

Let Your Kingdom Come!

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ISBN: 9798844363511
Independently published

DEDICATION

To those who, as Joseph of Arimathea, are waiting for the kingdom of
God to appear.

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About those six old men.

As I once traced the history of a mystery called “Babylon” [in a book called *Scarlet Threads*] I feel compelled now to do the same regarding the Kingdom of God that ran alongside Babylon and still does, but that one day will see the demise of that challenger to the glory of God.

There is a pathway that leads from Eden to Paradise. That road connects to the *Kingdom of God* all along the way.

“Kingdom of God?” you say? What is the Kingdom of God?

There is a video in our minds as we contemplate the return of Jesus. It is of course based on solid Scripture. We see the signs in the heavens, the clouds parting, the angry Savior meting out justice and then, with all His saints, landing on the planet.

Then the video stops. What’s next? Some see the end of the planet. Some see nothing at all. But in Scripture, the video continues. It is a long video. You can see so much of what happens next. Many have seen it and delight in it and daily expect it. That’s why so much was recorded about it.

Now, I know you have heard the following story before. It is a folk tale from old India. Please bear with me as I share the entire narration, for it is an interesting way to illustrate the topic before us.

Long ago six old men lived in a village in India. Each was born blind. The other villagers loved the old men and kept them away from harm. Since the blind men could not see the world for themselves, they had to imagine many of its wonders. They listened carefully to the stories told by travelers to learn what they could about life outside the village.

The men were curious about many of the stories they heard, but they were most curious about elephants. They were told that elephants could trample forests, carry huge burdens, and frighten young and old with their loud trumpet calls. But they also knew that the Rajah's daughter rode an elephant when she traveled in her father's kingdom. Would the Rajah let his daughter get near such a dangerous creature?

The old men argued day and night about elephants. "An elephant must be a powerful giant," claimed the first blind man. He had heard stories about elephants being used to clear forests and build roads.

"No, you must be wrong," argued the second blind man. "An elephant must be graceful and gentle if a princess is to ride on its back."

"You're wrong! I have heard that an elephant can pierce a man's heart with its terrible horn," said the third blind man.

"Please," said the fourth blind man. "You are all mistaken. An elephant is nothing more than a large sort of cow. You know how people exaggerate."

"I am sure that an elephant is something magical," said the fifth blind man. "That would explain why the Rajah's daughter can travel safely throughout the kingdom."

"I don't believe elephants exist at all," declared the sixth blind man. "I think we are the victims of a cruel joke."

Finally, the villagers grew tired of all the arguments, and they arranged for the curious men to visit the palace of the Rajah to learn the truth about elephants. A young boy from their village was selected to guide the blind men on their journey. The smallest man put his hand on the boy's shoulder. The second blind man put his hand on his friend's shoulder, and so on until all six men were ready to walk safely behind the boy who would lead them to the Rajah's magnificent palace.

When the blind men reached the palace, they were greeted by an old friend from their village who worked as a gardener on the palace grounds. Their friend led them to the courtyard. There stood an elephant. The blind men stepped forward to touch the creature that was the subject of so many arguments.

The first blind man reached out and touched the side of the huge animal. "An elephant is smooth and solid like a wall!" he declared. "It must be very powerful."

The second blind man put his hand on the elephant's limber trunk. "An elephant is like a giant snake," he announced.

The third blind man felt the elephant's pointed tusk. "I was right," he decided. "This creature is as sharp and deadly as a spear."

The fourth blind man touched one of the elephant's four legs. "What we have here," he said, "is an extremely large cow."

The fifth blind man felt the elephant's giant ear. "I believe an elephant is like a huge fan or maybe a magic carpet that can fly over mountains and treetops," he said.

The sixth blind man gave a tug on the elephant's coarse tail. "Why, this is nothing more than a piece of old rope. Dangerous, indeed," he scoffed.

The gardener led his friends to the shade of a tree. "Sit here and rest for the long journey home," he said. "I will bring you some water to drink."

While they waited, the six blind men talked about the elephant.

"An elephant is like a wall," said the first blind man. "Surely we can finally agree on that."

"It's a spear, I tell you," insisted the third blind man.

"I'm certain it's a giant cow," said the fourth blind man.

"Magic carpet. There's no doubt," said the fifth blind man.

"Don't you see?" pleaded the sixth blind man. "Someone used a rope to trick us."

Their argument continued and their shouts grew louder and louder.

"Wall!" "Snake!" "Spear!" "Cow!" "Carpet!" "Rope!"

"Stop shouting!" called a very angry voice.

It was the Rajah, awakened from his nap by the noisy argument. "How can each of you be so certain you are right?" asked the ruler.

The six blind men considered the question. And then, knowing the Rajah to be a very wise man, they decided to say nothing at all.

"The elephant is a very large animal," said the Rajah kindly. "Each man touched only one part. Perhaps if you put the parts together, you will see the truth. Now, let me finish my nap in peace."

When their friend returned to the garden with the cool water, the six men rested quietly in the shade, thinking about the Rajah's advice.

"He is right," said the first blind man. "To learn the truth, we must put all the parts together. Let's discuss this on the journey home."

The first blind man put his hand on the shoulder of the young boy who would guide them home. The second blind man put a hand on his friend's shoulder, and so on until all six men were ready to travel together.

On Putting all the parts together...

Ah, To learn the truth, we must put all the parts together.

Friends, brothers and sisters, there is a partial blindness on us when we talk about things that are spiritual. For example, some see the manhood of Jesus while others see His Deity. Some see man's part in the whole salvation process, others see God's. With the topic of the Kingdom of

God, there are a myriad of views, but when analyzed they don't necessarily conflict. They are just not complete.

Much of the discussion turns around the future of Israel. One Bible scholar, well-respected, says that if you get Israel right, you'll get eschatology right. [Eschatology is the study of last things.] And if you get Israel wrong, you'll get eschatology wrong.

There are Biblical literalists on one side and on the other, those who like to *allegorize* or *spiritualize* the texts until one cannot be sure *what* they mean. Such people have done the same sort of work in Genesis 1-11 and other portions of difficult Scripture.

It is believed by some that if a person would interpret the Scriptures consistently literally, he would have to be a premillennialist. That is a term that indicates that one believes that Jesus will come, set up a one-thousand-year reign, and then turn the kingdom over to the Father for the eternal rule, as outlined in 1 Corinthians 15.

As with the Indian folks in the tale, there are some who say there is no such thing as a millennium at all. Things will get better and better and then Jesus will come. Or the Millennial reign is only symbolic of the spiritual reign of Christ in His church, or, as I said, many other variations.

What follows is what I have discovered. And I freely confess to you that I am a literalist. Whenever possible I believe exactly what I am reading in the Scripture, whether it makes sense to my brain or not. I follow this procedure in dealing with the creation story, the flood story, the resurrection story. So why not with the one-thousand-year story?

As I read through the Old Testament I see prophecy after prophecy of a coming kingdom. I see a promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and David, of a land that shall belong to the Jewish people, of One who will come from that nation to rule the world with those whom He has chosen.

When I come to the New Testament, I see Jesus describing Kingdom principles and Kingdom people, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. In other words, nothing changes in the mind of God from the end of Malachi to the beginning of Matthew. The Kingdom is in view throughout His life. Even Pilate recognized the Kingship of Jesus and frustrated the Jewish leaders of the day, by hanging that controversial sign over Jesus' head. *Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.*

Yes and even the thief on the next cross to Jesus got the message and asked to be admitted into the kingdom. He was not denied. For him and for us, the kingdom starts with a repentant humbled heart and a bowing to the King, but it ends up in a place, a literal place, where Jesus is. Christ will be bringing that thief with Him when he returns to set up His government, a government prophesied by Isaiah.

So are we all blind?

There are many in the church world today who see only a kingdom now. It is a spiritual kingdom they see. Jesus ruling over *me*. Jesus ruling over *you*. And that's the kingdom.

Others see a kingdom divided into seven mountains, which they are to conquer. Entertainment, sports, government etc. Take over the world's domains, give it all to Jesus when He comes.

Still others say there is no such thing as a kingdom, especially a thousand-year kingdom. That's just figurative language.

Others see Jesus coming on a White Horse, taking over the world and ruling it for 1000 years.

Blind men all, if all they can perceive is one aspect of kingdom theology.

My suggestion is that all of us beg God for eyes to be wide open to every little thing that Jesus ever said and that the prophets and apostles ever said, about the kingdom. Open the book. Meditate on it. Devour it. One day we will all come to perfect unity in this regard.

For me, I need much more Kingdom growth personally, but I get seriously excited as I anticipate the coming of Jesus to put the government on His shoulders and turn this world into what it was meant to be. What adventure is coming! What freedom! What joy for those Who know the Lord.

As was my method in *the Scarlet Threads* in tracing Babylon, I shall move now chronologically through the Bible to see exactly what it says about a kingdom. I shall then move on into history to trace what others have said about it. There have been many nay-sayers who cannot see the kingdom. There will be others who see it but identify it wrongly, in my opinion. Others have seen it with a brilliance of vision that continues urging God's people to seek that kingdom with all of the heart.

I would like for you to prove to yourself the reality of a coming kingdom, as I share in the following pages a battery of Scriptures from God's Word that highlight the promises of God to the nation Israel, and the Kingdom which they will dominate. Also I will add verses that tell of the kingdom within us. For the kingdom is now and later at the same time.

Following this series of God-breathed words of the present and coming kingdom I will add voices down through history that have stood in agreement with prophetic and apostolic pronouncements.

First the Scriptures. (I will use the NKJV). Note also that all dates in my division of things are approximate.

We begin at the beginning.

THE KINGDOM BEFORE ABRAHAM

1. 4000 B.C., The Kingdom and Adam.

We must never downplay the reign of Yahweh, the great I AM, over all His creation and all of Heaven. Israel acknowledged this early and often, as here after the deliverance from Egypt (Exodus 15:18):

“The Lord shall reign forever and ever.”

When the Bible speaks of the reign and rule of God or Christ, it can be speaking of two things. First is His ultimate authority over all things, even that which He allows to displease Him for the time being. This is unquestioned, unchanging, unchangeable. God reigns.

But second, it becomes clear from the beginning of time that the Father had in mind a human-based government for the planet, though of course still under His direct supervision.

The very first chapter of the Bible has God telling Adam to fill the earth, subdue it, and have dominion over all God’s creation. Adam was in charge on earth. He was to bring glory to Heaven while enjoying dominance on earth.

Genesis 1:26-28.

26Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

So already, the kingdom of God was on earth. A perfect God, a perfect human king, a planetary dominance. God wanted to rule with this first Adam.

Man being in charge on earth was deemed “very good” by God. It is not a “carnal” inferior practice that God initiated. Modern amillennialists have indicated such about the idea of a physical kingdom in our future, and seem distressed that God’s people would want something material in the next world. No. The material world is still “very good.”

Trouble in Paradise, though. The rule of God through a man would not come here until the coming of the second Adam. This first Adam had a weakness that would bring his kingdom down before it was even built up. He could choose to sin. And he did. His rule was humiliated and ended as sin entered his domain.

Genesis 3:23-24.

23therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. 24So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

There would be many more attempts, not because God kept failing, but because the men in charge kept falling. This was God's way of educating the human race in its need for a holy Ruler, a son of a holy God but Who was also a son of man.

2. 3900 B.C., The Kingdom and Seth.

Where was the rule of God from Adam to Noah? Did Seth, Adam's third son, pass on the knowledge of God to his descendants?

Genesis 5:3

3And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.

We have no authoritative word on this matter. A long stretch of history, around one thousand five hundred years, passes with scant comment from Scripture, except that the trend is downhill:

Genesis 6:5

5Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."

Humans on their own, or even with the presence of a holy man or two, or a group of such men, cannot bring about the righteousness that the Creator longs for and men need. Men ruling by the dictates of their own conscience will soon find the dictator to be stronger than they can bear.

Another crushing defeat for mankind, and in fact, near extinction of the race.

3. 3000 B.C., The Kingdom and Noah

Noah predicts and oversees the end of the world. Almost. And like Adam he is given lordship over the renewed planet. A new “king” of sorts is here. A new chance for the kingdom of God to be manifest on earth as it is in heaven.

Genesis 9:1-2, 7-11, 15

1So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 2And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. 7And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply in it.”

8Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: 9“And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, 10and with every living creature that is with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. 11Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth...”

15”...and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.”

Here was a real possibility. Noah is to be backed up by his three sons. Together they will establish a fruitful society of God-lovers who will be under the direct supervision of the Lord of Heaven.

But this too was not to be. One of the three sons turned out to be a serious problem. And some from his progeny caused such vile behavior in the earth that the people of God of a much later generation – Israel – would have to wipe them off the face of the earth.

No lasting kingdom here. The beautiful promises and protection of God would have to wait for Someone else.

4. 2200 B.C., The kingdoms of men.

A purely human government is catalogued in Genesis 10, as men rise up against God again, and it seems that the rule of God is never going to be established in the earth. It seems that way to this day. But hidden under the doings of Adam's and Noah's descendants is the slow unfolding of a plan to bring the reign of God to our rebellious planet.

God's program for Noah and those who followed him was to populate the huge territory called Earth. Spread out. Take it all. Instead, the rebels in the vicinity of the Tower called Babel (confusion) decided to huddle together and protect themselves against the evil in the sky.

