britain in the millennial kingdom because **EVERY Jew must return** to the land after Christ returns:

*“Then shall they know that I am the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and **have left none of them any more there**” (Ezek.39:28)*

***ALSO THE 12 TRIBES WILL BE NAMED
AFTER THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL.***

Jerusalem will be at the centre of the tribes after Christ returns and the tribes will go to Jerusalem to worship on the feast days. Each tribe will have their own gate to enter the city and the gates will be named after the 12 tribes.

*“And the gates of the city shall be after the names of the tribes of Israel: **three gates northward**; one gate of Reuben, one gate of Judah, one gate of Levi.*

And at the east side four thousand and five hundred: and three gates; and one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan.

And at the south side four thousand and five hundred measures: and three gates; one gate of Simeon, one gate of Issachar, one gate of Zebulun.

At the west side four thousand and five hundred, with their three gates; one gate of Gad, one gate of Asher, one gate of Naphtali” (Ezek.48:31-34).

The two tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim; the sons of Joseph, will use the same gate which will be called Joseph. The reason for this is to allow one gate for the priests and Levites to enter and one gate is allocated to Levi for this purpose.

The name of the city will be *Jehovah-shammah* which means “the LORD is there”(Ezek.48:35).

The prophecy of the two sticks in Ezekiel’s hand that become ONE STICK means what it says that in the last days that ALL 12 tribes will be represented. There may be some surprises as Isaiah says:

*“For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, **and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away**. (Gentiles won’t be in the land!)*

“The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been? (There will be surprise when ALL the Jews return from the Gentile countries)

*“Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and **they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders**” (Isa.49:19-22).*

(In the kingdom Jews will be highly regarded and will receive every assistance to get back to the land -

“the Lord will send forth his angels with the sound of a great trumpet to gather together His elect from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other” (Matt.24:31).

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you” (Zech. 8:23).

MORMONS AND THE TWO STICKS

Mormons teach that the two sticks that are joined together are the Bible (Judah) and the book of Mormon (Joseph).

They believe that the two are joined to make ONE message for the last days. The Book of Mormon teaches another Gospel to that preached by the Apostles and contradict Scripture.

Nowhere in scripture is the Word of God referred to as a stick and scripture plainly states that the two sticks refer to **two nations** that will become ONE NATION in the last days.

*“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**” (Ezek.37:22).*

SPIRITUAL LIFE IN THE NATION

When Ezekiel prophesied to the wind to blow on the corpses they received life and

“the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army” (Ezek.37:10).

The third stage in Israel’s restoration will be when God’s hly Spirit comes upon the nation and they receive new life from God.

Today the nation is spiritually dead and living in rejection of Christ but Jeremiah prophesied that in a future day God will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel as follows:

*“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** ... 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 neighbor, 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).*

Paul spoke of this day in Romans 11:25-26 when he said that

“blindness in part is happened to Israel UNTIL the fulness of the Gentiles be come in and so ALL ISRAEL shall be saved...”

The timing of Israel’s conversion is described in detail in the next two chapters of Ezekiel’s prophecy and also in Joel chapter 2.

When Ezekiel prophesied to the **wind it was symbolic of the Spirit** for the word in Hebrew for “wind” and “Spirit” are the same. Salvation is the work of the Spirit of God as He brings a soul to see their need of salvation and points them to Christ who has paid the price for our sin.

Joel speaks of the Holy Spirit being poured out on Israel in the last days:

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh... And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit” (Joel 2:28-29).

Jacob's Pillow or the Stone of Destiny?

"And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel" (Gen.28:18-19).

JACOB was fleeing from his twin brother Esau, when he lay down to sleep at Luz which he renamed Bethel ("house of God") because, during the night, he dreamed of a ladder to heaven and saw angels ascending and descending.

In the dream, the Lord spoke to Jacob confirming the covenant promises made to Abraham and applying them to him.

When he awoke he took the stone that he had used as a pillow and made a memorial pillar of his encounter with God, vowing that the Lord would be his God.

Some who hold to the British-Israel theory contend that Jacob did not leave the stone as a memorial and witness to his vow but that he took the stone with him and 20 years later brought it back after serving Laban.

Furthermore, they claim that, when Jeremiah was forcibly taken to Egypt after the fall of Jerusalem in 586BC, Jeremiah carried the stone with him to Egypt and thence to Ireland with two of King Zedekiah's daughters. One daughter was supposedly married to the king of Ireland. The stone then found its way to Scotland and was used at the crowning of Scottish kings. In 1296 during the Scottish Wars, Edward I took the stone to Westminster Abbey as the spoils of conflict and it was located under the coronation chair where English kings and queens have been crowned.

Some British-Israel theorists would like to think that the presence of the Stone of Scone, "stone of destiny" as it is called, located in Westminster Abbey, is proof that the promises confirmed to Jacob when he lay his



wear a head on the stone for a pillow, apply to the British crown and that the British crown is in fact the throne of David!!!

The entire theory is mythical and fanciful if we put the very best construction on it but is heresy if we take a Biblical view.

In 1950 four Scottish students stole the “stone of destiny” from Westminster Abbey and for two years it remained in Scotland until recovered and returned to Westminster Abbey in 1952.

The story of the theft of the “stone of destiny” makes interesting reading.

THEFT OF THE STONE OF DESTINY AS REPORTED BY WIKIPEDIA

“On Christmas Day 1950, four Scottish students from the University of Glasgow (Ian Hamilton, Gavin Vernon, Kay Matheson and Alan Stuart) removed the Stone of Scone from Westminster Abbey in London and took the Stone back to Scotland. **In 2008 the incident was made into a film called Stone of Destiny.**

The Stone of Scone, the ancient Stone upon which Scottish monarchs were crowned, was taken from Scone near Perth, Scotland **by King Edward I of England in 1296 during the Scottish Wars of Independence** and fitted into King Edward’s Chair in Westminster Abbey. Monarchs were crowned sitting upon the chair and Stone... In December 1950, a few days before Christmas, four students from Glasgow drove to London and decided to make an immediate attempt at removing the Stone from the Abbey. Later that day Ian Hamilton hid under a trolley in the Abbey, but was caught by a nightwatchman after the Abbey doors had been closed, briefly questioned, and then let go.

The following day Vernon and Stuart returned to Westminster Abbey and learned some information **on the watchmen’s shifts**. In the middle of that night, the three men **removed the Stone from under the Chair, and as they did so, it crashed to the floor and broke into two pieces. The smaller piece was taken to one of the cars waiting outside.**

Ian Hamilton placed the **small piece of Stone in the boot of the car** and got into the passenger seat.



