

“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

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CHAPTER FIVE

ISRAEL’S POSITION AND MISSION IN THE MILLENNIAL AGE

The Jews having now been partially restored to Palestine in unbelief; Gentile power having culminated in the gathered forces of Antichrist; the Jews crushed by Gentiles; “**the quarrel of My (God’s) covenant**” settled in the land; and “**the time of Jacob’s trouble**” passed; the Gentile power is broken and Antichrist destroyed by the Lord Jesus Christ in person.

“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee . . . And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.” (Zechariah 14:1-5, 9).

This remarkable passage can be satisfactorily interpreted only by adopting the plain, natural, and obvious sense; and it must be fulfilled in the future. The gathering of the nations to battle; the city Jerusalem; the natural results of war; the Mount of Olives on the east of Jerusalem; the earthquake compared in its effects with an historic earthquake, are easily understood only in their simple and literal meaning.

Further, if understood literally, it must be prophecy and not yet history.

Some interpreters have treated this passage as history and regard it as fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in the year 70 A.D. But unfortunately for this interpretation the destruction of Jerusalem *followed* the advent of our Lord by a period of seventy years; and occurred even forty years after His ascension; whereas the destruction of Jerusalem predicted here occurs *before* the advent.

Then others have said, the Mount of Olives divided by an earthquake is highly figurative language, intended to describe the opening up of a way from Jerusalem for the Gospel to go forth to other nations!

But unfortunately for this interpretation the Gospel went to the western nations, and the western world has been specially blessed during this dispensation, so that the figurative division of the Mount of Olives was unnecessary. We are almost ashamed to refer to such modes of interpreting the plain Word of God. But such modes of interpretation become necessary where either the literal restoration of Israel is denied, or the premillennial advent of our Lord, or both.

The feet of the Lord Jesus last touched our earth at Olivet. The interval between His ascension and personal return has elapsed. The Holy Spirit during that interval has gathered the Church composed of believing Jews and believing Gentiles. “**The firstfruits**” having escaped the tribulation; and “**the harvest**” having passed through it; the “**holy ones,**” as representing the whole Church, having met the Lord in the air, accompany Him to the Mount of Olives; the thread is taken up where it was broken nearly two thousand years ago; the national Israel is brought again to the front by deliverance from the power of Antichrist, and national conversion by a sight of Christ Himself.

“And 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, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn . . . In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness” (Zechariah 12:9, 10, and 13:1).

The sight of the Lord Jesus Christ breaks the heart of the national remnant surviving the crushing power of Antichrist. The universal mourning is followed by a national cleansing in the fountain of Messiah’s atoning cleansing blood.

Here we have the fulfillment of Romans 11:26. All Israel saved, on the coming to Zion of the Deliverer, who turns away ungodliness from Jacob. This Divine Deliverer coming for the national salvation of Israel is promised in the latter part of Isaiah 59 with which ch. 60 should be read. **“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”**

This is the Jewish nation, not the Christian Church, as the preceding context plainly shows, and which is confirmed by Romans 11:26, 27. Then follows an account of the state of the Gentile world as enveloped in darkness, yea “**gross darkness,**” but the glory of the Lord is seen upon Israel, and the Gentiles come to Israel’s light and kings to the brightness of Israel’s rising. Now the Lord is Israel’s everlasting light, and the days of her mourning ended. The people of Israel are now all righteous, and inherit the land for ever; and their beloved metropolis, Jerusalem, is called, **“The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations”** (Isaiah 60).

Thus the Lord Jesus comes not only “**in like manner**”—literally, bodily, visibly—as he was seen to go, according to Acts 1:11; but he comes also to the *same place*, according to Zechariah 14:4. The Lord Jesus Christ *receives the Kingdom* at the commencement of His millennial reign; and at the close of the millennium He *delivers up the Kingdom to the Father*.

Let us now consider Israel’s position in the millennial age.

I. *Israel’s position in relation to man*; and II. *Israel’s position in relation to God*.

I. Israel’s position—geographical—in relation to man

God has chosen Palestine as the geographical center of the world. Israel is destined in the revealed purpose of God to be a channel and an instrument of blessing to all the nations of the earth; so God has chosen the very best position, geographically, for the realization of His plan.

“When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the LORD’S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance” (Deuteronomy 32:8, 9).

Here the geographical position of all the Gentile nations is determined by the Most High in relation to His people Israel. God gives the Gentiles their inheritance. He gives Israel Palestine as his inheritance; and takes Israel as His own inheritance.

The apostle Paul beautifully sets forth and enlarges upon this point in his address to the “**Men of Athens**” who worshipped “**an unknown God.**” The “**God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth . . . hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord**” (Acts 17:24-27).