But God was not ready for a one-world government. This is Satan's idea for – I believe – our near future, a plan God will actually second when He is about to wrap things up here. Then God will bring in His own Ruler and the earth will finally be under the rule of God and a God-man. A perfect man. All other such one-world governments lead to totalitarianism, bondage. Thus the scattering of Genesis 11. Together, ungodly men are dangerous.

Genesis 11:6-8

6And the Lord said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. 7Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." 8So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.

THE KINGDOM AND THE PATRIARCHS

5. 2100 B.C., The Kingdom and Abraham

Genesis 12:1-3.

*1Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. 2I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; **And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**"*

The world was thoroughly pagan by the time of Abraham, or as he was known at first, *Abram*. Babylon was having its way. Nimrod and those who followed him had convinced the world that there was another god or two, and that the god who would destroy a whole world could not be their own.

In the midst of all this wickedness there lived a man God had seen from before the foundation of the world as the means by which He Himself, God Almighty of Heaven, would some day come to the earth and reign. And in reigning, God would bless all nations. The blueprint has been four thousand years in the making so far. God is in no hurry, and is working out many other facets to His program while we wait for the culmination.

Abram heard God calling him out of the midst of the Babylonian mysteries, to come to a land of God's choosing, to sojourn there, to bring forth a family there. His little band set forth to obey the word of the Lord.

The clan grew, to the point where Abram was able to defend himself with force as needed. The story is told early in Genesis of local warring kings having a conflict that involved his nephew Lot. Abram would need to respond. By God's help he won a victory over the offenders, and in the process met a very unusual man.

Genesis 14:18-20.

*18Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. 19And he blessed him and said: "**Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.**"*

Some have identified this mystery man as none other than the Lord Himself, others say he was merely a type of Christ, but the significance is real either way. God has His hand on this man called out of pagan Babylonia. Something eternal is being worked out between God and Abram. Something *unconditional*.

The following incident should seal in our minds that the Lord's promises to Abraham cannot be broken.

Genesis 15:1, 7-21.

*1After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."7Then He said to him, "I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, **to give you this land to inherit it.**"*

8And he said, "Lord God, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"

9So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon."

10Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. 11And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. 12Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him.

13Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.14And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. 15Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. 16But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

*17And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. 18On the same day **the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates— 19the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, 20the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, 21the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."***

God made a covenant with Abram. But Abram did not reciprocate; he was fast asleep! All the promising was on God's side. This is truly an *unconditional promise* that cannot be broken. The land we call Israel today is truly Israel's. This land shall forever belong to these people of Abraham. That's right, Forever.

If the land is theirs, much more is theirs. More promises will be added via kings and prophets in the future. And every one of them will be kept. *See if this pattern does not repeat itself through the Scriptures.*

Here is more even to Abram, who now will be called *Abraham*.

Genesis 17:1-8.

1When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. ***2***And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." ***3***Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: ***4***"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. ***5***No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. ***6***I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ***7***And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. ***8***Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

Already the blessings pile up. Through Abraham all nations shall be blessed. You will have your own special land. You will be the father of many nations. The covenant is to be *everlasting*.

What further witness do we need, though witnesses I shall provide, many of them? God has sworn. What seems to be lost in our day is not lost at all. In God's good time, Abraham will see everything God has promised, bountifully fulfilled. And not just temporarily as before, but *forever*.

Here is a repetition of the promise, with an oath to confirm all:

Genesis 22:16-18.

16...*"By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— 17blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

Who else could the God of Heaven swear by (Hebrews 6:13)? He swore by Himself! This promise is so locked in, so assured. And with no strings attached. No conditions in the fine print. No fine print!

And the son promised to Abraham that would start all of these things happening, the son of promise, received his own promises.

6. 2000 B.C., The Kingdom and Isaac.

Genesis 26:2-5.

*2Then the Lord appeared to him and said: "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you. 3Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; **for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. 4And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; 5because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."***

God was blessing Abraham before his incredible obedience in regards to Isaac. Then He blessed him for that obedience. When God sets His heart on a person, that heart is set! Now the fruit of Abraham's obedience, brought forth by the Spirit of God to whom all the glory belongs, will receive the very same promises as his father.

Isaac's life does not seem to be as spectacular as his dad's. Your life and mine may not be spectacular either. But to be in the line that leads to the coming of the King to the planet is enough. We examine our hearts daily to be sure of our salvation that will lead to our participation in that kingdom.

Isaac is now "tricked", we say in our human understanding, into blessing his son. But our human understanding is always wrong. His son was a key part of the Kingdom Program for ages untold. Hear the words of father to son:

7. 1900 B.C. The Kingdom and Jacob.

Genesis 27:26-29.

*27And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said: "Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed. 28Therefore may God give you **Of the dew of heaven, Of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and wine. 29Let peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, And let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, And blessed be those who bless you!"***

That last line brings us back to the very words of God to Isaac's father. The promise continues unabated, unconditioned.

How much Isaac was aware of what he had done, we are not told. But in the next scene, Dad is heard giving a genuinely *aware* and *awake* blessing to his son, as a farewell benediction.

Genesis 28:1-4.

*3“May God Almighty bless you, And make you fruitful and multiply you, That you may be an assembly of peoples; 4And give you the blessing of Abraham, To you and your descendants with you, **That you may inherit the land In which you are a stranger, Which God gave to Abraham.**”*

He understands. He sees now that he and his son are being guided along the same path, initiated by the unconditional and therefore undeserving promises of God.

Now the Lord Himself comes back on the scene as the newly-blessed heir to the Patriarchs is on his way to enter into the plan of God. Here is the famous vision of the ladder...

Genesis 28:10-15.

***13**And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: “I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. **14**Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; **you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. 15**Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.”*

It is true that much of what God has promised His three men has come to pass in ancient Israel. But the idea that the entire earth will be blessed somehow through this family has not yet been viewed on our planet. That is still future. And recall that the promise of the land and the promise of the planet-wide blessing go hand in hand. When He does one, He will do the other. We cannot settle for a half-fulfilled prophecy.

Jacob next returns to the land, and God appears to Him in a time of family pressure, to reaffirm all that has been said so far.

Genesis 35:11-12.

***11**Also God said to him: “I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. **12**The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land.”*

A nation. Kings. The land. All is still intact. An unbroken chain of blessing. Just keep on believing me. Now One special king that will come from Jacob's line is brought into focus.

8. 1800 B.C., The Kingdom and Judah.

Genesis 49:8-10.

*8Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's children shall bow down before you. 9Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him? 10**The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.***

Jacob is dying and now passes on the blessing to his sons, one in particular. Judah is the man through whom Messiah will come in about eighteen hundred years. Jacob seems to be given insights about this as well as the very idea of an earthly throne that will be Judah's inheritance.

The true rulers of God's special kingdom over the centuries of the Jerusalem-based kingdom will be from this man Judah.

And then *Shiloh*. The word signifies peace and tranquility. The hidden message is that through much of the wait for this peace will be war and commotion and worse. But then the Prince of Peace will come and bring to us a worldwide government of strength and protection and security. Shiloh. And the Messiah will be the last in the line of Judah's kings.

THE KINGDOM AND THE LAW

9. 1500 B.C., The Kingdom and Moses.

The prophet Moses introduces what we call the Old Testament, the old covenant that eventually failed. It failed to deal with sin. It failed to produce a kingdom.

Here was another measure taken by Yahweh to educate us all about who can and who cannot rule for God on earth. This Moses period was a theocratic government, in which God was to rule through the Law and the great lawgiver.

But alas. Just as surely as Adam and Noah and all the governments of men had failed, this one was bound for ultimate failure. The law of Moses, which was the law of God, was too hard. Impossible. It could not be kept, and the promises attached to it demanded its keeping perfectly.

But let me say clearly: *The failure of a conditional covenant on man's part does not annul other covenants given unconditionally by God. Moses does not do away with Abraham.*

Here are some of the Lord's early words to Moses.

Exodus 6:2-8.

2And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am the Lord. 3I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name Lord I was not known to them. 4I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, in which they were strangers. 5And I have also heard the groaning of the children of

Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. 6Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the Lord; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the Lord.' ”

So the first indication that God's promises are going to be fulfilled is this reminder to Moses that what He had vowed to the Patriarchs was indeed going to happen. And the history that will soon unfold proves that. But what Moses did not know is that the new nation was to be divided between those who believed and those who did not. Only believers, in the line of faithful Abraham, would be allowed to see and enter the promised territory.

What Moses also did not know is that the rules he was laying down would forbid any Israelite of any time from entering the true Promised Land, from having their sins forgiven, from establishing the kingdom of God on earth. The breaking of all Mosaic rules would bring tragedy after tragedy on Israel.

Yet the promises to Abraham would remain untouched.

Such has been the status of Israel from its first inklings to Abraham to this present day. The believing remnant will inherit God's promises to Abraham. For the promise was made to a believing man. It is those who have Abraham's faith that will inherit Abraham's blessings.

After Moses and his people have been delivered from Egypt, their first order of business was to sing a song of praise. Here is part of it.

Exodus 15:17-18.

You will bring them in and plant them In the mountain of Your inheritance, In the place, O Lord, which You have made For Your own dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established. "The Lord shall reign forever and ever."

A special mountain. A special sanctuary, made in heaven. The reign of God forever. And a *planting*, signifying permanence. Israel's place in the land over the centuries has been anything but permanent thus far. Moses here sees a day when that will all change.

Moses is now given a message which he is to forward to the people on the way to their destiny. There's a scary word in it. Do you see the word?

Exodus 19:4-6

4'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. 5Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.

The word is "if." All promises to this point have been unconditional. Now comes the idea, spoken to the ones in front of him, not all Jews of all time, that your entrance into the blessings of God and my heart are conditional on your obedience. Obedience to an impossibly holy law.

Why the shift from conditional to unconditional? Is there really a shift? Has God ever allowed into His Kingdom the unbelieving and disobedient? He spoke His unconditional promises to a believing heart and an obedient soul. He spoke His conditional words to a mixed company, most of whom would turn out not to be believers.

We pass now to the second giving of the law, the book of Deuteronomy, a series of messages given by Moses as they camp on the plains of Moab, on the border of their new home. Moses' tone, inspired by the Spirit and Moses' forty years of experience with this rebellious people, is decidedly negative. The promised obedience based on trust in God has gone south many times and ways. Moses does not see all sweetness and light ahead of this people.

Deuteronomy 9:4-5.

4When the LORD your God has driven them [the Canaanites] out before you, do not say in your heart, "Because of my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to possess this land." Rather, the LORD is driving out these nations before you because of their wickedness.

*5It is not because of your righteousness or uprightness of heart that you are going in to possess their land, but it is because of their wickedness that the LORD your God is driving out these nations before you, **to keep the promise He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.***

Israel, God is going to keep His unconditional promises, because He is God and He is good and He cannot lie. But you, you are an unrighteous group of people. Don't get proud over what is about to take place.

So, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have been called specifically by God to head up a new nation. All families of the earth are to be in some way blessed by this people. Though at first a family, and then a national entity in a new land, Israel does not initially seem headed toward *kingdom*

status. In fact the transition seems to trouble the Lord. But long before the days of kings in Israel, Moses spoke a startling word about the coming of those kings. It's in Deuteronomy 17:

Deuteronomy 17:14-20

*14When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,' **15you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses**; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. 16But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' 17Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. 18Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. 19And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, 20that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.*

Even before this, as mentioned above, in Exodus 19, God had spoken through Moses a promise often overlooked:

*you shall be to Me a **kingdom** of priests...*

So an earthly kingdom is coming. It will come as a result of Israel's stubborn rejection of the rule of God. But it is coming. Moses even gives the rules for such a governor. Most of these rules were broken, like the prohibiting of the multiplication of wives and horses and riches.

But the ruler of God's people was to be a reader of and a keeper of the law of God, all his days, says Moses. Some of the kings of Judah were evidently of this caliber, but toward the end of the southern nation, there was nothing but disdain for God's law on the throne.

Towards the end of the book we hear Moses giving seemingly contradictory messages about this people. Here first is a blessing that can only be fulfilled by an obedient nation, under a New Covenant which is not even thought of here, but which God will bring about for them later.

Deuteronomy 26:16-19

16*"This day the Lord your God commands you to observe these statutes and judgments; therefore you shall be careful to observe them with all your heart and with all your soul. 17Today you have proclaimed the Lord to be your God, and that you will walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments, and His judgments, and that you will obey His voice. 18Also today the Lord has proclaimed you to be His special people, just as He promised you, **that you should keep all His commandments**, 19and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, in praise, in name, and in honor, and that you may be a holy people to the Lord your God, just as He has spoken."*

Is the appellation "special people" based on the keeping of all His commandments? If so, Israel is in dire trouble. That trouble is foretold in chapter 28. Following a short list of blessings that would come upon Israel were they to obey, is a seriously extended list of curses on their disobedience.

Deuteronomy 28:15-19

15*"But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:16"Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country. 17"Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. 18"Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. 19"Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.*

Forty-eight more verses tell of the horrors awaiting Israel.

Let it be noted again here that **all of God's promises, for good or ill, will be kept**. Let it further be noted that everything Moses said would happen to Israel because of disobedience, did happen, culminating in their actual return to Egypt from which God had delivered them.

But that is not the end of the story.