As he did this, Kay Matheson noticed a policeman and Hamilton and Matheson immediately **fell into a lovers' clinch**. The policeman stopped and the three proceeded to have a conversation even though it was 5 A.M. Having **shared some jokes and a cigarette Matheson and Hamilton drove off to Victoria**, Hamilton getting out **on the way to walk back to the Abbey**.

On his arrival, there was no sign of Vernon and Stuart, so he **proceeded to drag the large piece of stone to the car himself**. As he was driving away he saw Vernon and Stuart walking towards him.



A replica of the Scone stone on show in Scotland

The stone was so heavy that the **springs on the car were sagging**, so Vernon, fearing the alarm had been raised, made his way to Rugby, Warwickshire. Hamilton and Stuart drove to Kent, **hid the large piece of stone in a field and made their way back to Scotland**. Matheson left her car, containing the small piece of the Stone, with a friend in the Midlands, and like **Vernon, made her way back to Scotland by train**. On discovering that the Stone was missing, the authorities **closed the border between Scotland and England** for the first time in four hundred years.

A fortnight later Hamilton and some friends – including John Josselyn, whose 21st great grandfather was, ironically, Edward I – **recovered the two pieces of stone and brought them to Glasgow. They hired a stonemason, Baillie Robert Gray, to mend the Stone**. In April **1951 the police received a tip-off** and the Stone was **returned to Westminster Abbey** in February 1952 and no charges were laid.

Since 1996, The Stone of Destiny, has resided in Edinburgh Castle – alongside the Crown Jewels of Scotland and provision has been made for the Stone to be transferred back to Westminster when required for future coronation ceremonies. The Stone of Scone was last used at the coronation of Elizabeth II.

Many questions surround the Stone of Scone. Was the genuine stone

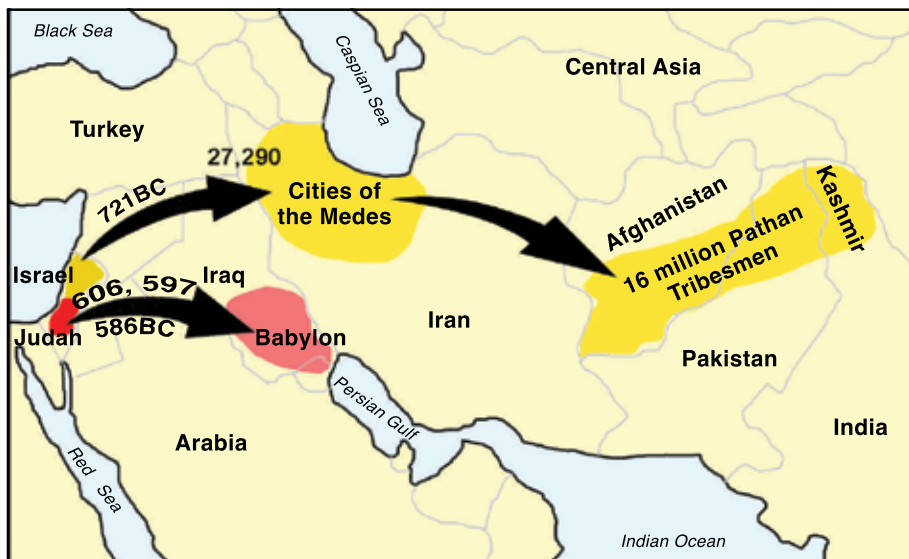
returned to Westminster in 1952? Was the genuine stone taken to Edinburgh in 1995? Even more doubt is cast by a legend that before Edward I took the stone to Westminster in 1296 the Scots replaced it with a substitute.

What ever the truth is about the Stone of Scone (Stone of Destiny) the British-Israel theory is today being promoted by remnants of Herbert W Armstrong's cult which broke up into five different churches claiming to be "the Church of God".

One publication of the International Church of God summarizes the "Fundamentals" of its beliefs and teaches:

- i) that baptism is essential to salvation;
- ii) that the Holy Spirit can only be received by laying on of hands;
- iii) that the Jewish sabbath and the Jewish feasts should be observed.
- iv) It denies the doctrine of the Trinity and therefore the deity of Christ and,
- v) believes that many will get a second chance to be saved at the great white throne judgment.

When these errors are added to the absurd fictitious British Israel theory, it is clear that the self-proclaimed Church of God is apostate and their leaders are last-days false prophets.



Ezekiel Chs. 38 & 39 The War that Brings Israel to Repentance

GOD is behind history and although men execute their evil designs it is God who overrules to work out His purposes. Even ungodly rulers who are in open defiance of God cannot avoid the providential omnipotent control of the Creator and in the last days this is patently obvious as we consider the prophecy of Israel, Russia and Islam.

We have seen thus far that in the last days, that Israel was scattered across the world but would come together to organize a national home in the land of Palestine (1897). We have also seen that the plans of the Zionists would result in a massive return of Jews to the land and the establishment of the nation of Israel among the nations of the world (1948). Furthermore, this return would be in the midst of intense opposition from the Arab neighbours just as the return after the Babylonian captivity took place amidst opposition from the Samaritans. The third and final stage of God's dealings with Israel is to bring the combined might of Russia and Islam against Israel in order to bring the Jews to the end of their human resources and to cause them to turn to the Lord.

The conversion of the Jews will be achieved when the might of Russia is made available to the surrounding countries of **Turkey, Iran, Libya, and Sudan (Biblical Ethiopia)** and this is the subject of Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39.

THE PROPHECY IS FOR THE LAST DAYS

There can be no doubt that the chapters under consideration relate to events in the **last days** for the following reasons:

- i) Ezekiel prophesied in the 12th year of the captivity of Jehoiachin which was **one year after** the final invasion of the land by the Babylonians in 586BC. The prophecy therefore cannot relate to the Babylonian invasion.
- ii) The invasion is specifically stated to be in the "*latter years*" (Ezek.38:8,16). In addition, the latter years are said to be "*after many days*" (Ezek.38:8) and certainly not something that would occur in Ezekiel's foreseeable future.

iii) The events prophesied would occur when Israel was a nation **dwelling securely in the land** (Ezek.38:8,11). Ever since the Babylonian captivity Israel has experienced conflict under the Persians from the Samaritans, under the Greeks from the Seleucids, and under the Romans they were suppressed and finally scattered until today. Through the centuries the Jews have been persecuted, isolated in ghettos, expelled and massacred in pogroms and in the holocaust.