Here we have the Creator of the universe, the Ruler of heaven and earth, the Creator of man, making of that one man “**all nations of men**” to occupy the earth—determining the times or seasons at which in the history of the race these nations shall come into existence, fulfil their mission, and disappear: and describing “**the bounds of their habitation**”—*their geographical boundaries*. All this arrangement is made with the practical object “**that they should seek the Lord**”; that is, to facilitate the spread of the knowledge of God throughout the world.

James, by the Holy Spirit, asks, “**whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?**”

What is true of the individual is true also of nations. Nations covet a portion of their neighbor’s land. If they have right they take it. If they have might, though no right, they still take it, and designate this a readjustment of boundaries, or describing scientific boundaries.

This, of course, generally, if not always, means the taking a large slice from your neighbor, but scarcely ever means the giving of a slice to your neighbor. Hence come national wars.

Now when the Lord returns, as the Prince of Peace, He will hush a warring world to peace, will describe geographical boundaries, put Israel in his own land as God's geographical center, and locate all other nations in relation to Israel, in order to facilitate the blessing of the world.

“Thus saith the LORD God: This is Jerusalem: I have set her in the midst of the nations, and countries are round about her” (Ezekiel 5:5).

This is restored Israel's geographical position in relation to man, and the purpose of God in that position.

II. Israel's Position in relation to God

This may be expressed as, God in the midst of Israel. Amongst the remarkable visions vouchsafed to the prophet Ezekiel, we have one representing the glory departing from Jerusalem, and another representing the glory returning to the same place.

“Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city” (Ezekiel 11:22, 23).

Here we have the glory departing by the Mount of Olives, the only mountain **“on the east side of the city.”** Now, on the return of our Blessed Lord to open His millennial reign, the glory returns to the same place.

“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 his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory. And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house. And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me. 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*” (Ezekiel 43:1-7).

Here the glory returns by **“the way of the east”** to the house or temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, and the glory fills the house.

This glory is the glorious Lord Himself in person, speaking from the house, and declaring that house to be the place of His throne, and the place of the soles of His feet, indeed, His dwelling-place in the midst of the children of Israel for ever.

When this vision becomes actual history, and the Lord has returned to His city and temple, He gives His people Israel a new experience, most appropriately expressed in the language of Isaiah 12:

“And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee” (Isaiah 12:1-6)

Israel’s singing to the Lord because He hath done excellent things, and then declaring His doings among the peoples, and making known these excellent things **“in all the earth,”** implies the rapid transmission of good news throughout the whole world. May not the telegraph wires, which will then belt the globe, be used in telling all nations that the Lord has returned to Jerusalem to reign?

How beautifully this blessedness of Israel is confirmed by the prophet Joel.

“And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed” (Joel 2:26-27).

The Lord in the midst of Israel, and Israel never more ashamed, gives evidence of blessing for national Israel in the future to an extent never experienced in the past.

The prophet Zephaniah bears testimony to the same blessing for national Israel, and under the same circumstances.

“Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing” (Zephaniah 3:14-17).

Here Israel at home in Jerusalem sings and shouts for joy, and with good reason, for judgments are **“taken away,”** **“Jacob’s trouble”** passed; the enemy **“cast out”**—whether this refers to Antichrist or Satan, the one is destroyed, and the other shut up for a thousand years: the Lord in Israel’s midst, mighty to save, and Himself rejoicing over His restored and saved people.

By the prophet Zechariah this doctrine is confirmed.

“For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her . . . Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD” (Zechariah 2:5, 10).

“Thus saith the LORD: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, the holy mountain . . . Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness” (Zechariah 8:3, 7, 8).

Here again we have Israel restored from the extremities of the earth—from the east country and from the west country; Jerusalem called **“the city of truth;”** the people singing and rejoicing because they are in the midst of Jerusalem, and are to dwell there; and because the LORD has returned to Zion, and will Himself dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and will be a wall of fire round about His restored and saved people, and will Himself be their glory.

“In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory” (Isaiah 45:25).

Thus God has placed Israel in the center of the world, and has taken up His own dwelling place in the midst of Israel, to superintend in Person the blessing of the world through Israel. Palestine in the midst of the nations; Jerusalem, the world’s metropolis, in the midst of the nations with the countries round about her; Israel in the midst of Jerusalem; Christ in the midst of Israel; God in the midst of Christ, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; all the resources of Deity available to the Lord Jesus Christ—we wonder not that Israel should have a grand and successful mission in filling the earth with the knowledge of God, and bringing in millennial day.

Let us now consider—

Israel’s mission in the millennial age. The teaching of Holy Scripture is as definite and full on this subject as we found it to be on the subject of Israel’s position.