Moses anticipates that Israel's disobedience will lead her to being scattered among the nations. Cursed. By all human standards, forgotten, finished. But there is one way out for them...

Deuteronomy 30:1-8.

1*"Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God drives you, 2and you return to the Lord your God and obey His voice, according to all*

that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, 3that the Lord your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the Lord your God has scattered you.

4If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. 5Then the Lord your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. 6And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

7“Also the Lord your God will put all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. 8And you will again obey the voice of the Lord and do all His commandments which I command you today.

Here then is the picture of a restored and even regenerated Israel returning to the land. It is a scene that will be recounted over and over again by the later prophets of Israel. *Israel the wicked and faithless becomes Israel the repentant and regathered.* The kingdom is intact. God will have a people with whom to rule the world one day. This same basic message of a fallen yet recovered nation is foretold again in Deuteronomy 31 and 32.

Deuteronomy 31:24-29

24So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished, 25that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying: 26“Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there as a witness against you; 27for I know your rebellion and your stiff neck. If today, while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the Lord, then how much more after my death? 28Gather to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call heaven and earth to witness against them. 29For I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you. And evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands.”

But in the very next chapter a song of Moses, though recounting Israel’s wickedness, ends in these jubilant notes:

Deuteronomy 32:43.

43“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And render vengeance to His adversaries; He will provide atonement for His land and His people.”

There it is again! Unconditional reaffirmation of the promises of land and people... and even the inclusion of the Gentiles with the blessing! More of the same in Moses' farewell speech:

Deuteronomy 33:28-29.

28Then Israel shall dwell in safety, The fountain of Jacob alone, In a land of grain and new wine; His heavens shall also drop dew. 29Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord, The shield of your help And the sword of your majesty! Your enemies shall submit to you, And you shall tread down their high places."

There seem to be two men named Moses, speaking two different proclamations on this people. No, one Moses filled with one Spirit, seeing temporary curses and eternal blessings. The ultimate victory of the kingdom called Israel is foretold with no apology, no "if", no doubt.

10. 1400 B.C., The Kingdom and Balaam.

A false prophet, yes. He worked against Israel eventually, yes. But the Spirit of God restrained him from cursing Israel and in fact led him to say some wonderful things about Israel's future, and the One Who would come to be her King.

This prophecy was given east of Jordan, in the days just before Israel's momentous crossing into their land.

Numbers 24:17-19.

17I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult. 18And Edom shall be a possession; Seir also, his enemies, shall be a possession, While Israel does valiantly. 19Out of Jacob One shall have dominion, And destroy the remains of the city.

11. 1400 B.C., The Kingdom and Joshua

Joshua 1:2-4, 6.

*Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, **to the land which I am giving to them**—the children of Israel. **3**Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. **4****From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.***

*Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance **the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.***

The land belongs to Israel forever. God swore it to the fathers, so shall it be. Joshua is the new ruler of the nation, listening to God for His orders, challenging the people to be faithful.

But it must be sadly noted that whoever was in charge of the nation, from Moses forward, the same disobedience prevailed. It is a shaky kingdom, at best, but still a kingdom of sorts.

THE KINGDOM AND THE JUDGES

12. 1200 B.C., The Kingdom and Hannah.

The Lord is now (1400- 1100 B.C., the Judges) ruling His people through those who would offer judgment, the judgments based on the law of Moses, and provide needed military help when Canaanite nations rose against Israel. Among them, Gideon, Samson, and finally Samuel would be in this genre. Good men charged with ruling a not-so-good people. The chain of thought

regarding a kingdom where God rules, is next mentioned in prayer to Yahweh as Hannah is about to give birth to one of the great prophets of the Bible.

1 Samuel 2:8-10.

*8He raises the poor from the dust And lifts the beggar from the ash heap, To set them among princes **And make them inherit the throne of glory.** "For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, And He has set the world upon them. 9He will guard the feet of His saints, But the wicked shall be silent in darkness. "For by strength no man shall prevail. 10The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces; From heaven He will thunder against them. **The Lord will judge the ends of the earth. "He will give strength to His king, And exalt the horn of His anointed."***

See it? Inheritance of a throne. Israel's enemies to be broken. The ends of the earth envisioned! They are to be governed by the anointed king, a Messiah. Such insight twelve hundred years from the first coming of Jesus!

13. 1200 B.C., The Kingdom and Samuel.

As Moses predicted, the people get weary of things as they are and want a king like everyone else. The Lord is hurt, Samuel is hurt, but somehow this was the plan from the beginning.

The record of the coming transition is in

1 Samuel 8:4-9.

*4Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, 5and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."6But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the Lord. 7And the Lord said to Samuel, "**Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.** 8According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also. 9Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behavior of the king who will reign over them."*

Samuel was broken over this matter. The Lord too was angered, yet in His wisdom He allowed His plan to work out through this rejection by Israel. Yahweh has often yielded to man's rejection in the furthering of His plan.

The following chapters of 1 Samuel relate the formation of the kingdom under a less than desirable man. The people were getting the opposite of what Moses had prescribed in Deuteronomy. King Saul was definitely not a man of the Word. And the prophet Samuel had given them repeated warnings about what a king could do were he given the power. So it came to pass.

At Saul's coronation ceremony, Samuel has this to say:

1 Samuel 12:22.

22For the Lord will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the Lord to make you His people.

He lets the people know they have done a wicked thing, but assures them that they still will not be forsaken.

After repeated disobediences, the Lord intervened and allowed Samuel to anoint another king. From this point in the story, the future of Israel and even the world starts to be manifest. King David will prefigure the One Who is to be King over all the earth one day.

THE KINGDOM AND THE KINGS

14. 1000 B.C., The Kingdom and David.

The Saul thing did not work out so well. So God gave up on the kingdom idea altogether?

Not at all. Because of His particular fondness for King David, and especially because of His ultimate goal to be Lord over His own creation in a personal way, some promises were made which cannot be reversed. Let's look at that .

A new phase is coming now. God ruled through the Patriarchs, through Moses, through Joshua, through the judges, through the prophet Samuel. Now he will rule through the kings.

The people had demanded a king, just any king. God demanded that He be the One Who would choose these kings. The dynasty is to begin with David and continue to Solomon.

David's rise and reign are recorded in the next book of the Bible. And 2 Samuel contains a promise that all of us need to drink in. It is in 7:16, speaking to David:

2 Samuel 7:16

*And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. **Your throne shall be established forever.***

Even a cursory understanding of the later years of David's life lets us know that the man David is not the ultimate subject of this promise. Like all of us, though his heart was after God, his flesh was after David quite often.

But God had spoken. First, there is to be a *forever* throne. Second, that throne is to be somehow related to the man *David*.

Isaiah picks up the David theme about three hundred years later, speaking of a Child Who is to be born, a Child Who will bear on His shoulders "the government" (Isaiah 9:6-7): *Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom...*

And Jeremiah: (23:5) *Behold the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will raise to **David** a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper...*

And Zechariah: (12:1-8) *In that day [at the end of history] ... the house of **David** shall be like God.*

Even a crowd that surrounded Jesus one day, comprehended this fact (John 7:42):

*Others said... Has not the Scripture said that the Christ [Messiah, King] comes from the seed of **David**...*

And John, in the last chapter of the Bible (Revelation 22:16), quotes Jesus as referring to Himself in this manner:

*I am the Root and the Offspring of **David**...*

So we have struck a Biblical nerve here in mentioning David. With David comes an earthly kingdom, but *the Kingdom of God*, nevertheless. With David historically comes expansion and victory and the wiping out of God's enemies.

So the kingdom was then. It is now, though in a different form. And it is yet to come. A kingdom that shall be around forever. Let's see *all* that the kingdom is.

We have covered three thousand years of earth's history so far. In every age there is the King in Heaven attempting to establish His reign on earth. And now we have found the key person of the Old Testament whose Descendant will make it all happen in a *permanent* way. Glorious things are ahead of us.

Take a look at words spoken by, or about, or to, this incredible leader of Israel:

2 Samuel 7:8-16. [1 Chronicles 17:11-12].

*8Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, **to be ruler over My people**, over Israel. 9And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who are on the earth. 10Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, 11since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the Lord tells you that He will make you a house.*

David is to have a permanent place in the kingdom. The people of God are to be planted somewhere forever. No more "the wandering Jew."

Looks like we're back to unconditional promise-making! I see no assistance given by David, no requirements made of David. Just a promise. David responds.

2 Samuel 7:22-29. [1 Chronicles 17:23-27].

*23And who is like Your people, like Israel, **the one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a name**—and to do for Yourself great and*

*awesome deeds for Your land—before Your people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, the nations, and their gods? **24For You have made Your people Israel Your very own people forever; and You, Lord, have become their God.***

One nation has been chosen by God. Has that changed? Show me where! They are God's people forever, not "God's ancient people."

That idea alone will force us to revise many of the theology books out there, yes?

*25"Now, O Lord God, the word which You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house, **establish it forever and do as You have said. 26So let Your name be magnified forever, saying, 'The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel.'** And let the house of Your servant **David be established before You.***

David accepts the offer. Go ahead, Lord, establish my house forever! Can we accept it? A forever Kingdom related to King David?

2 Samuel 23:2-5.

*2"The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue. 3The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me: 'He who rules over men must be just, Ruling in the fear of God. 4And he shall be like the light of the morning when the sun rises, A morning without clouds, Like the tender grass springing out of the earth, By clear shining after rain.' 5"Although my house is not so with God, **Yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. For this is all my salvation and all my desire; Will He not make it increase?***

At the risk of repetition, may I say once more that the key word in David's thinking is *everlasting*.

Before we leave David, we don't want to leave out the author of 1 Chronicles. Here is his quote of David.

1 Chronicles 16:14-18.

*14He is the Lord our God; His judgments are in all the earth. 15Remember His covenant forever, **The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations,16The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac, 17And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel for an everlasting covenant, 18Saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan As the allotment of your inheritance."***

A thousand generations. From the time God promised Abraham to the time when the Millennial Kingdom is turned over to the Father, is a long time. That's how long the promise

extends. It doesn't stop when Israel stops obeying, or when the "Old Testament" ends, or at any other arbitrary man-made boundary. It stops when it has been fulfilled!

Soon we move to the prophets who also saw the kingdom in their, and our, future. But first a look at the Psalms, written mainly by that king whose name is so prominent in Kingdom theology. And let's not forget that David is called by Peter, a prophet. His insights are critical. He is the *sweet psalmist of Israel*, and as you will see, the Kingdom of Israel.

Well over half of the Psalms were penned by this King David, even some that do not have his name on them but are quoted in the New Testament as Davidic.

I will refer to the Psalms that clearly describe a time when Christ shall rule and reign on earth. Some of the Psalms could be taken also as speaking of His Heavenly sovereignty *at all times*. I will not quote them. My purpose in writing this document is to speak of the kingdom that has been *on the earth* already, is *presently* on the earth, and *will be on the earth* in its fullness one day in our future.

Please recall, while God was indeed sovereign over all the Universe, David was His chosen king on earth, ruling over Israel, the chosen people. There is no conflict between an earthly and a heavenly kingdom, both God's, intertwining and ruling simultaneously.

15. 1000 B.C., The Kingdom and the Psalmists

Many of these are from David, others were written by other authors at different times. Psalm 2 begins the parade of quotations regarding the coming kingdom in the Bible's songbook.

Psalm 2:6-9.

6"Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7"I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' "

This Psalm speaks of a time when the nations of the earth will be given to the Son of God. His rule will be firm, as with a rod of iron. This will be necessary, for the saints, ruling with Him, will be ruling over the people of the Gentile nations referenced in Matthew 25, containing citizens who were helpful to the Lord, but who have not yet received of His Spirit.

Psalm 9:7-8, 17-18.

*7But the Lord shall endure forever; He has prepared His throne for judgment. **8He shall judge the world in righteousness**, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness. 17The wicked shall be turned into hell, And all the nations that forget God. 18For the needy shall not always be forgotten; The expectation of the poor shall not perish forever.*

Jesus will be a just Judge when He reigns. Some nations will be spared, some not (as in Matthew 25).

Psalm 10:16-18.

*16The Lord is King forever and ever; **The nations have perished out of His land.** 17Lord, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will prepare their heart; You will cause Your ear to hear, 18To do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, That the man of the earth may oppress no more.*

This song speaks of the nations that are kept out of the kingdom. Oppressors gone. What a wonderful world is coming. These conditions have never existed on earth, by the way.

Psalm 14:7.

7Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! When the Lord brings back the captivity of His people, Let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad.

Why at that time? Because that is the same time as His return, His conquering of His enemies, His setting up of the kingdom.

Psalm 18:50.

50Great deliverance He gives to His king, And shows mercy to His anointed, To David and his descendants forevermore.

David and his descendants. The king. Do you see the pattern of these Psalms?

Psalm 22 is a Messianic Psalm and speaks much of the suffering of Messiah. But at the end is made mention (27-31) that eventually this despised One will rule the nations, and be worshiped by them.

Psalm 22:27-31.

27All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the Lord, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You. 28For the kingdom is the Lord's, And He rules over the nations. 29All the prosperous of the earth Shall eat and worship; All those who go down to the dust Shall bow before Him, Even he who cannot keep himself alive. 30A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation, 31They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, That He has done this.