It is only since the Jews returned to the land with the backing of the US that they have become a mighty military nation with 160,000 standing army and 630,000 active reservists plus 3 million that are classified as “fit for service”. The financial and military support of the US has given the nation a sense of security and when Antichrist signs his 7- year covenant with them immediately after the Rapture, it will be well said that *“they shall dwell safely all of them”* (Ezek.38:8). Never before in the history of Israel has the nation been able to call on so great firepower.

iv) The prophecy must be for the last days because the prophecy **concludes with the conversion of Israel** from which they will never depart. Through history there have been times when the people turned to the Lord in measure but later departed from God and His Law. The conflict described in Ezekiel 38/39 results in God saying, *“neither will I hide my face any more from them”* and every Jew in the world will be returned to the land (Ezek.39:28-29).

v) The prophecy must be in the days when the land has been **transformed from “wastes”** or deserts into fruitful lands supporting *“cattle and goods”* (Ezek.38:12). Mr Netanyahu boasts that Israel has the best and most productive cows in the world!

vi) The prophecy has never had a fulfilment because the **particular combatants** have never before combined to invade the land of Israel.

Gog is the chief prince of **Meshech and Tubal** (Moscow and Tobolsk on the Tobol River), East and West Russia, and the land of Magog is located on the northern shores of the Black Sea; **Persia**

is today called Iran; The House of **Togarmah and Gomer** were sons of Japheth who settled in Turkey; **Libya** has ever been in North Africa and **Ethiopia** in Bible times was always located at the southern border of Egypt.

The above nations have never combined to invade Israel and it has only been made possible due to the Islamic wars after 630AD when the Middle East came under the control of the Muslim religion.

vii) Finally there has never been a time in history since Ezekiel's day when God has ***poured out His Spirit*** on the nation and when all anti-semitism ceased while the heathen understood that Israel's dispersion was because they departed from the Lord (Ezek.39:23). On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out but it was on the Church and not on the nation.

viii) The invasion must occur when **Israel has riches** that are valuable to the invaders for they come to take a "*spoil*" (Ezek.38:13). It is only in recent years that Israel has discovered the vast gas deposits of the **Tamar and Leviathan gas fields** off the coast and may have large oil deposits in the Golan Heights. So large is Israel's resource of gas that when pipelines are constructed to Europe they will compete with Russia for the EU market. Israel has become a serious competitor to Russia.

Israel's "spOIL" may only be a part of her wealth for the chemical wealth of the Dead Sea is very substantial and is being used as a fertilizer at present.

ix) The invasion must occur when Israel is supported by **Arabia** and the "*merchants of Tarshish and the young lions thereof*" (Ezek. 38:13).

It was only in the 20th century that Britain, America and the Arab nations joined forces to develop the oil resources of the Persian Gulf region.

x) The invasion can only be after Israel has been regathered to the land



*“After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the **land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel**”(Ezek.38:8).*

This scripture indicates that the Jews must return from the nations where they are scattered before the invasion.

THE DIRECTION OF THE INVASION IS FROM THE UTMOST NORTH OF ISRAEL

The geographic location of the land of Magog is said to be out of the “*north parts*” or more literally, the “*far north*” or “utmost north.” The Hebrew in Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary give the meaning of “north” as:

“hidden, i.e. dark; used only of the north as a quarter (gloomy and unknown)”

This indicates the distant north or **arctic region** where it is **dark** for 6 months of the year

*“And thou shalt come from thy place out of **the north parts**, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army”* (Ezek.38:15).

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE INVADERS

The “*northern army*” will be destroyed as described in Ezek.38:18-23) and there will be four ways that God will bring this about.

- “*all men that are upon the face of the earth, **shall shake** at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down*”(Ezek.38:19-20),
- “*every man’s sword shall be **against his brother***”(Ezek.38:21),
- “*I will plead against him with **pestilence and blood***”(Ezek.38:22),
- “*great **hailstones** (asteroids), fire, and brimstone*”(Ezek.38:22).

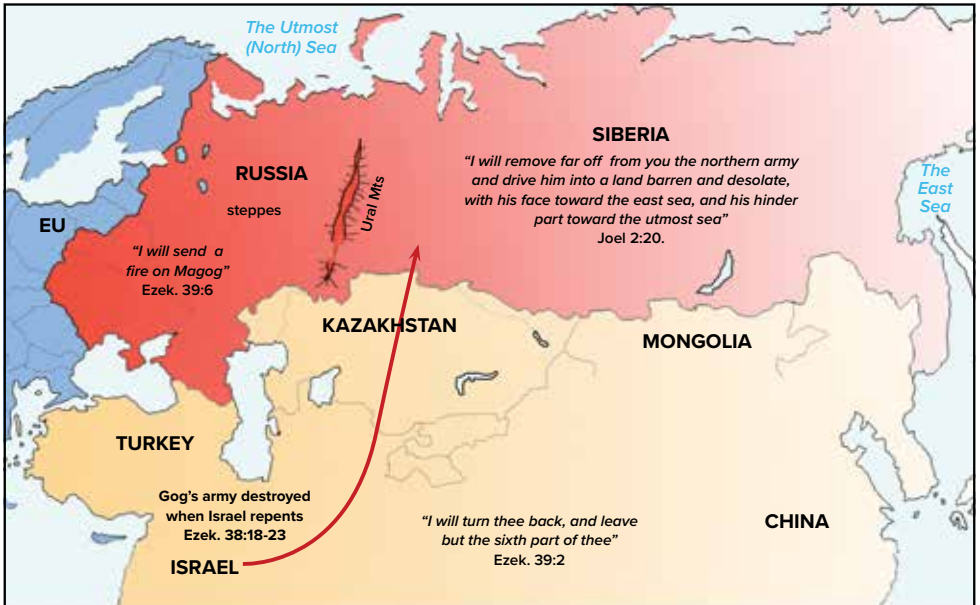
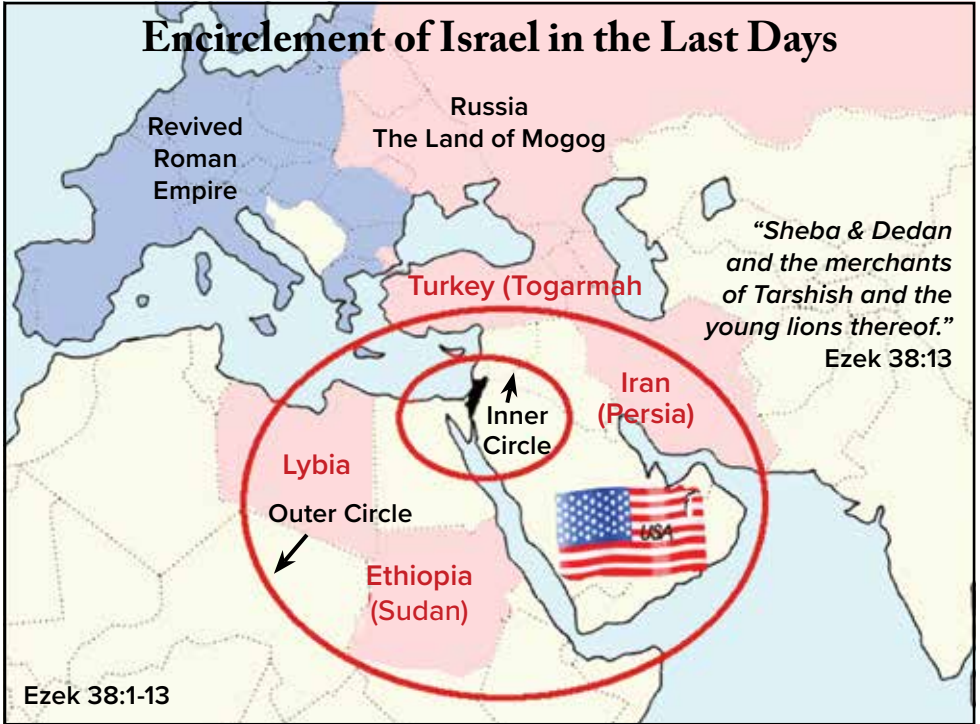
The victory over the armies will be clearly because of **Divine intervention** after Israel repents. Just as God told Jehoshaphat:

“Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you” (2Chron.20:17).

The number of enemy soldiers will be great:

*“Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be **like a cloud to cover the land**, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee”* (Ezek.38:9).

Encirclement of Israel in the Last Days



However, so great will be the desolation that **only one sixth** will escape:

*“I will turn thee back, and leave but **the sixth part of thee**, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel: And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. **Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel**, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured” (Ezek.39:2-4).*

So many will be destroyed that it will take **7 months to bury the dead and 7 years to burn the debris**. A valley in Jordan on the east side of the Dead Sea will be used to bury the bodies and it will be called “*the valley of Hamongog*” meaning, “*Gog’s grave*”(Ezek.39:15).

The birds of prey and the wild beasts will feast on the carcasses until at the end of the 7-month period, only bones will be found (Ezek.39:15-20). The land will “*stink*” with the corruption all around (Ezek.39:11; Joel 2:20).

Where will the one sixth of the invading army that escapes go? Joel 2:20 tells us:

*“But I will remove far off from you **the northern army**, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward **the east sea**, and his hinder part toward the **utmost sea**, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savor shall come up, because he hath done great things.”*

Since the land of Magog will be burned it seems the Russian army will retreat to Siberia “**between the eastern sea (Pacific) and the utmost sea (Arctic).**” Russia is divided into two parts east and west of the Ural Mountains. The land of Magog is west of the Urals so the only part remaining will be Siberia.

Why will horses be used? The destruction of the northern armies will be after the world has been devastated by Islamic terrorism and 25% of the world will have perished (Rev.6:3-8). With such prior devastation fuel supplies may be limited and men will resort to using animals. Central Asia and Turkey are well known for their horses and we know that at the end of the seven years Tribulation, in the battle of Armageddon there will be horses used in the conflict because God will “*smite every horse of the people with blindness*” (Zech.12:4).

In 2009 there were 180,000 horses in Turkey and we know that the Ottoman Turks had 166,000 horses in their cavalry. According to the UN the total world horse population in 2016 was about 58 million.

Not only will the invading armies be destroyed in the land but the “*land of Magog*” will be burned together with “*them that dwell carelessly in the isles*” (Ezek.39:6). Tarshish is one of the sons of Javan to whom were given the “*isles of the Gentiles*” (Gen.10:5).

It seems that the US may be immobilized at that time because there is no indication that the Isles will be active in the second half of the Tribulation; **it is Antichrist who takes centre stage** after the mid-point of the Tribulation. The next reference to Tarshish is when the “*ships of Tarshish first*” bring the Jews back to the land in the Millennium after the Lord returns (Isa.60:9).

PROTEST BY SHEBA AND DEDAN TARSHISH AND THE YOUNG LIONS

When the Russian/Islamic forces enter Israel there will be a protest from “*the merchants of Tarshish and the young lions thereof*” together with “*Sheba and Dedan*”. Sheba and Dedan represent the land of **Arabia while Tarshish is Great Britain**. The young lions of Great Britain are the US, Australia and New Zealand. These nations will challenge the invasion:

“Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?” (Ezek.38:13).

It seems that the protest is limited to a protest for some reason.

GOD’S PURPOSE IN SENDING THE ARMIES

*“And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, **that the heathen may know me**, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes”* (Ezek.38:16).

Why did God choose Gog to destroy on the mountains of Israel? To make an example of him before all the nations and let them know that Israel is God’s chosen people and God will honour the Abrahamic Covenant which states that those who curse Abraham’s seed, God will curse.

When the nations see what God does to Gog immediately **after Israel repents** and turns to Christ, it will be obvious why Gog and Islam is judged.

*“So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward. And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into **captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me**, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword” (Ezek.39:22-23).*

HOW MANY JEWS WILL BE SAVED?

Paul indicated in Romans 11:25-26 that when the “*fulness of the Gentiles be come in*” during this Church age, “*So **all Israel** shall be saved*”.

Jeremiah is even more specific:

*“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 neighbor, 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.31:33-34).*

The Tribulation will see a mighty work of the Spirit of God and while two thirds of the Jews in the land will perish (Zech.13:8-9) the remaining one third will ALL turn to the Lord as Joel indicates (Joel 2:15-32). The ungodly shepherds will perish as indicated in Ezekiel 34 but the remnant will ALL seek the Lord.

THE TIME OF ISRAEL'S CONVERSION

Many Christians place the conversion of Israel at the second advent of Christ because of Zechariah 12:9-10:

*“It shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy **all the nations** that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and **they shall look upon me whom they have pierced**, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son” (Zech.12:9-10).*

This view is wrong for a number of reasons:

- a) Israel is a saved people **at the mid-point** of the seven years as stated

in Rev.12:17 where they are described as “*the remnant of her (Israel’s) seed, which keep the commandments of God, and **have the testimony of Jesus Christ***”.

b) Antichrist persecutes the Jews in the second half of the Tribulation because they stand for Christ. When they are unconverted at the Rapture, he signs a 7-year covenant with them. He breaks the covenant with Israel at the mid-point according to Daniel 9:27. This suggests that Israel must be saved **before** the mid-point of the 7 years when he slays the two Jewish prophets at Jerusalem.

c) Isaiah states that Israel **is waiting for the Lord** when He returns so they must be converted beforehand:

*“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; **we have waited for him**, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation”* (Isa.25:9).

d) If Israel is converted at the return of Christ then the war of Ezekiel 38/39 must be Armageddon because Israel knows that the Lord is Israel’s God “*from that day and forward*” (Ezek.39:22).