Israel restored and blessed becomes, according to the revealed purpose of God, a blessing to all nations. God’s purpose to bless the world through the seed of Abraham was clearly revealed to him when first called to leave his country. **“I will bless thee;” “and be thou a blessing;” “and I will bless them that bless thee,” “and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed”** (Genesis 12:2, 3).

This passage needs no human comment

“Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory” (Psalm 102:13-16).

The servants of the Lord are taking an unusual interest at this day in Zion's stones and dust, as indicating the nearness of Israel's restoration and the Lord's appearance in glory, when **“the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.”**

“He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit” (Isaiah 27:6).

The sons of Jacob are now a scattered people, but when restored they shall take root in the land, and bless the world with the fruits of righteousness.

“Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD hath comforted His people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God” (Isaiah 52:9, 10).

Here we have the salvation of Israel as a nation followed by the blessing of all the nations of the earth.

“Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream” (Isaiah 66:10-12).

It is important here to observe the order of blessing—peace is first extended to Jerusalem like a river; then we have the glory of the nations, or Gentiles, like an overflowing stream.

“In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth: for that the LORD of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance” (Isaiah 19:24, 25).

Here we have Israel not only in intimate association with Egypt and Assyria, but at home in the midst of the earth, and a blessing in the midst of the earth.

“Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound” (Isaiah 30:26).

This is a most remarkable passage. Whatever the phraseology may mean, it evidently implies blessing, for light is an emblem of blessing; and as seven is the number of perfection or completeness, it implies complete or millennial blessing.

- **“The light of the moon,”** most probably represents the Mosaic dispensation;
- **“The light of the sun,”** the dispensation of the Church;
- **“The light of seven days,”** the glorious millennial day. This blessedness, at all events, will be

the direct result of Israel's national restoration and salvation— **“in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach (hurt) of His people.”**

The testimony of the prophet Zechariah to the nation of restored and saved Israel is equally clear and glorious. When the promised restoration has taken place, and Israel is dwelling in the midst of Jerusalem, and God in the midst of Israel; then, **“It shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, but let your hands be strong . . . Thus saith the LORD of hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. 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”** (Zechariah 8:13, 20-23).

Here we have **“the house of Judah,”** and **“the house of Israel”**—the whole twelve tribes once a curse among the nations, now saved, and a blessing to them. We have also Jerusalem the center of blessing, and the Jew an instrument of blessing to the entire world.

“And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again” (Zechariah 2:11, 12).

Here we have **“many nations”** blessed through Israel, and standing in the same relation to God as His beloved and elect nation— **“they shall be *My people.*”**

“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” (Isaiah 2:2, 3).

Here we have Jerusalem as the center of blessing for all nations. The nations flowing to Jerusalem to learn the ways of God, and a knowledge of the will of God flowing out from Jerusalem to all the nations. This must not be spiritualized or allegorized and applied to the Church, but must be received as literal and future; for the teaching here is associated with the cessation of war, and the house of Jacob invited to walk in the light of the Lord. It is not necessary to quote further passages in proof of Israel's mission being a mission of blessing to all nations. The sixty-seventh Psalm, however, is so very appropriate that we feel we must ask the reader's attention to it for a moment. The Psalm opens with prayer and closes in faith, and the middle of the Psalm teaches the same truth.

A godly Jew prays by Divine inspiration— **“God be merciful to us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us”** Surely the us means the writer and the people to whom the writer belongs. **“That Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations . . . God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.”**

Surely this Psalm plainly teaches the connection between the blessing of Israel and the blessing of the world. It is willingly conceded that the Church of Christ may legitimately use all scripture as teaching spiritual lessons for all time; but the mischief is, that the Jew is so frequently lost sight of altogether, and the purpose of God in Israel entirely missed.

Surely, then, if the Holy Scriptures, taken in their plain and obvious sense, teach any doctrine definitely, they teach the restoration and salvation of Israel; that Israel will assuredly be blessed beyond all former experience; and placed in the midst of the nations and countries surrounding her, and with Christ in the midst of her. will become a blessing in the midst of the earth, so that in Abraham’s seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Israel now, instead of being a byword and a reproach among the nations, shall be the most honored.

“Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you *a name and a praise among all people of the earth*, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD” (Zephaniah 3:19, 20).

“Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD”
(Deuteronomy 33:29).

“Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD” (Psalm 144:15).

And now in the presence of such marvellous blessing brought to Israel and to the whole world in fulfillment of God’s purpose in electing and preserving Israel, a new song is called for, to be sung to the Lord for His faithfulness, righteousness, and salvation.

“O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: *all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God*” (Psalm 98:1-3).

We have thus gathered from Scripture Israel’s position and mission in the millennial age.

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