Worldwide worship is spoken of in the prophets also. The very nature of that worship is even spelled out. Oh, the kingdom is coming! Be ready to worship the Lord regularly! Begin today!

Psalm 24:7-10.

*7Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. 8Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. 9Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! **And the King of glory shall come in.** 10Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah*

We have often spoken or sung Psalm 24 without realizing the literal way this will all be fulfilled. Jesus the Mighty Conqueror will enter Jerusalem with great power and reign there with His saints!

Psalm 37:9-11.

*9For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the Lord, They shall inherit the earth. 10For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, But it shall be no more. **11But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.***

Did not Jesus talk about the meek inheriting the earth as here in Psalm 37? Has that happened yet? And are the wicked out of existence? No, these things are in our future.

Psalm 45:1-17.

*1My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King; My tongue is the pen of a ready writer. 2You are fairer than the sons of men; Grace is poured upon Your lips; Therefore God has blessed You forever. 3Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, With Your glory and Your majesty. 4And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness; And Your right hand shall teach You awesome things. 5Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; The peoples fall under You. **6Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.** 7You love righteousness and hate wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions. 8All Your garments are scented with myrrh and*

aloes and cassia, Out of the ivory palaces, by which they have made You glad. 9Kings' daughters are among Your honorable women; At Your right hand stands the queen in gold from Ophir. 10Listen, O daughter, Consider and incline your ear; Forget your own people also, and your father's house; 11So the King will greatly desire your beauty; Because He is your Lord, worship Him.12And the daughter of Tyre will come with a gift; The rich among the people will seek your favor. 13The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace; Her clothing is woven with gold. 14She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colors; The virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to You. 15With gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought; They shall enter the King's palace. 16Instead of Your fathers shall be Your sons, Whom You shall make princes in all the earth. 17I will make Your name to be remembered in all generations; Therefore the people shall praise You forever and ever.

Psalm 45 is yet another Messianic song, this one from the sons of Korah. They are not speaking of David here, but of the *Son of David*, as the Spirit gives them utterance. This King to come is beautiful, mighty, ruling with a sword, having an eternal throne. The “sons” of this King will be made princes in all the earth. His name will be remembered in all generations. So the pattern is visible again: a real man ruling over a real people in an earthly setting from generation to generation.

Psalm 46:6-10.

*6The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted. 7The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah 8Come, behold the works of the Lord, **Who has made desolations in the earth. 9He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire. 10Be still, and know that I am God;**
*I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!**

Here we see the reign of peace of Messiah after He has beaten down all those who rose against Him. Shiloh has come. The earth is at rest.

Psalm 47:1-9.

*1Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph! 2For the Lord Most High is awesome; **He is a great King over all the earth.** 3He will subdue the peoples under us, And the nations under our feet. 4He will choose our inheritance for us, The excellence of Jacob whom He loves. Selah 5God has gone up with a shout, The Lord with the sound of a trumpet. 6Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! **7For God is the King of all the earth;** Sing praises with understanding. 8God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne.9The princes of the people have gathered together, The people of the God of Abraham.*

For the shields of the earth belong to God; He is greatly exalted.

In 47, He is the King of all the earth, reigning over the nations. Hasn't happened. Will happen.

Psalm 48:1-14.

*1Great is the Lord, and greatly to be **praised In the city of our God, In His holy mountain.**
2Beautiful in elevation, The joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion on the sides of the north,
The city of the great King. 3God is in her palaces; He is known as her refuge. 4For behold, the
kings assembled, They passed by together. 5They saw it, and so they marveled; They were
troubled, they hastened away. 6Fear took hold of them there, And pain, as of a woman in birth
pangs, 7As when You break the ships of Tarshish With an east wind.
8As we have heard, So we have seen In the city of the Lord of hosts,
In the city of our God: God will establish it forever. Selah 9We have thought, O God, on Your
lovingkindness, In the midst of Your temple.
10According to Your name, O God, So is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is
full of righteousness. 11Let Mount Zion rejoice, Let the daughters of Judah be glad, Because of
Your judgments. 12Walk about Zion, And go all around her. Count her towers; 13Mark well her
bulwarks; Consider her palaces; That you may tell it to the generation following. 14For this is
God, Our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to death.*

In 48, He is seen in His special city, the city of the great King, and His holy mountain. These locations are sprinkled throughout the Psalms and the prophets.

Psalm 50:1-5.

*1The Mighty One, God the Lord, Has spoken and called the earth From the rising of the sun to its
going down. 2**Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God will shine forth.** 3Our God shall come,
and shall not keep silent; A fire shall devour before Him, And it shall be very tempestuous all
around Him. 4He shall call to the heavens from above, And to the earth, that He may judge His
people:5“Gather My saints together to Me, Those who have made a covenant with Me by
sacrifice.”*

Psalm 50, from Asaph, depicts God coming forth out of Zion, gathering His saints together, and threatening to tear in pieces the forgetters of God. It will happen.

Psalm 51:18-19.

*18Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; **Build the walls of Jerusalem.** 19Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, With burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.*

What? Animal sacrifice? Wait until you see Ezekiel! Here a literal Jerusalem is promised good things.

Psalm 67:1-7.

*1God be merciful to us and bless us, And cause His face to shine upon us, Selah **2That Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations.** 3Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You.4Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy! **For You shall judge the people righteously, And govern the nations on earth.** Selah 5Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. 6Then the earth shall yield her increase; God, our own God, shall bless us. 7God shall bless us, And all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.*

Psalm 67 says simply that God shall judge the people righteously and govern the nations on earth. *All nations are governed by the Lord Himself.* Here is mention again of “all the ends of the earth.”

Psalm 69:35-36.

35For God will save Zion And build the cities of Judah, That they may dwell there and possess it. 36Also, the descendants of His servants shall inherit it. And those who love His name shall dwell in it.

Again in 69 see Zion and Judah. Real places. No need to allegorize.

Psalm 72:1-19.

A Psalm of Solomon.

*1Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's Son. 2He will judge Your people with righteousness, And Your poor with justice. 3The mountains will bring peace to the people, And the little hills, by righteousness. 4He will bring justice to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor. **5They shall fear You As long as the sun and moon endure, Throughout all generations.** 6He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, Like showers that water the earth. 7In His days the righteous shall flourish, And abundance of peace, Until the moon is no more. 8He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth. 9Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him, And His enemies will lick the dust. 10The kings of Tarshish*

*and of the isles Will bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba Will offer gifts. 11Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him. 12For He will deliver the needy when he cries, The poor also, and him who has no helper. 13He will spare the poor and needy, And will save the souls of the needy. 14He will redeem their life from oppression and violence; And precious shall be their blood in His sight. 15And He shall live; And the gold of Sheba will be given to Him; Prayer also will be made for Him continually, **And daily He shall be praised.** 16There will be an abundance of grain in the earth, On the top of the mountains; Its fruit shall wave like Lebanon; And those of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. 17His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun. And men shall be blessed in Him; **All nations shall call Him blessed.** 8Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, Who only does wondrous things! 19And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen.*

72 is written by the great King Solomon, and he was not shy to acknowledge that *One greater than Solomon* will reign. There is no way that the preceding description is about anyone but Messiah.

Yes, some of what you read here was accomplished by Jesus when He was on earth. But those accomplishments will pale when compared to what He will do then.

Another clue: There will be no sun or moon in the eternal kingdom. But there is a sun and moon in Solomon's description. This is a kingdom on the present planet.

Notice also the subjugation of all the nations and their bringing of gifts to Messiah. When has all this happened? But it will happen.

Mention of gifts being given to Messiah is confirmed by the prophets that we will examine. Geographical locations combined with effulgent praises tell us this is the Lord Jesus, come to earth to reign!

Psalm 76:8-11.

8You caused judgment to be heard from heaven; The earth feared and was still, 9When God arose to judgment, To deliver all the oppressed of the earth. Selah 10Surely the wrath of man shall praise You; With the remainder of wrath You shall gird Yourself. 11Make vows to the Lord your God, and pay them; Let all who are around Him bring presents to Him who ought to be feared.

How Messiah will be honored in that day!

Psalm 82:8.

From Asaph:

8Arise, O God, judge the earth; For You shall inherit all nations.

Familiar theme in 82. Inheriting of nations.

Psalm 85:11-13. 11Truth shall spring out of the earth, And righteousness shall look down from heaven. 12Yes, the Lord will give what is good; And our land will yield its increase. 13Righteousness will go before Him, And shall make His footsteps our pathway.

Truth. Righteousness. Prosperity. The glorious Millennial Kingdom.

Psalm 86:9-10.

*9All nations whom You have made **Shall come and worship before You**, O Lord, And shall glorify Your name. 10For You are great, and do wondrous things; You alone are God.*

Psalm 86 tells us again that all nations shall come and worship before You, O Lord, and shall glorify Your name... A theme picked up by the prophets.

Psalm 87:1-6.

1His foundation is in the holy mountains. 2The Lord loves the gates of Zion More than all the dwellings of Jacob. 3Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God! Selah 4'I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to those who know Me; Behold, O Philistia and Tyre, with Ethiopia: 'This one was born there.' " 5And of Zion it will be said, "This one and that one were born in her; And the Most High Himself shall establish her." 6The Lord will record, When He registers the peoples: "This one was born there." Selah

Communications with various groups in the newly organized land of Emmanuel.

Psalm 89:3-4.

3'I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: 4'Your seed I will establish forever, And build up your throne to all generations.' " Selah

Psalm 89 reminds us that it is to David that the promises were made originally. His Seed will be established forever. His throne will be built up to all generations. As long as seed and thrones

and generations are mentioned, we are speaking of something of this earth, though saturated with Heaven.

Psalm 92:12-15.

12The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. 13Those who are planted in the house of the Lord Shall flourish in the courts of our God. 14They shall still bear fruit in old age; They shall be fresh and flourishing, 15To declare that the Lord is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

The key word is “planted.” This speaks of an eternal security, a kingdom that eventually will last forever, though it starts on earth for one thousand years.

Psalm 96:10-13.

*10Say among the nations, “The Lord reigns; The world also is firmly established, It shall not be moved; **He shall judge the peoples righteously.**” 11Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; Let the sea roar, and all its fullness; 12Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice 13 before the Lord. **For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth.** He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.*

How plain does it get? He is coming! To judge! To reign!

Psalm 98:1-3, 7-9.

*1Oh, sing to the Lord a new song! For He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory. 2The Lord has made known His salvation; His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations. 3He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; **All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.** 7Let the sea roar, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell in it; 8Let the rivers clap their hands; Let the hills be joyful together 9 before the Lord, For He is coming to judge the earth. With righteousness He shall judge the world, And the peoples with equity.*

Much like 96, Psalm 98 proclaims the coming of the Lord, as strongly as any New Testament book. A happy land is announced that will be ruled by the One Who will judge with equity.

Psalm 99: 9.

9Exalt the Lord our God, And worship at His holy hill; For the Lord our God is holy.

Psalm 99 speaks of an exalted Lord, to be sure, but also that He is great in Zion, high above all the peoples, to be worshiped at his holy hill, the very imagery of Isaiah 2.

Psalm 102:13-16, 18-22

*13You will arise and have mercy on Zion; For the time to favor her, Yes, the set time, has come.14For Your servants take pleasure in her stones, And show favor to her dust. 15So the nations shall fear the name of the Lord, And all the kings of the earth Your glory. 16**For the Lord shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His glory.** 18This will be written for the generation to come, That a people yet to be created may praise the Lord. 19For He looked down from the height of His sanctuary; From heaven the Lord viewed the earth, 20To hear the groaning of the prisoner, To release those appointed to death, 21To declare the name of the Lord in Zion, And His praise in Jerusalem, 22When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve the Lord.*

Psalm 102 has Messiah having mercy on Zion, so that the nations shall fear the name of the Lord. Here, a people yet to be created will praise the Lord. His name will be praised in Jerusalem. Notice there is a “set time” for all of this.

Psalm 105:7-11.

*7He is the Lord our God; **His judgments are in all the earth.** 8He remembers His covenant forever, The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations, **9The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac,** 10And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel as an everlasting covenant, 11Saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan As the allotment of your inheritance,”*

Another mention of the thousand generations. Another mention of Abraham. And Isaac. And Jacob. And the covenant. And Canaan. Consistent words throughout Scripture. This is coming!

Psalm 106:47.

*47Save us, O Lord our God, And gather us from among the Gentiles,
To give thanks to Your holy name, To triumph in Your praise.*

106. God will first take the Jews from the Gentiles, then add the Gentiles to the Jews. There are elect on either side.

Psalm 110:1-7.

1The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." 2The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! 3Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. 4The Lord has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." 5The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. 6He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries. 7He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.

110 is called in the title, the announcement of the Messiah's reign. Messiah is told to rule in the midst of enemies, which would be the former Gentile nations. Kings will be executed in the day of His wrath, that is, at His return when He sets up His rule. All consistent with every other prophecy in this book and the others.

Psalm 118:22-24.

22The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. 23This was the Lord's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. 24This is the day the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

See this passage in the light of a coming kingdom and its beauty is even greater.

Psalm 125:1-2.

1Those who trust in the Lord Are like Mount Zion, Which cannot be moved, but abides forever. 2As the mountains surround Jerusalem, So the Lord surrounds His people From this time forth and forever.