But Armageddon has “*the kings of the earth and of the whole world*” gathered against Israel whereas Ezekiel 38 indicates **only 6 nations invade Israel** and the other nations know why God destroys them! **One sixth escape** to Siberia when Russia invades but Antichrist’s army is **totally destroyed** at Armageddon.

e) Gog is not Antichrist. Antichrist is a Roman prince according to Dan.9:26, whose people destroyed the “*city and the sanctuary*” in AD70.

f) The Lord fights for Jerusalem (Zech.12:3-9; 14:3) in the second half of the Tribulation and He would only do that if they had turned to Christ as Messiah and Saviour.

Nobody can repent when Christ returns because **He is coming in judgment**; the days of mercy will have passed and men will have made up their minds who they serve. Scripture says that Jesus Christ will come “*in flaming fire **taking vengeance** on them that know not God*” (2Thess 1:8). The first half of the Tribulation will see the “*Gospel of the Kingdom*”

preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Matt.24:14) and that is placed **BEFORE** the "*abomination of desolation*" at the mid-point of the Tribulation (Matt.24:15). The 144,000 Jewish witnesses testify in the **first half** of the Tribulation, are martyred, and are seen in heaven at the mid-point of the Tribulation (Rev.14:1-4).

***COULD THE RUSSIAN INVASION
BE AT THE END OF THE MILLENNIUM?***

The name Gog is a title such as King, President or Prime Minister. He is the **Chief Prince** of the land of Magog (Russia).

At the end of the Millennium, Satan will be loosed from the Bottomless Pit to deceive the nations and test mens' heart condition. Multitudes will be deceived and the Chief Prince of the land of Magog at that time will surround Jerusalem with a massive army only to be destroyed by fire from heaven (Rev.20:8-9). **None of Gog's army escape at the end of the Millennium whereas one sixth of Gog's army escape during the Tribulation. They are separate events 1,000 years apart.**

The invasion at the end of the millennium is a **second attempt** by Satan to destroy Israel, God's chosen people. Again, the invasion in the Tribulation involves **only six nations** but at the end of the Millennium the invaders come from the "*four quarters of the earth*" and the "*breadth of the earth*" (Rev.20:8-9).

Ezekiel Chs. 40 to 48 - Worship in Christ's Kingdom

THUS far we have had revealed to us that Israel will return to the land in unbelief before being invaded by a Russian-led Islamic army and that this invasion will be instrumental in bringing the one-third remnant to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Joel's prophecy (ch.2) indicates that the conversion of Israel will occur in the first half of the Tribulation and that after that, ALL nations will gather against Jerusalem for the final conflict of Armageddon. Joel ch.3 describes the awful time of global conflict in the second half of the Tribulation.

Other scriptures indicate that Christ will return in glory "*immediately after the tribulation of those days*" (Matt.24:29) and Joel graphically described the second advent of Christ in ch.3:15-16. After the Lord returns, the promised kingdom will be established as Luke's account of the Olivet Discourse indicates.

*"So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that **the kingdom of God is nigh at hand**. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled"* (Luke 21:31-32).

Ezekiel's prophecy does not deal with the second half of the Tribulation since he was given a commission to prophesy exclusively to the nation of Israel. The second half of the Tribulation describes God's dealings with the Gentile nations. Therefore Ezekiel continues the prophecy **of Israel's future** after her conversion, in the promised kingdom.

All attention will focus on Israel after Christ returns and judges the wicked Gentiles. Global worship will be directed from Jerusalem and the Jewish people will all exercise a ministry to the entire world by proclaiming the law of the Lord to every nation.

The Jews at the time will all be redeemed people and only saved Gentiles will enter the kingdom therefore the Jews will be greatly honoured by all the Gentiles and God has promised

*"It shall come to pass **afterward**, that I will pour out my spirit **upon all flesh**"* (Joel 2:28)

Anti-Semitism will cease and the nation of Israel will rule the world in Christ's kingdom.

*"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).*

Jerusalem will become the centre of government and the form of government will be **a theocracy** with the public servants all Jews.

Some Orthodox Jews have already been promoting a change of Government in Israel **from democracy to a theocracy** and efforts have been made to identify those Jews who can prove they are from the line of David. From this line they want to select a "*son of David*" to occupy the "*throne of David*" as the King of Israel.

The great emphasis on ancestry today is significant for it is turning up ancient records that will assist Jews in tracing their forebears but there cannot be a theocracy before the Lord returns in light of Ezekiel 21:27 and Luke 1:31-33 which states that the throne of David will be no more "*until He come whose right it is*".

James quoted Amos 9:11 in Acts 15:15-18 which indicates that the throne of David has fallen down but will be built again after God has "*taken out of them (Gentiles) a people for His name*" ie. the Church.

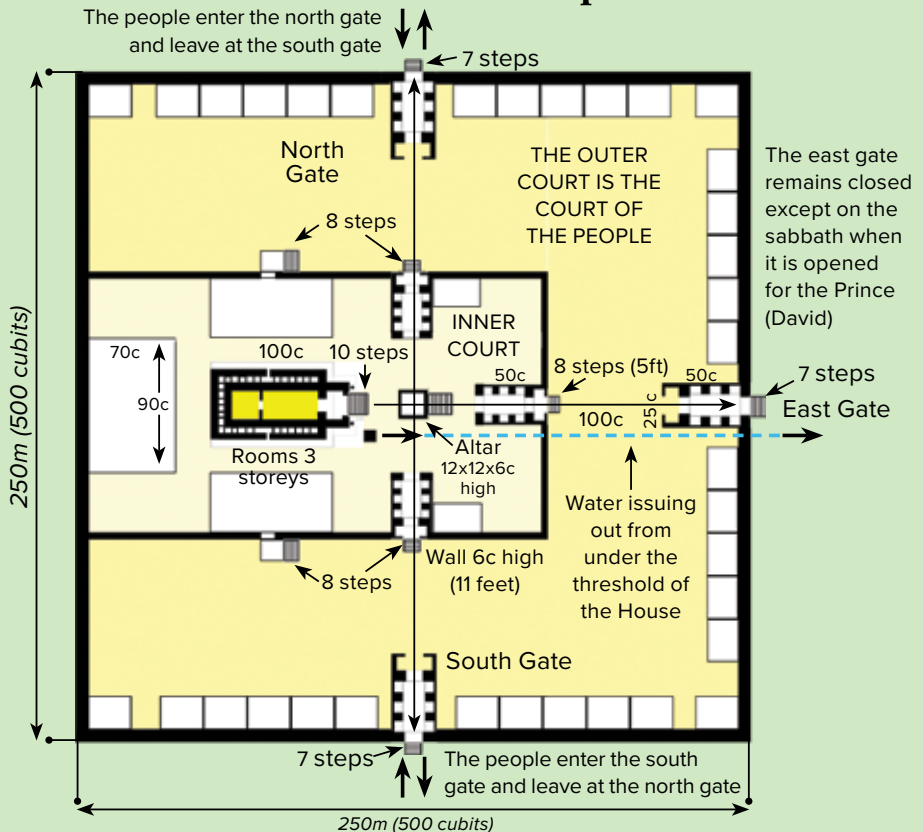
So the millennium will see Jesus as king reigning over the Jews, and all the nations will have kings who will be subject to Christ as the King of kings.

THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM

Many Christians have difficulty accepting that sacrifices will be offered again in the millennium and this is based on the fact that Christ has offered one sacrifice for ever to atone for sin. So why should Jews offer animal sacrifices again?

We know that sacrifices of animals in the Old Testament could “*never take away sins*” (Heb.10:11) and that will always be true. Why then did the people of God offer sacrifices in the past? It was to remind them that “*the wages of sin is death*” (Rom.6:23) and that forgiveness is only possible through the death of an innocent substitute. Old Testament sacrifices pointed forward to Christ’s sacrifice. Christ died a substitutionary death in the place of guilty sinners and He will never repeat that sacrifice. The millennial sacrifices are therefore a **vivid memorial** of Christ’s sacrifice.

Ezekial’s Millennial Temple - Ezek. chs. 40-42



God has appointed only **one place of sacrifice** - at Jerusalem (Deut.12:14). Christ died at Jerusalem, the first Temple and altar were at Jerusalem and in the future a Temple will be built at Jerusalem.

The Church is a Gentile Church and Jerusalem is occupied by evil Gentile nations who destroyed the Temple. Without a Temple and priests there can be no sacrifices in memorial of Christ's death therefore the Church uses the symbols of bread and wine to remember Calvary.

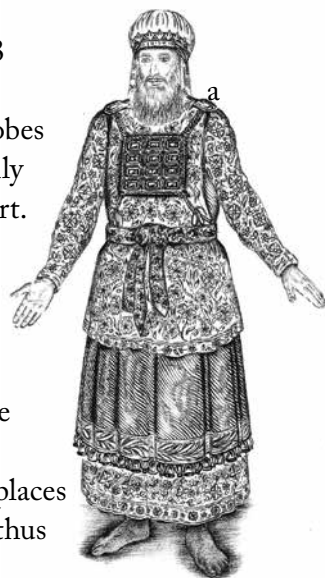
The Tribulation Temple will be destroyed when Christ returns and a millennial Temple constructed on a site that will have been rearranged by earthquakes on a plateau that will run from Geba, about 6 km north of Jerusalem for 60 km south to Rimmon, about 15 km north of Beersheba (Zech.14:10).

The Temple **outer court walls** will be 500 cubits (250 meters) square and 6 cubits (11 feet) high with 25 meters wide open space (called *suburbs* in the KJV) around the outside of the wall (Ezek.45:2). The total area of the outer court available for worshippers is approx. 42,000 sq.m. and could therefore accomodate up to approx 10,000 worshippers at any one time.

Areas outside the outer court will be allocated for the prince and the priests near to the Temple site so that they will be close by to serve in the Temple.

Around the Temple building there are 30 rooms in 3 storeys around the Temple building with access by winding staircase. Possibly these will provide wardrobes for the priests' holy garments and change rooms. Only priestly linen garments can be worn in the inner court. David had 24 courses of priests

The Temple is surrounded by two courts with gates in the north, south and east walls. All gates are **directly aligned** with the altar of burnt sacrifice. Worshippers in the outer court will not be able to see the altar but they will see the smoke of the sacrifices ascending above the wall. The layout of the Temple places the altar at the centre; all gates align with the altar, thus showing the importance of the sacrifice of Christ.



There are numerous rooms where instruments used in the outer court yard where priests boil the sin and trespass offerings and where they bake the meal offerings.

There are rooms for the “singers” outside the gates to the inner court (Ezek.40:44) where worshippers gather, and also rooms with tables where the Levites will lay the offerings and **wash the burnt offerings** (Lev.1:9) in preparation for placing on the altar of burnt sacrifice in the inner court.

When Solomon built the first Temple there were 120 priests with trumpets besides “*cymbals and instruments of music*”(2Chron.5:13) but we are not told how many there will be in the millennial Temple. Because worship will be in the open air it will be necessary to have a large number of musicians to lead the singing of psalms. David appointed 24,000 priests to serve in the Temple, 6,000 were judges, 4,000 musicians and 4000 were porters. These were all divided into 24 courses and served on a roster system (1Chron.23:2-6).

The inner court wall is to be 6 cubits high from the outer court level but the ground inside the wall is raised by 8 steps (5 feet).

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT?

There will be no ark of the covenant in the millennial Temple because the Lord Himself will be there and his glorious throne will fill the Holy of Holies (Ezek.43:7). Jeremiah states that there will not be an ark in the Temple (Jer.3:16).

*“When ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: **neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more.**”*

There are three groups that have claimed to find the ark of the covenant; one in Ethiopia; one under Calvary and another under the Temple Mount. The Ethiopians may have made a replica, the one under Calvary is a false claim by a man named Wyatt and the third is by some Jews. None of these groups can produce the ark.

THE PRIESTS

Of the tribe of Levi, the **sons of Zadok** (Ezek.44:15) will be the only

ones that will do the service in the Temple because they did not go after idols when Israel turned away from the Lord. These will wear special priestly bonnets, and linen clothes while serving within the Temple. Before they leave the inner court they are to change their garments and leave the priestly linen garments in dressing rooms by the Temple where the garments are stored.

It was required of the priests that they do **not shave their heads or have long hair** but only “poll” (shear) their heads (Ezek.44:20).

There is a principle here which Paul mentions in 1Cor.11:14-15. *“Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?”*

The Catholic system depicts Christ with long hair but that was contrary to Scripture. Only Nazarites were to let their hair grow during the days of their Nazarite vow - after that it was cut.

Priests are to abstain from **drinking wine** when serving in the Temple. Priests are to live undefiled lives and not to touch a dead body except for close family. Also they can only marry **maidens from Israel or widows of priests** and they are to **teach** the difference between the clean and unclean (Ezek.44:20-24). This is the principle of not being unequally yoked to unbelievers (2Cor.6:14) and also of ensuring that their life's partner is **fully committed** to the work of the Lord. It is possible for a man to be called to some service for God but if his wife does not support his ministry, although she may be a Christian, becomes a hinderance. Husbands and wives share equally in rewards for service.