Again unutterably simple to understand. Zion is permanent!

Psalm 132:13-18.

13For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: 14" This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it. 15I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread. 16I will also clothe her priests with salvation, And her saints shall shout aloud for joy. 17There I will make the horn of David grow; I will prepare a lamp for My Anointed. 18His enemies I will clothe with shame, But upon Himself His crown shall flourish."

132 foresees Zion as the dwelling place of God forever. Priests and saints and the throne of David are all there.

Psalm 135:4.

4For the Lord has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His special treasure.

Amen.

Psalm 138:4-5.

4All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O Lord, When they hear the words of Your mouth.

5Yes, they shall sing of the ways of the Lord, For great is the glory of the Lord.

Jesus will reign on earth over all the kings on earth. Makes sense to me.

Psalm 149:5-9.

5Let the saints be joyful in glory; Let them sing aloud on their beds.

*6Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, And a two-edged sword in their hand, **7To execute vengeance on the nations, And punishments on the peoples; 8To bind their kings with chains, And their nobles with fetters of iron; 9To execute on them the written judgment— This honor have all His saints.***

From one end of Psalms to the other it is clear. Jesus is coming. Jesus will reign. Jesus will defeat all enemies. Jesus will bring justice and truth and righteousness and peace.

Much I have left out. What I have given above is the clear message of a reign on earth. We could stop here in documenting what is coming. Nothing could be clearer. The Jews fully expected a king to come, deliver them from their enemies once and for all, and reign over all the earth from Jerusalem. And why not, reading the words of the Psalmists?

Why indeed do God's people not recognize this?

16. 900 B.C., The Kingdom and Solomon.

The kingdom rises and then the kingdom falls. The best of times and the worst of times come to Israel in one person, the son of David that David addresses here in a final charge:

1 Kings 2:1-3

*1Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying: 2“I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. 3And keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, **His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses,** that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn.”*

Note how David connects himself and his son to Moses and the law of God. The ongoing rule of the Lord must be continued, says Dad to Son.

But Solomon, you disappoint us, even more than your father David with his Bathsheba. For you had many Bathshebas, and each of them had a foreign god that you eventually made peace with in the kingdom of your father David, in the kingdom that was to be an everlasting kingdom of righteousness. Something isn't righteous here.

Solomon's idolatry eventually drives God to tear the kingdom in two, with a special note that it is because of David, and the promises made to David, and the city of Jerusalem which God has chosen, that the southern part of that kingdom will be where God's favor rests.

1 Kings 11:11-13.

*11Therefore the Lord said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. 12Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, **and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.**”*

Jerusalem is chosen. David is chosen. Some things cannot be altered even with the evil ways of man and Satan. Hear the prophet following up on this rending of the kingdom.

1 Kings 11:30-32, 35-36.

30Then Ahijah took hold of the new garment that was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces.
31And he said to Jeroboam, “Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and will give ten tribes to you
32(but he shall have one tribe for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel),
35But I will take the kingdom out of his son’s hand and give it to you—ten tribes. 36And to his son I will give one tribe, **that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there.**

16. 850 B.C., The Kingdom and Jehoshaphat.

The kings of Judah seemed to know whence they came and why. A promise was being kept.

2 Chronicles 20:5-7

*5Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court, 6and said: “O Lord God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? 7Are You not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, **and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?***

Yes, He is the same, Jehoshaphat. Good call.

17. 800 B.C., The Kingdom and Jehoram [of Judah].

Evil kings ruled Israel all the time, and Judah much of the time. Jehoram of Judah was one of the worst, though his father Jehoshaphat had been one of the best. But God held off on his

destruction of Judah until the rottenness was too awful to bear. The historian of Chronicles tells us why:

2 Chronicles 21:7

*7Yet the Lord would not destroy the house of David, **because of the covenant that He had made with David, and since He had promised to give a lamp to him and to his sons forever.***

Eventually even Judah had to be taken out, but only for seventy years. They came back. Then again they were scattered. And they returned again, in part. The scattering and regathering will finally reach its peak one day in the fullness of time, and Jesus will then oversee the final constituting of a kingdom that will last forever.

18. 750 B.C., The Kingdom and Hezekiah

Many of the kings of Judah, the southern kingdom, serve the Lord as the years pass. Many do not, at least not fully. Another righteous king is Hezekiah, and God reminds him of a promise that he has made to his ancestor David, when the city of David was being threatened.

2 Kings 19:34.

*34'For I will defend this city, to save it For My own sake **and for My servant David's sake.**' "*

The extreme Promise-keeper proceeds to wipe out the Assyrian army that was then threatening tiny Judah. God loves Jerusalem. God loves David. Somehow the kingdom will survive.

So will testify the major and minor prophets, who begin to appear on the scene at about this time in history. It is Hezekiah who first opens the door to the king of Babylon, in friendship. He will come later with judgment, say Isaiah and others.

THE KINGDOM AND THE PROPHETS

19. 800 B.C. The Kingdom and Joel.

There is wide disagreement about the date of Joel, but his message is so universal and timeless that no damage is done by placing him here. We begin in chapter 2.

Joel 2:15-27, 32

*15Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; 16Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes; Let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing room. 17Let the priests, who minister to the Lord, Weep between the porch and the altar; Let them say, "Spare Your people, O Lord, And do not give **Your heritage** to reproach, That the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?' "*

A wake-up call and a prayer for Israel brings out the zeal of the Lord:

*18Then the Lord will be zealous for His land, And pity His people. 19The Lord will answer and say to His people, "Behold, I will send you grain and new wine and oil, And you will be satisfied by them; **I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations.** 20"But I will remove far from you the northern army, And will drive him away into a barren and desolate land, With his face toward the eastern sea And his back toward the western sea; His stench will come up, And his foul odor will rise, Because he has done monstrous things." 21Fear not, O land; Be glad and rejoice, For the Lord has done marvelous things! 22Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field; For the open pastures are springing up, And the tree bears its fruit; The fig tree and the vine yield their strength.*

Good things are coming. Don't lose hope.

23Be glad then, you children of Zion, And rejoice in the Lord your God; For He has given you the former rain faithfully, And He will cause the rain to come down for you— The former rain, And

the latter rain in the first month. 24The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil.

25“So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you. 26You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, And praise the name of the Lord your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you;

Restoration promised, and a word which has not come to pass yet:

*And **My people shall never be put to shame.** 27Then you shall know that **I am in the midst of Israel:** I am the Lord your God And there is no other. My people shall never be put to shame.*

32And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the Lord Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the Lord has said, Among the remnant whom the Lord calls.

Truly a New Testament promise here, quoted by Paul in Romans 10:13. But this word was first preached to Israel in connection with that coming kingdom, when “you – Israel – will know that I am in the midst.” That day has not yet fully come, even though kingdom people in this Spirit age can take advantage of calling on His name now. And in chapter 3

Joel 3:16-21

*16The Lord also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake; **But the Lord will be a shelter for His people,** And the strength of the children of Israel.*

*17“So you shall know that I am the Lord your God, **Dwelling in Zion** My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy, And no aliens shall ever pass through her again.”*

18And it will come to pass in that day That the mountains shall drip with new wine, The hills shall flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water; A fountain shall flow from the house of the Lord And water the Valley of Acacias.

19“Egypt shall be a desolation, And Edom a desolate wilderness, Because of violence against the people of Judah, For they have shed innocent blood in their land. 20But Judah shall abide forever, And Jerusalem from generation to generation. 21For I will acquit them of the guilt of bloodshed, whom I had not acquitted; For the Lord dwells in Zion.”

Familiar names and images to those who have been tracking with me through the Scriptures. Such harmony from the Spirit of God! Jerusalem holy. A shaking. A holy mountain. Forgiveness. Much repetition, but worth repeating!

20. 700 B.C., The Kingdom and Isaiah.

Isaiah's prophecy is a fitting one to usher us into the fullness of the kingdom utterances of these men of God. Such beauty. Such clarity. And so many!

But as with most of the prophets, we would be unfair not to mention that there is a negative side to their God-given messages. Israel had become a wicked nation. Israel was about to be punished severely, and the fact is she is still being punished severely. And more is coming.

Nevertheless, this study is not about the judgments on Israel. It is about the grace and forgiveness of God to her that will cause Him to wash all her guilt away and keep every promise He made to Abraham and David and all the rest.

But I give this sample of the judgment that even Isaiah had to bring.

Isaiah 1:4-8

*4Alas, sinful nation, A people laden with iniquity, A brood of evildoers, Children who are corrupters! **They have forsaken the Lord**, They have provoked to anger The Holy One of Israel, They have turned away backward. 5Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, And the whole heart faints. 6From the sole of the foot even to the head, There is no soundness in it, But wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; They have not been closed or bound up, Or soothed with ointment.*

***7Your country is desolate**, Your cities are burned with fire; Strangers devour your land in your presence; And it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. 8So the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, As a hut in a garden of cucumbers, As a besieged city.*

Forget Israel!

Uh... no... God will instead remember her...

Isaiah 1:9.

9Unless the Lord of hosts Had left to us a very small remnant, We would have become like Sodom, We would have been made like Gomorrah.

Here are the *future residents of the kingdom*, the remnant, in the very first chapter.

Then Isaiah offers as clear a picture as you will see anywhere of the coming kingdom of our Lord Jesus:

Isaiah 2:2-4.

*2Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that **the mountain of the Lord's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains**, And shall be exalted above the hills; And **all nations shall flow to it**. 3Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 4**He shall judge between the nations**, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their **swords into plowshares**, And their spears into pruning hooks; **Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.***

Here we are given the location of the coming kingdom, the nature of the traffic that will flow there, the nature of the King's policies, the effect on the planet. Nothing figurative here. A splendid caricature of our future. The Jews believed it was coming. So do I.

Just before this is all set up, says Isaiah, in accord with John the revelator:

Isaiah 2:19-21

19They shall go into the holes of the rocks, And into the caves of the earth, From the terror of the Lord And the glory of His majesty, When He arises to shake the earth mightily. 20In that day a man will cast away his idols of silver And his idols of gold, Which they made, each for himself to worship, To the moles and bats, 21To go into the clefts of the rocks, And into the crags of the rugged rocks, From the terror of the Lord And the glory of His majesty, When He arises to shake the earth mightily.

Isaiah's prophecies go in and out of the kingdom and the life of Christ. No solid chronological order here. But the context of each kingdom passage becomes clear after a bit of thought, and comparison with other similar prophecies.

Chapter 4 gives yet another snapshot of the kingdom.

Isaiah 4:1-6

1And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own food and wear our own apparel; Only let us be called by your name, To take away our reproach." 2In that day the Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious; And the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and appealing For those of Israel who have escaped.3And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem. 4When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, 5then the Lord will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there will be a covering. 6And there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain.

The escape mentioned here is also mentioned in Matthew and Revelation. Little pieces here and there, when sought for diligently, can be found, placed together, and delighted in.

The kingdom that comes is transitional. That is, it is not the full-blown new heavens and earth of the last chapters of Revelation. Neither is it the situation of today or at any other time of Israel's history we have known. Consider this one passage in chapter 4 for example:

- An escaped people.
- Jews considered holy by the world.
- Cloud and smoke by day, fire by night.
- A place of refuge.
- A *need* for a place of refuge, that is, there will still be storms.

Much of our present world's conditions will still be in place, but King Jesus will provide for safety and governance as we have never known.

And how can we forget the well-known chapter 9 in this regard?

Isaiah 9:6-7.

*6For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; **And the government will be upon His shoulder.** And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **7Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,** To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

That which began in Eden, continued in Israel, and reaches its earthly peak in the thousand-year reign, will eventually blossom into an everlasting communion with God.

Isaiah 11 is another classic prediction of the kingdom:

Isaiah 11:1-16

*1There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. 3His delight is in the fear of the Lord, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears; 4But **with righteousness He shall judge the poor**, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth;*

Yes, so it was when He was here, and so it will be when He returns! But at that return...

He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. 5Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

A different vision of the Christ altogether, as He firmly takes charge in the new Kingdom.

***6The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb**, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. 7The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. **9They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain**, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.*

Nature is at peace!

*10And in that day there shall be a **Root of Jesse**, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious. ...**12He will set up a banner for the nations, And will assemble the outcasts of Israel...***

The whole earth will participate in this wonderful reign!

13Also the envy of Ephraim shall depart, And the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, And Judah shall not harass Ephraim. 14But they shall fly down upon the shoulder of the Philistines toward the west; Together they shall plunder the people of the East; They shall lay their hand on Edom and Moab; And the people of Ammon shall obey them.

Israel and Judah will be one again, working together with King Jesus to subdue the earth.

15The Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the Sea of Egypt; With His mighty wind He will shake His fist over the River, And strike it in the seven streams, And make men cross over dry-

shod. 16There will be a highway for the remnant of His people Who will be left from Assyria, As it was for Israel In the day that he came up from the land of Egypt.

Geographical details that simply do not fit anywhere in Israel's history to date, or in a new heavens and new earth. This is Kingdom talk. Is it any wonder the Israelite nation fully expected a Deliverer to come, and that the *apostles* knew that this was the One? Only their timing was off...

Yes indeed the Lord reigns in Heaven forever, but also on earth, says Isaiah (24:23) with the Psalmists,

... the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders, gloriously.