The remainder of the Levites that went astray will be made keepers of the gate (porters), slay the burnt offerings for the people, and be “*keepers of the charge of the house*” (Ezek.44:11-14) but will not be permitted to come close to the Lord in the Temple.

The sons of Zadok were descendants of Eleazar/Phinehas with whom God made an **everlasting covenant** that they should hold the office of High Priest. In the days of Eli the High Priesthood had passed into the line of Ithamar but David replaced Abiathar with Zadok to bring it back to the line of Eleazar under the everlasting covenant made with Phinehas (Num.25:12-13).

AARON

Nadab

Abihu

Eleazar

Ithamar

Nadab and Abihu died when they offered “strange fire” before the LORD (Lev.10:1-2).

THE ETERNAL PRIESTLY COVENANT

“And thou shalt anoint them (Aaron’s sons) ...for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations (Exod.40:15).

*“Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him (Phinehas) my covenant of peace: And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel” (Num.25:12-13).
See Ps 106:30-31.*



Phinehas

Abishua

Bukki

Uzzi

Zerahiah

Meraioth
(Azariah Ezra7)

Amariah

Ahitub

Zadok (Replaced Abiathar
as high priest-1 Kgs2:35)

Shallum

Hilkiah

Azariah

Seraiah

Jehozadak (went into
Babylonian captivity)

Ezra

(Ezra 7:1-5)

Line of Zadok to be
priests in the Millennial
Temple Ezek.44:15

Eli

Hophni &
Phinehas (killed
by Philistines)

Ahitub son
of Phinehas
(1Sam.14:3)

Ahimelech, son
of Ahitub (killed
with 85 priests at
Nob by Doeg on
Saul’s orders)

Abiathar son of
Ahitub (escaped
to tell David
but later joined
Adonijah in
rebellion and
was put out by
Solomon)

Ahimelech, son
of Abiathar

*Yellow area represents
the period when
Ithamar’s line were
High priest.*

THE WORSHIPPERS

Worship in the Temple will be orderly. The people will enter by the north gate of the outer court and stand to worship between the eastern gate of the inner court and the outer eastern gate of the outer court. They will then leave by the south gate of the outer court. Alternatively the people may enter by the south gate of the outer court and after worshipping before the eastern gate of the inner court, leave by the north gate of the outer court.

The eastern gate was to be kept shut because the Lord will return to the Temple through that gate. It was only opened on the sabbath for the Prince (David) (Jer.30:9; Hos.3:5; Amos 9:11; Ezek.37:24) to enter and after he has worshipped he will leave by the eastern gate which would be then be shut.

*“And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, **even my servant David**; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and **my servant David a prince among them**; I the LORD have spoken it”* (Ezek.34:23-24).

God is a God of order and not of confusion. Paul wrote, *“Let all things be done decently and in order”* (1Cor.14:40).

The number of worshippers that could occupy the outer court of the people is approx 10,000 in each session.

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD

The feasts of **Passover and of Tabernacles** (Ezek.45:17-25) will be observed in the millennial kingdom as well as the New Moon and Sabbaths. Much of the Old Testament ceremonial law will be practised. Zechariah confirms that the Feast of Tabernacles will be held in the millennium (Zech.14:16-18).

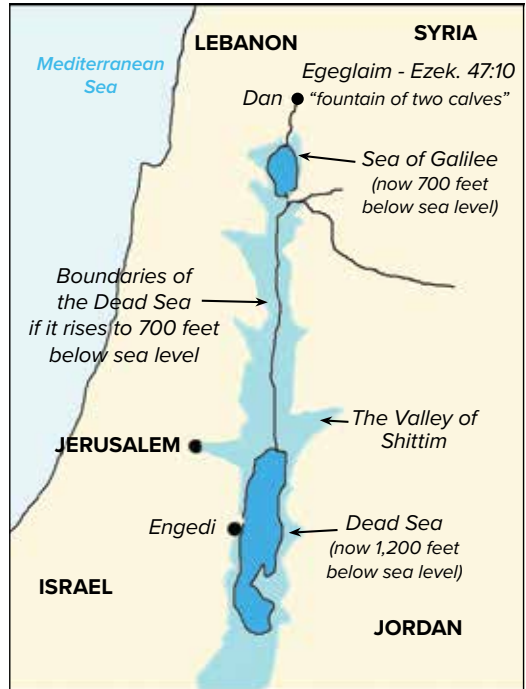
Sin offerings, burnt offerings and meal offerings are all mentioned (Ezek.43:13-27).

WATER FOR THE TEMPLE - CH.47

Water is required for worship at the Temple. The priests are required to wash, and the burnt sacrifices must be thoroughly washed (Lev.1:9) as they are cut up ready to be completely burned on the altar. Ezekiel saw that

“waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward...from the right side of the altar on the south side” (Ezek.47:1).

This water must have crossed the outer court and come out by the east gate of the outer court and run away to the east through the split mount of Olives, growing deeper all the way to the Dead Sea in such volumes that the Dead Sea will be able to support fish. In fact the water will rise such that it will reach Eneglaim, “the fountain of the two calves” north of the Sea of Galilee.



On the banks of this river there will be all kinds of trees that will produce in their season and the leaves will be medicinal (Ezek.47:12). This is a foreshadowing of what will be in the New Earth when the New Jerusalem is on earth and there will be *“a pure river of water...proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb”* (Rev.22:1).

In Jerusalem today there is already a stream of water flowing from under the Temple site through Hezekiah’s Tunnel into the Pool of Siloam. There is an aquifer in the mountain area at Jerusalem which gushes at times - possibly fed by waters from Mount Hermon or even the mountains of eastern Turkey. In past years, 30% of Israel’s water was drawn from this aquifer.

DIVISION OF THE LAND

All of the 12 tribes are given land in the millennial kingdom. No tribe is omitted.

The allocation of land to each tribe destroys the “lost ten tribes theory”.

The 10 tribes taken captive to Assyria in 721BC were never lost and when Christ returns He will gather His “elect” nation from the four corners of the world and Jerusalem will be the capital city.

The area allocated to each tribe simply would not be large enough for Britain and America etc to be planted there if they were the lost 10 tribes. God will bring every Jew in the world back to live in the land in the days of Christ’s kingdom; God has said He would gather Israel

“unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there (in foreign countries)” (Ezek.39:28).

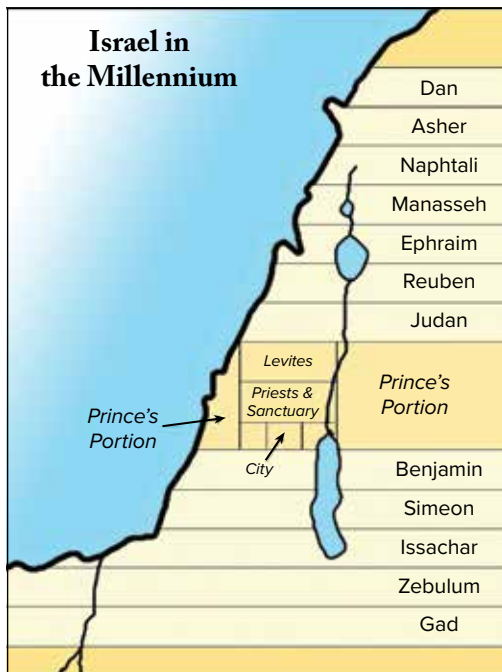
Levi has his portion around the Temple but the other tribes are located as shown in the adjoining map.

Joseph is given two parts, for his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, whereas the other tribes receive one portion. God rewarded the faithfulness of Joseph.

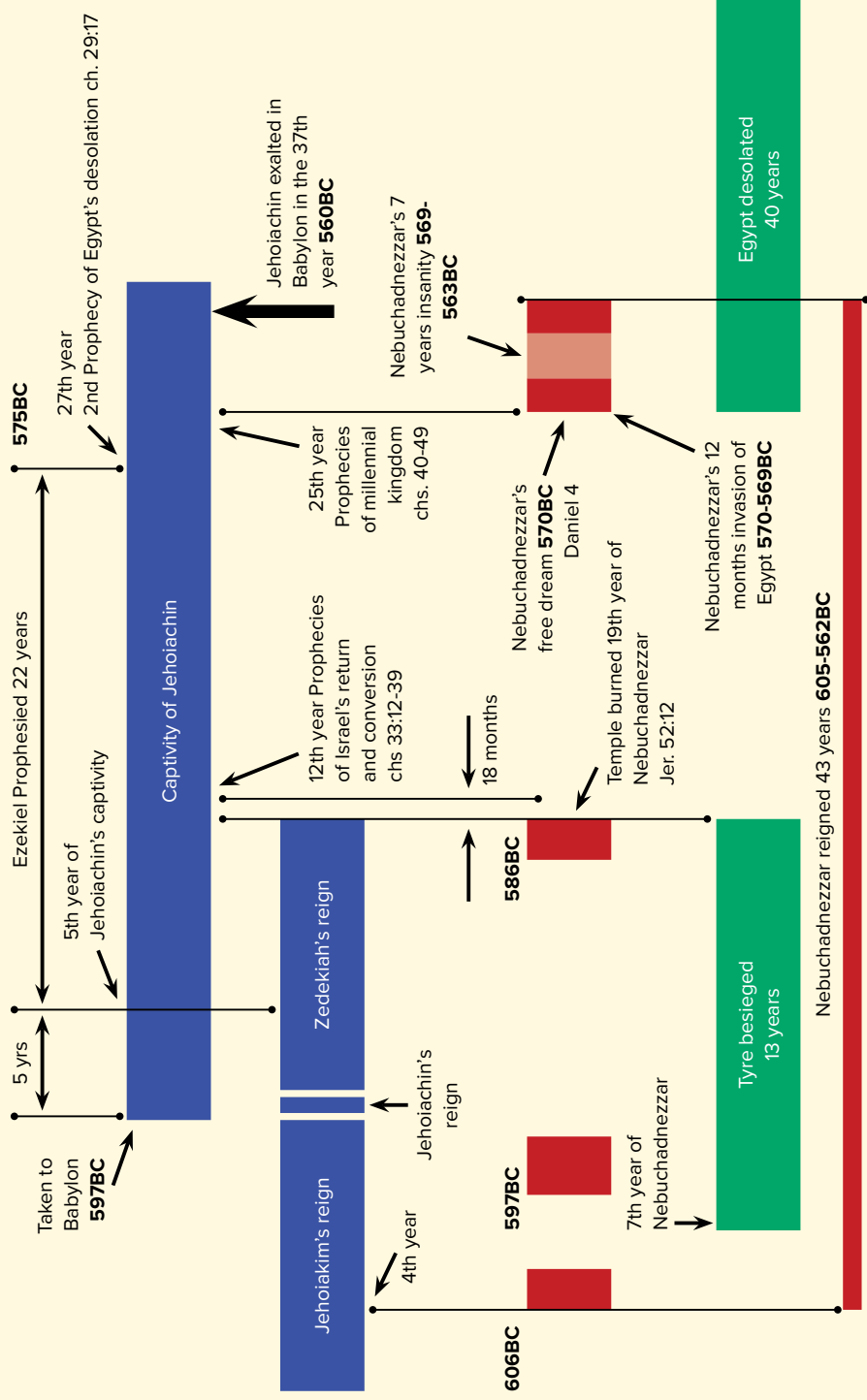
The names of the tribes will be inscribed upon the **12 gates** of the city of Jerusalem just as they will be inscribed on the 12 gates of the New Jerusalem (Ezek.48:48:30-34).


The city of Jerusalem will be 18,000 reeds (108,000cubits/ 54,000 m) perimeter or 13.5 km square. The New Jerusalem will also be “*foursquare*” (Rev.21:16).

Jerusalem will have its name changed and will be called, Jehovah-shammah; “*The LORD is there*”. To find out something of the glory of the millennial city of Jerusalem we need to turn to Isaiah chapter 60 to 62.



Historical background to Ezekiel





Ezekiel prophesied from the land of Chaldea where he was taken prisoner in the captivity of Jehoiachin in 597BC. He ministered to the Jews in captivity and his message is essentially about the departure and return of the glory of God to His Temple. Ezekiel records the reasons for the departure of the glory of God and declares the imminent destruction of the Temple in 586BC.

Twice Ezekiel is commissioned to be a watchman to the house of Israel. The first is to warn of coming judgment from Babylon and to foretell associated events (Ch.3:17).

These prophecies have all been fulfilled.

But Israel is not the only nation that was to be judged. Tyre, Ammon, Moab, Edom, the Philistines and Egypt all were judged by the Chaldeans exactly as prophesied because of their attitude to God's people.

Ezekiel's second commission was to warn Israel of events in the last days (Ch.33:7) when the nation will be brought to repentance. From chapter 34 to the end, the prophecy is all about Israel's repentance and restoration to the land.

The prophecies of Ezekiel conclude with specifications of a glorious Temple to be built in Jerusalem, faithful priests serving in the Temple, the 12 tribes restored to the land and the glory of God permanently restored to the Temple. The name of Jerusalem is finally changed to *Jehovah-Shammah*, The Lord is there.



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