Isaiah 14:1-2.

*1For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, **and will still choose Israel, and settle them in their own land.** The strangers will be joined with them, and they will cling to the house of Jacob. 2Then people will take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them for servants and maids in the land of the Lord; they will take them captive whose captives they were, and rule over their oppressors.*

“Still”. See it? In spite of all the losses, in spite of all the sin, which Israel will confess sadly, God will *still* choose Israel!

Isaiah 16:5

5In mercy the throne will be established; And One will sit on it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, Judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness.”

Does 16:5 need explanation?

Isaiah 19:24-25

24In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, 25whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.”

Old enemies now friends in the Millennium.

Isaiah 24:21-23.

21It shall come to pass in that day That the Lord will punish on high the host of exalted ones, And on the earth the kings of the earth. 22They will be gathered together, As prisoners are gathered in the pit, And will be shut up in the prison; After many days they will be punished. 23Then the moon will be disgraced And the sun ashamed; For the Lord of hosts will reign On Mount Zion and in Jerusalem And before His elders, gloriously.

“Many days.” How about one thousand years? That matches this chapter 24 prophecy with the one in Revelation 20, where Satan is bound, “many days.”

Isaiah 25:6-12.

*6And in this mountain The Lord of hosts will make for all people A feast of choice pieces, A feast of wines on the lees, Of fat things full of marrow, Of well-refined wines on the lees. 7And He will destroy on this mountain The surface of the covering cast over all people, And the veil that is spread over all nations. 8He will swallow up death forever, **And the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces;** The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the Lord has spoken. 9And it will be said in that day: “Behold, 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.”*

10For on this mountain the hand of the Lord will rest, And Moab shall be trampled down under Him, As straw is trampled down for the refuse heap. 11And He will spread out His hands in their midst As a swimmer reaches out to swim, And He will bring down their pride Together with the trickery of their hands. 12The fortress of the high fort of your walls He will bring down, lay low, And bring to the ground, down to the dust.

In 25, we see glimpses of the end of all things again. The long-awaited Messiah comes and brings incredible joys to His people and all people of earth, except His enemies, who will once and for all be defeated, along with that enemy, death.

Isaiah 26:1-2, 9, 19-21.

*1In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: “**We have a strong city; God will appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks. 2Open the gates, That the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in.**”*

Here are Millennial people rejoicing in their new security.

*9With my soul I have desired You in the night, Yes, by my spirit within me I will seek You early; For when **Your judgments are in the earth**, The inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”*

This is a person of our own time longing for that Kingdom to come.

19Your dead shall live; Together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; For your dew is like the dew of herbs, And the earth shall cast out the dead. 20Come, my people, enter your chambers, And shut your doors behind you; Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, Until the indignation is past.

Trouble is coming. Hang on. Jesus is coming too, as in verse 21.

*21For behold, **the Lord comes out of His place To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity**; The earth will also disclose her blood, And will no more cover her slain.*

This could have been written by any number of New Testament writers. *Isaiah is the prophet of the Kingdom of God.*

Isaiah 30:18-19.

*18Therefore the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you; And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; Blessed are all those who wait for Him. **19For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; You shall weep no more.** He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; When He hears it, He will answer you.*

Chapter 30 tells us that when Zion rules, life is good.

Isaiah 32:1-4, 16-19.

***1Behold, a king will reign in righteousness**, And princes will rule with justice. 2A man will be as a hiding place from the wind, And a cover from the tempest, As rivers of water in a dry place, As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. 3The eyes of those who see will not be dim, And the ears of those who hear will listen. 4Also the heart of the rash will understand knowledge, And the tongue of the stammerers will be ready to speak plainly.*

16Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, And righteousness remain in the fruitful field. 17The work of righteousness will be peace, And the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.

*18My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, In secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places,
19Though hail comes down on the forest, And the city is brought low in humiliation.*

Righteousness. Peace. Security. The Golden Age of Israel has not come yet, but is on the way.

Notice that the wind and the tempest and the rash person and the foolish one, will all be here in the Millennium. But there will be a hiding place and a Healer and a corrective element that is not present today. A world we have all longed for is coming!

Isaiah 33:17, 20-22. [but look at 53:2, "There is no beauty that we should desire Him."]

17Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; They will see the land that is very far off. 20Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts; Your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home, A tabernacle that will not be taken down; Not one of its stakes will ever be removed, Nor will any of its cords be broken.

21But there the majestic Lord will be for us A place of broad rivers and streams, In which no galley with oars will sail, Nor majestic ships pass by. 22(For the Lord is our Judge, The Lord is our Lawgiver, The Lord is our King; He will save us).

The eyes that saw no beauty in Jesus will see that beauty when He comes to reign among us.
Isaiah 35:1-10.

*1The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; 2It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, Even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, The excellence of Carmel and Sharon. **They shall see the glory of the Lord,** The excellency of our God.*

*3Strengthen the weak hands, And make firm the feeble knees. 4Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! **Behold, your God will come with vengeance,** With the recompense of God; He will come and save you."*

*5Then **the eyes** of the blind shall be opened, And **the ears** of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6Then **the lame** shall leap like a deer, And **the tongue** of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert. 7The parched ground shall become a pool, And the thirsty land springs of water; In the habitation of jackals, where each lay, There shall be grass with reeds and rushes.*

8A highway shall be there, and a road, And it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, But it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a

fool, Shall not go astray. 9No lion shall be there, Nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it; It shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there,

10And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, And come to Zion with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

35 seems to mingle promises that were somewhat fulfilled when Messiah was here earlier, with ones that shall come to pass later.

Truly if it can be said that Jesus had a healing touch on all He met when He was here, the effect of His healing power will be multiplied infinitely when He comes again and sets up His rule. And yes, we can spiritualize the "Highway of Holiness," without taking its literal fulfillment away. And who wants anything but the literal interpretation of that last section, that sees God's people coming to Zion, a *literal place just about everywhere it is mentioned.*

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

*1"Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your God. 2"Speak **comfort to Jerusalem**, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the Lord's hand Double for all her sins."*

The Holocaust. The wanderings. The Tribulation. Enough, says God. Now I shall still keep my promise to you. You have learned your lesson.

*3The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "**Prepare the way of the Lord**; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. 4Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; **5The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together**; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."*

John the Baptist announces Jesus' entry into His creation. We look forward to His second coming when another announcer will come to the planet. Meanwhile He has left His Kingdom here, in the charge of the Holy Spirit with Whom He is one.

*9O Zion, You who bring good tidings, Get up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, You who bring good tidings, Lift up your voice with strength, Lift it up, be not afraid; **Say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"** 10Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong hand, And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him.*

Yes, the advent of Jesus will bring judgment to many, but rewards to many.

11 *He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.*

Allegorizing. Isaiah 40 falls prey to much of it, but for no good reason. A literal kingdom is coming. With a literal king. In a literal location. Why cannot most of the prophecies be literally true?

Oh, and did Jesus come with a strong hand the first time? No. Did He rule the first time? No. Did He feed His whole flock, when His flock had not been gathered together yet? No. These are promises of a second coming to this earth. The very term “second coming” demands an earth-centered mission.

Isaiah 41:8-10, 14.

8 “But you, Israel, are My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, **The descendants of Abraham My friend.** *9* **You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth,** And called from its farthest regions, And said to you, ‘You are My servant, I have chosen you and have not cast you away: *10* Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’ *14* “Fear not, you worm Jacob, You men of Israel! I will help you,” says the Lord And your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

In chapter 41, Abraham is back in sight! And the ingathering is repeated.

And don’t you love it? Israel is called a “worm” but promised the help of the Holy One of Israel. How we all can relate to this!

Isaiah 42:1-4.

1 “Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; **He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.** *2* He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. *3* A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench;

He will bring forth justice for truth. *4* He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law.”

Chapter 42 is another classic chapter. This one combines Jesus’ first and second comings.

First coming: He did not cry out. He did not raise His voice. Gently He dealt with all the needy. He brought justice through His death on the cross, but – second coming – that justice has not

yet been established in the earth. Nor will it be by the preaching of the gospel. His righteousness will not be firmly entrenched here until He is enthroned as Lord of the Earth.

Isaiah 43:1-7.

*1But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, **O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.** 2When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.*

*3For **I am the Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior;** I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place. 4Since you were precious in My sight, You have been honored, And I have loved you; Therefore I will give men for you, And people for your life. 5Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, And gather you from the west; 6I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not keep them back!' Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth— 7Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him."*

Chapter 43. Who has God loved like He has loved His true Israel? What will He not do for them? To what extent will he not go to have them returned to Him and to the land He promised them?

Isaiah 44:1-5, 21-23.

*1"Yet hear now, O Jacob My servant, And Israel whom I have chosen. 2Thus says the Lord who made you And formed you from the womb, who will help you: 'Fear not, O Jacob My servant; And you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. 3For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; **I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;** 4They will spring up among the grass Like willows by the watercourses.'*

5One will say, 'I am the Lord's'; Another will call himself by the name of Jacob; Another will write with his hand, 'The Lord's,' And name himself by the name of Israel.

21"Remember these, O Jacob, And Israel, for you are My servant; I have formed you, you are My servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me! 22I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."23Sing, O heavens, for the Lord has done it! Shout, you lower parts of the earth; Break forth into singing, you mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For the Lord has redeemed Jacob, And glorified Himself in Israel.

Note here and in other prophets how the Spirit of God will be involved with the people Israel. Sins will be blotted out. God will be glorified. What a day is coming!

Isaiah 49:5-6, 22-23.

5*“And now the Lord says, Who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, So that Israel is gathered to Him (For I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, And My God shall be My strength),*

6*Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; **I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles,** That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”*

22*Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples; They shall bring your sons in their arms, And your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders; 23Kings shall be your foster fathers, And their queens your nursing mothers; They shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, And lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the Lord, For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me.”*

The regathering again in 49. Influence over all the nations (Gentiles).

Now the prophet must interject an unusual word. A word that God hates. The word is *divorce*...

Isaiah 50:1

1*Thus says the Lord: “Where is the certificate of your mother’s **divorce**, Whom I have put away?”*

Israel had cut herself off. The divorce was not finalized. There would be a time of separation [54:6-7, 6*For the Lord has called you Like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, Like a youthful wife when you were refused,” Says your God. 7“For a mere moment I have forsaken you, But with great mercies I will gather you.*]

But God can take them back. And He will.

Isaiah 51:3, 11.

3For the Lord will comfort Zion, He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the Lord; Joy and gladness will be found in it, Thanksgiving and the voice of melody. 11*So the ransomed of the Lord shall return, And come to Zion with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness; Sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

As in 35, above. But nice to hear again!

Isaiah 52:1-2, 7-10.

1Awake, awake! Put on your strength, O Zion; Put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city! For the uncircumcised and the unclean Shall no longer come to you. 2Shake yourself from the dust, arise; **Sit down, O Jerusalem! Loose yourself from the bonds of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion!**

7How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, **Who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"**

8Your watchmen shall lift up their voices, With their voices they shall sing together; For they shall see eye to eye When the Lord brings back Zion. 9Break forth into joy, sing together, You waste places of Jerusalem! For the Lord has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem. 10The Lord has 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.**

A perfect city of God. And a familiar description of those now, and in that day, who proclaim the good news of what is coming and has come.

Isaiah 56:6-8.

6"Also the sons of the foreigner Who join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, And to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants— Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant— 7Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; **For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.**" 8The Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says, "Yet I will gather to him Others besides those who are gathered to him."

56. The holy mountain. Spoken of often in the prophets. Here also is mention of sacrifices offered in that kingdom... And Jesus reminded the wicked rulers of His day what Isaiah said about the House of God, in whatever age it stands.

Isaiah 59:19-21.

19So shall they fear The name of the Lord from the west, And His glory from the rising of the sun; When the enemy comes in like a flood, The Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him. 20**"The Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," Says the Lord.**

21“As for Me,” says the Lord, “this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants’ descendants,” says the Lord, “from this time and forevermore.”

How often has 59:19 been used in other contexts! This is a promise of God’s protection of His people during the reign of Christ, for there still will be enemies possible in that day.

Isaiah 60:1-7, 10-22.

*1Arise, shine; **For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.** 2For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But **the Lord will arise over you,** And His glory will be seen upon you. 3The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.*

60 gives a clear statement of the condition of the world when Jesus comes, and His changing of that condition.

4“Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, And your daughters shall be nursed at your side. 5Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you. 6The multitude of camels shall cover your land, The dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; All those from Sheba shall come; They shall bring gold and incense, And they shall proclaim the praises of the Lord. 7All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together to you, The rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; They shall ascend with acceptance on My altar, And I will glorify the house of My glory.

Abundant Millennium wealth that will bring glory to Messiah.

*10“The sons of foreigners shall build up your walls, And their kings shall minister to you; **For in My wrath I struck you, But in My favor I have had mercy on you.** 11Therefore your gates shall be open continually; They shall not be shut day or night, That men may bring to you **the wealth of the Gentiles,** And their kings in procession. **12For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall perish, And those nations shall be utterly ruined.** 13“The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, The cypress, the pine, and the box tree together, To beautify the place of My sanctuary; And I will make the place of My feet glorious.*

Can it be? The peoples of earth will make Messiah and His people abundant in blessing.

14Also the sons of those who afflicted you Shall come bowing to you, And all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the soles of your feet; And they shall call you The City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

No doubt about Who is in charge in the coming kingdom. And has this ever come to earth before?

15“Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, So that no one went through you, I will make you an eternal excellence, A joy of many generations. 16You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles, And milk the breast of kings; You shall know that I, the Lord, am your Savior And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

Everything turned around. No more “Jewish problem” to be resolved. The Gentiles will suddenly find themselves on the other side of the fence.

17“Instead of bronze I will bring gold, Instead of iron I will bring silver, Instead of wood, bronze, And instead of stones, iron. I will also make your officers peace, And your magistrates righteousness.

Everything kicked up a notch!

18Violence shall no longer be heard in your land, Neither wasting nor destruction within your borders; but you shall call your walls Salvation, And your gates Praise. God the Glory of His People

Peace at last.

19“The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the Lord will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory. 20Your sun shall no longer go down, Nor shall your moon withdraw itself; For the Lord will be your everlasting light,

Here it seems Isaiah has blended the Millennial Kingdom blessings with those of the Eternal Kingdom, as he unknowingly blended the first and second comings of Christ earlier in the book. The prophets did not make up this material but flowed in what the Spirit gave them.

*And the days of your mourning shall be ended. 21Also your people shall all be righteous; **They shall inherit the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified.***

All of this wonder is for the glory of God!

22A little one shall become a thousand, And a small one a strong nation. I, the Lord, will hasten it in its time.”

Chapter 60’s vision of the future continues in 61:

Isaiah 61:4-7.

*4And **they shall rebuild the old ruins**, They shall raise up the former desolations, And they shall repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations. 5Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, And the sons of the foreigner Shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. **6But you shall be named the priests of the Lord**, They shall call you the servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, And in their glory you shall boast. 7Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, And instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double; Everlasting joy shall be theirs.*

The Tribulation years will have left a horrible mess to be cleaned. The people of earth at that time will get busy with this project right away.

And yes, there will be people called “priests” in that day. And here is another suggestion that the Gentiles will be subservient to the new Israel.

Isaiah 62:1-7, 11-12.

***1For Zion’s sake** I will not hold My peace, And **for Jerusalem’s sake** I will not rest, Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, And her salvation as a lamp that burns.*

62. Comforting to know that Jesus will do whatever it takes to keep His promise to His people.

2The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, And all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, Which the mouth of the Lord will name. 3You shall also be a crown of glory In the hand of the Lord, And a royal diadem In the hand of your God.

***4You shall no longer be termed Forsaken**, Nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; But you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; **For the Lord delights in you**, And your land shall be married. 5For as a young man marries a virgin, So shall your sons marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So shall your God rejoice over you.*

*6I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; They shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent, **7And give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.***

There it is again. That encouragement to failing hearts. Like Boaz of old, he will not sleep, as it were, until he has settled this inheritance business, this marriage business. He's working on it as we speak.

11Indeed the Lord has proclaimed To the end of the world: "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Surely your salvation is coming; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him.'"

His reward is with Him. Echoes of Revelation, methinks?

12And they shall call them The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord; And you shall be called Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.

We ought to have a little pity – only a little – for those who must find a way to take away the literal and make everything figurative. Zion. Jerusalem. Gentiles. A new name. A praise in the earth. Why change the meaning here? Why not just enjoy what God has said? The Jews were not wrong to expect what God had promised. They were wrong not to realize that the Fulfillment of the promise was within their grasp, in their very face. Nor are we wrong to believe in a literal fulfillment of all Jesus has promised.

Isaiah 65:20-25

20No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.

21They shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22They shall not build and another inhabit; They shall not plant and another eat; For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

23They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble; For they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the Lord, And their offspring with them. 24It shall come to pass That before they call, I will answer; And while they are still speaking, I will hear.

25The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, The lion shall eat straw like the ox, And dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, Says the Lord.

Later we will talk about the end of death. It does not end until the close of the thousand-year reign. But life is certainly extended greatly. Then look at the houses, vineyards, trees, wolves, lambs, lions, oxen...all earthly things with heavenly characteristics in Emmanuel's land.

Isaiah closes with one more look at the kingdom that should set us thinking for some time.

Isaiah 66:18-24

18For I know their works and their thoughts. It shall be that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see My glory.

19I will set a sign among them; and those among them who escape I will send to the nations: to Tarshish and Pul and Lud, who draw the bow, and Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands afar off who have not heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles.

20Then they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the Lord out of all nations, on horses and in chariots and in litters, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem, says the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord. 21And I will also take some of them for priests and Levites, says the Lord.

22For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me," says the Lord, So shall your descendants and your name remain.

23And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me, says the Lord.

24And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, And their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.

All nations gathered, as in Matthew 24, 25. Messengers sent to places on the planet who have not yet heard of the Lord's return and rule. Offerings brought to Jerusalem. Priests and Levites! All human beings made to worship the Lord! And unrepentant sinners' corpses will be visible to all as a reminder of the grace of God to the redeemed.

Spiritualize all of that, ye who would twist the Scriptures to your liking!

There is one item, however, that needs some understanding. The new heavens and the new earth are spoken of in John's Revelation, so it seems, as *following* the Millennial reign. Here, and in chapter 65, they seem to *be a part of* the kingdom days.

The last two chapters of Revelation do indeed seem to be of a different caliber. No death. No temple. Yet there are still nations. And a new Jerusalem. And all still on the earth, where the tabernacle of God has descended.

Has Isaiah slipped over into eternity, beyond the Millennium? One thing is certain: we do not abrogate one passage of Scripture to make way for another. That's how Islam's holy book works, not ours. Somehow Isaiah and John saw the same vision of the future.

John and so many of the prophecies make it plain that there is a "middle" kingdom between where we are now and where we are going. Isaiah blends them into one in a couple places? So be it.

We move now to Micah

21. 700 B.C., The Kingdom and Micah.

Micah and Isaiah were contemporaries. One can find passages that are quite similar in the two books. Similarly thrilling. But then, Micah also had some negatives to add first...

Micah 1:3-9

*3For behold, **the Lord is coming out of His place**; He will come down
And tread on the high places of the earth. 4The mountains will melt under Him, And the valleys
will split Like wax before the fire, Like waters poured down a steep place. 5All this is for the
transgression of Jacob And for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of
Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what are the high places of Judah? Are they not Jerusalem?*

6“Therefore I will make Samaria a heap of ruins in the field, Places for planting a vineyard; I will pour down her stones into the valley, And I will uncover her foundations. 7All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces, And all her pay as a harlot shall be burned with the fire; All her idols I will lay desolate, For she gathered it from the pay of a harlot, And they shall return to the pay of a harlot.”

*8Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked; I will make a wailing like the jackals And a mourning like the ostriches, 9**For her wounds are incurable. For it has come to Judah; It has come to the gate of My people— To Jerusalem.***

Micah – that is, the Lord – is not too happy with the northern or southern kingdoms. He even calls the wounds incurable. Death. But keep reading Micah, and you will see that resurrection is in store also. First wounds, then death, but then revival.

Micah 2:12-13,

*12I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together like sheep of the fold, Like a flock in the midst of their pasture; They shall make a loud noise because of so many people. 13The one who breaks open will come up before them; They will break out, Pass through the gate, And go out by it; **Their king will pass before them, With the Lord at their head.***

Chapter 2’s imagery of a sheepfold and a Good Shepherd certainly is not strange to us. Then the mention of someone coming through a gate brings us to Ezekiel’s description of the temple grounds, and the prince who serves under the Lord in that day.

Micah 4:1-8.

1Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord’s house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it. 2Many nations shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 3He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

*4But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, And no one shall make them afraid; For the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken. 5For all people walk each in the name of his god, But we will walk in the name of the Lord our God Forever and ever. 6“**In that day,**” says the Lord, **“I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast And those whom I have afflicted; 7I will***

*make the lame a remnant, And the outcast a strong nation; **So the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion From now on, even forever.** 8And you, O tower of the flock, The stronghold of the daughter of Zion, To you shall it come, Even the former dominion shall come, The kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.”*

The first verses of Micah 4 are a quotation from Isaiah 2, word for word. But Micah has more of his own words to add in that chapter.

We will talk about the transition from millennial days to eternal days later. The use of the word *forever* here can include both. Notice again the *gathering* theme and the constant use of Mt. Zion as a geographical marker pinning us to one place on the earth.

Micah 5:2-15.

*2“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.” 3Therefore He shall give them up, Until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; Then the remnant of His brethren Shall return to the children of Israel. **4And He shall stand and feed His flock In the strength of the Lord,** In the majesty of the name of the Lord His God; And they shall abide, **For now He shall be great To the ends of the earth;** 5And this One shall be peace.*

Chapter 5’s famous “Christmas” passage blends into a description of One Who will be great to “the ends of the earth,” a phrase we have heard before regarding the coming King.

***7Then the remnant of Jacob Shall be in the midst of many peoples,** Like dew from the Lord, Like showers on the grass, That tarry for no man Nor wait for the sons of men. 8And the remnant of Jacob Shall be among the Gentiles, In the midst of many peoples, Like a lion among the beasts of the forest, Like a young lion among flocks of sheep, Who, if he passes through, Both treads down and tears in pieces, And none can deliver. 9Your hand shall be lifted against your adversaries, And all your enemies shall be cut off.*

No more enemies to threaten Israel. Israel in fact ruling over the Gentiles, the nations.

*10“And it shall be in that day,” says the Lord, “That I will cut off your horses from your midst And destroy your chariots. 11I will cut off the cities of your land And throw down all your strongholds. 12I will cut off sorceries from your hand, And you shall have no soothsayers. 13Your carved images I will also cut off, And your sacred pillars from your midst; You shall no more worship the work of your hands; 14I will pluck your wooden images from your midst; Thus I will destroy your cities. **15And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury On the nations that have not heard.”***

No more war. Enough with idolatry. Unbelieving nations judged.

Micah 7:14-20.

14*Shepherd Your people with Your staff, The flock of Your heritage, Who dwell solitarily in a woodland, In the midst of Carmel; Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, As in days of old. 15*“As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, **I will show them wonders.**”

16*The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; They shall put their hand over their mouth; Their ears shall be deaf. 17*They shall lick the dust like a serpent; They shall crawl from their holes like snakes of the earth. They shall be afraid of the Lord our God, And shall fear because of You.**18**Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy. **19****He will again have compassion on us,** And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea. **20**You will give truth to Jacob And mercy to Abraham, Which You have sworn to our fathers From days of old.

Chapter 7 of Micah compares the coming glories to the ones wrought when Israel was first delivered from Egypt. Part of that wondrous revelation will be judgment on nations, so severe that men will crawl into caves and under rocks to hide, as detailed in Revelation.

And above all, the great forgiveness of God for His people. The great determination to bless and to keep His promises to Israel will not be stopped even with all of that nation’s evils.

Now, two other prophets who lived at around the same time as Micah.

22. 700 B.C., The Kingdom and Amos.

After nearly nine chapters of doom and gloom for Israel, Amos is led by the Spirit to join the restoration chorus.

First the doom:

Amos 2:4-6

*Thus says the Lord: “For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because they have despised the law of the Lord, And have not kept His commandments. Their lies lead them astray, Lies which their fathers followed. 5*But I will send a fire upon Judah, And it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem.”

6Thus says the Lord: "For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment..."

Serious charges. Serious threats. All fulfilled and still being fulfilled. But as always with the prophets, this is not the end of the story. The end of Amos' prophecy sounds a lot different.

Amos 9:11-15.

11"On that day I will raise up The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, And repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days of old; 12That they may possess the remnant of Edom, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name," Says the Lord who does this thing.

13"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, And all the hills shall flow with it.

14I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. 15I will plant them in their land, And no longer shall they be pulled up From the land I have given them," Says the Lord your God.

See the chosen people ruling over Gentile nations. Wasted ruins are rebuilt. And their stay is permanent. Nothing like this in history past or present, again! Something is coming!

Notice that a restoration of the *tabernacle of David* is coming. Amos prophesied while the Temple of Solomon still stood. That Temple and David's tabernacle would all be destroyed. Yes, another Temple, more than one, would come in the future, but it is the tabernacle of David, that housed the ark of God in Jerusalem during that king's life, that is singled out for restoration.

David is given prominence in more than one prophetic word about the kingdom. It is His kingdom, and not Solomon's, of which the prophets speak. The line through Solomon ended in disgrace with Jeconiah. David's line, through his son Nathan, continues to this day in Christ Jesus.

23. 700 B.C., The Kingdom and Hosea.

Hosea, another prophet of Isaiah's generation, is full of promises of Israel's restoration. But as with the others, Hosea must tell the bad news. Judgment is coming. Chapter 2...

2"Bring charges against your mother, bring charges; For she is not My wife, nor am I her Husband! Let her put away her harlotries from her sight, And her adulteries from between her breasts; 3Lest I strip her naked And expose her, as in the day she was born, And make her like a wilderness, And set her like a dry land, And slay her with thirst.

4"I will not have mercy on her children, For they are the children of harlotry. 5For their mother has played the harlot; She who conceived them has behaved shamefully. For she said, 'I will go after my lovers, Who give me my bread and my water, My wool and my linen, My oil and my drink.'

6"Therefore, behold, I will hedge up your way with thorns, And wall her in, So that she cannot find her paths. 7She will chase her lovers, But not overtake them; Yes, she will seek them, but not find them.

Then she will say, 'I will go and return to my first husband, For then it was better for me than now.' 8For she did not know That I gave her grain, new wine, and oil, And multiplied her silver and gold— Which they prepared for Baal.

9"Therefore I will return and take away My grain in its time And My new wine in its season, And will take back My wool and My linen, Given to cover her nakedness. 10Now I will uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, And no one shall deliver her from My hand.

11I will also cause all her mirth to cease, Her feast days, Her New Moons, Her Sabbaths— All her appointed feasts. 12"And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees, Of which she has said, 'These are my wages that my lovers have given me.' So I will make them a forest, And the beasts of the field shall eat them.

13I will punish her For the days of the Baals to which she burned incense. She decked herself with her earrings and jewelry, And went after her lovers; But Me she forgot," says the Lord.

A just punishment is levied against Judah. Here, and throughout Hosea's prophecy. But also mixed throughout is the incredible mercy of God.

Consider the following passage, written directly after the words I have just quoted. Israel has hinted that she shall go back to God. And after the punishment, God says,

Hosea 2:14-23.

14“Therefore, behold, **I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, And speak comfort to her.** 15I will give her her vineyards from there, And the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; She shall sing there, As in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.

16“And it shall be, in that day,” Says the Lord, **“That you will call Me ‘My Husband,’ And no longer call Me ‘My Master,’** 17For I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, And they shall be remembered by their name no more. 18In that day I will make a covenant for them With the beasts of the field, With the birds of the air, And with the creeping things of the ground. Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth, To make them lie down safely.

19“I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me In righteousness and justice, In lovingkindness and mercy; 20I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, And you shall know the Lord. 21“**It shall come to pass in that day That I will answer,”** says the Lord; “I will answer the heavens, And they shall answer the earth. 22The earth shall answer With grain, With new wine, And with oil; They shall answer Jezreel.

23**Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, And I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy; Then I will say to those who were not My people, ‘You are My people!’ And they shall say, ‘You are my God!’ ”**

Heart-breaking words from a scorned husband who decides to forgive and make the marriage work. Incredible to our ears. The bringing of Israel into the wilderness is mentioned elsewhere, significantly in John’s Revelation, where we will look at it again.

A message similar to the ending of this one is found in chapter 1:

Hosea 1:10-11.

10“Yet the number of the children of Israel Shall be as the sand of the sea, Which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass In the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not My people,’ There it shall be said to them, ‘You are sons of the living God.’

11**Then the children of Judah and the children of Israel Shall be gathered together, And appoint for themselves one head; And they shall come up out of the land, For great will be the day of Jezreel!**

The context here is Israel, written off – it seemed – by God’s judgments. Paul sees in it (Romans 9) the fact that some undeserving Gentiles are included also!

More from Hosea in chapter 3:

Hosea 3:4-5

4For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. **5**Afterward the children of Israel shall return **and seek the Lord their God and David their king.** They shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days.

We live now in the “many days” of no king or sacrifice in Israel. But it shall not ever be so. The Lord and David are scheduled for a return appearance!

And at the end of the book, 14:4-7,

4*“I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from him. 5I will be like the dew to Israel; He shall grow like the lily, And lengthen his roots like Lebanon. 6His branches shall spread; His beauty shall be like an olive tree, And his fragrance like Lebanon. 7Those who dwell under his shadow shall return; They shall be revived like grain, and grow like a vine. Their scent shall be like the wine of Lebanon.*

King Jesus and His love make all things new.

Now we move a little later into history and listen to three prophets who spoke around the middle of the 600’s B.C.

24. 650 B.C., The Kingdom and Nahum.

Nahum speaks of restoring, a major theme of the prophets. There is no mention of the reason for that needed restoration in Nahum, because the entire prophecy is aimed at *Nineveh*.

Nahum 1:15-2:2.

*15Behold, on the mountains The feet of him who brings good tidings, Who proclaims peace! **O Judah, keep your appointed feasts, Perform your vows. For the wicked one shall no more pass through you; He is utterly cut off. 1He who scatters has come up before your face. Man the fort! Watch the road! Strengthen your flanks! Fortify your power mightily. 2For the Lord will restore the excellence of Jacob Like the excellence of Israel, For the emptiers have emptied them out And ruined their vine branches.***

There will come a time when wickedness will be ruled out of Israel. She will then be free to keep her feasts, says Nahum. And this is the message of the one on the mountain proclaiming peace, a word which Paul picked up as referring to anyone who preaches the gospel of the kingdom of God.

25. 650 B.C., The Kingdom and Zephaniah.

This little book seems to be about a general judgment coming, not just God's anger at Israel and Jerusalem, though they are included. Yet after all the judging and the anger, peace with God...

Zephaniah 3:8-20

8“Therefore wait for Me,” says the Lord, “Until the day I rise up for plunder; **My determination is to gather the nations To My assembly of kingdoms,** To pour on them My indignation, All My fierce anger; All the earth shall be devoured With the fire of My jealousy. 9“For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, That they all may call on the name of the Lord, To serve Him with one accord. 10From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia **My worshipers, the daughter of My dispersed ones, Shall bring My offering.**

Worldwide worship of the King is a subject we will see again in Zechariah...

11And you shall no longer be haughty In **My holy mountain.** 12I will leave in your midst a meek and humble people, And they shall trust in the name of the Lord. **13The remnant of Israel shall do no unrighteousness** And speak no lies, nor shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth;

...reminding us of the kingdom people Jesus spoke of in the Sermon on the Mount.

14Sing, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! 15The Lord has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy. **The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; You shall see disaster no more.**

Jesus will literally be *in the midst* of His people in that day.

16In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear; Zion, let not your hands be weak. 17The **Lord your God in your midst,** The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.

Perhaps Jesus sings over us now? We hear such talk these days. But this cannot be proved by the passage before us. The song is a victory song as *Christ Jesus has just been given rule,* with His people, over the whole earth.

19Behold, at that time I will deal with all who afflict you; I will save the lame, and gather those who were driven out; I will appoint them for praise and fame in every land where they were put to shame.

Wrongs will be made right in that day.

20At that **time I will bring you back,** even at the time I gather you; For I will give you fame and praise among all the peoples of the earth, When I return your captives before your eyes, says the Lord.

I'm sure no one can argue that any of this has ever happened on planet earth to date. But one day it shall!

Next the mighty voice of the weeping prophet, who through his tears, still saw a joyful time for Israel.

26. 650 B.C., The Kingdom and Jeremiah

Jeremiah's focus is the people in front of him, backsliding Judah. But even so, occasionally the weeping prophet is able to clear his eyes long enough to see well into our own future.

We begin with chapter 3.

Jeremiah 3:14-18.

*14“Return, O backsliding children,” says the Lord; “for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and **I will bring you to Zion.** 15And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.*

16“Then it shall come to pass, when you are multiplied and increased in the land in those days,” says the Lord, “that they will say no more, ‘The ark of the covenant of the Lord.’ It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit it, nor shall it be made anymore.

17“At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts. 18In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given as an inheritance to your fathers.

Here in chapter 3 is Hosea's image of a marriage relationship with Israel that God will not allow to be broken. Then a prophecy of extinguished evil in the land. Has it happened? Have Judah and Israel come together from the land of the north and lived in holy existence in their land? Please!

Chapter 16 is next.

Jeremiah 16:14-15.

14“Therefore behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “that it shall no more be said, ‘The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ 15but, ‘The Lord lives

*who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.' **For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.***

Again the return is promised.

One fascinating prediction the prophet makes is regarding the line that will lead to the Messiah, Who will sit on the throne of David. In 22:29-30 he lets us know that no descendant of Jeconiah, who is in direct descent from David, will sit on the Davidic throne!

Is not Jesus a descendant of Jeconiah? Actually, no. The line of David through Solomon and Josiah and Jeconiah etc. ends in Joseph, the foster father of our Lord. But Jesus' *blood line* comes through another son of David, the relatively unknown Nathan (not the prophet of that name). Mary can trace her lineage all the way back to Nathan and thus to David. The promise to David of an earthly but Heaven-inspired and eternal rule, is intact. [We'll cover this in more detail in speaking of King Jeconiah, next.]

In the very next chapter, 23, is Jeremiah's famous prophecy of the Branch. The etymology of this word, some say, gives rise to the New Testament reference to Jesus being called a Nazarene.

Jeremiah 23:1-8.

1"Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" says the Lord. 2Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings," says the Lord.

The wicked of Israel are to be judged. But there is a remnant. True Israel. Read on.

3"But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. 4I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking," says the Lord. 5"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 6In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

A king is coming. And in His days the earth shall be destroyed? Not at all. The king will reign and prosper. Read it as it is...

*7“Therefore, behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “that they shall no longer say, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ 8but, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ **And they shall dwell in their own land.**”*

The government will be on His shoulders, as Isaiah would have it. He will supervise a worldwide team of resurrected men who will carefully control every aspect of earth’s life.

It should be obvious to all that such a day has not dawned upon us at this time in our history or any time in our past.

Many have been rejoicing since the return of the Jews in 1948. But so far there is no indication that these Jews or the present state of Israel, are the fulfillment of this prophecy. When Jesus returns, true Jews will be brought back to their homeland, brought to *repentance* before their Lord, and with Him and the Gentiles who have been grafted into the Body, *rule the world*.

The contents of chapter 23 were deemed so important by the Spirit of God that he had them repeated in chapter 33! But now, to chapter 24,

Jeremiah 24:1-7.

1The Lord showed me, and there were two baskets of figs set before the temple of the Lord, after Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the princes of Judah with the craftsmen and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. 2One basket had very good figs, like the figs that are first ripe; and the other basket had very bad figs which could not be eaten, they were so bad. 3Then the Lord said to me, “What do you see, Jeremiah?”

And I said, “Figs, the good figs, very good; and the bad, very bad, which cannot be eaten, they are so bad.”

*4Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 5“Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: ‘Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge those who are carried away captive from Judah, whom I have sent out of this place for their own good, into the land of the Chaldeans. **6For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land; I will build them and not pull them down, and I will plant them and not pluck them up.** 7Then I will give them a **heart to know Me**, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, **for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.***

More assurance of a future planting of Israel that will not be reversed. Plus, a *heart* to go with it all. This has seriously not happened. Jews today continue to refuse their Messiah, while even

giving that title [Messiah] to their *land*! Yes, the modern Jew of Israel quite often believes that the Bible was talking about *the land* when it talked about a Messiah coming. Oh well...

Now comes chapter 30, which mixes a coming horror called Jacob's trouble (aka the "Tribulation") with promises of a restored Israel. Again, every word of prophecy is important. Read carefully.

Jeremiah 30:1-11, 18-24.

1The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, 2"Thus speaks the Lord God of Israel, saying: 'Write in a book for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you. 3For behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah,' says the Lord. 'And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.'"

4Now these are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah.5"For thus says the Lord: 'We have heard a voice of trembling, Of fear, and not of peace. 6Ask now, and see, Whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins Like a woman in labor, And all faces turned pale?

*7Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of **Jacob's trouble, But he shall be saved out of it.** 8'For it shall come to pass in that day,' Says the Lord of hosts, 'That I will break his yoke from your neck, And will burst your bonds; **Foreigners shall no more enslave them. 9But they shall serve the Lord their God, And David their king, Whom I will raise up for them.***

*10'Therefore do not fear, O My servant Jacob,' says the Lord, 'Nor be dismayed, O Israel; For behold, **I will save you from afar, And your seed from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet, And no one shall make him afraid.***

*11For I am with you,' says the Lord, 'to save you; Though I make a full end of all nations where I have scattered you, Yet **I will not make a complete end of you. But I will correct you** in justice, And will not let you go altogether unpunished.'*

18'Behold, I will bring back the captivity of Jacob's tents, And have mercy on his dwelling places; The city shall be built upon its own mound, And the palace shall remain according to its own plan. 19Then out of them shall proceed thanksgiving And the voice of those who make merry; I will multiply them, and they shall not diminish; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.

20Their children also shall be as before, And their congregation shall be established before Me; **And I will punish all who oppress them.** 21Their nobles shall be from among them, And their governor shall come from their midst; Then I will cause him to draw near, And he shall approach Me; For who is this who pledged his heart to approach Me?’ says the Lord. **22‘You shall be My people, And I will be your God.’”**

23Behold, the whirlwind of the Lord Goes forth with fury, A continuing whirlwind; It will fall violently on the head of the wicked. 24The fierce anger of the Lord will not return until He has done it, And until He has performed the intents of His heart. **In the latter days you will consider it.**

A return. An ultimate punishment as seen in Daniel and the Gospels.

David (there he is again!) is to be the ruler of a new kingdom. Yes, some see *David* as a code name for Jesus, others see the real king David resurrected [as the text actually says] and placed under Jesus in the Millennial reign. These details fit perfectly with the other passages that predict a kingdom period.

See also chapter 31 regarding this matter. And a lot of other matters.

Jeremiah 31:1-6

1“*At the same time,*” says the Lord, “*I will be the God of all the families of Israel, **and they shall be My people.***” 2*Thus says the Lord: “The people who survived the sword Found grace in the wilderness— Israel, when I went to give him rest.”* 3*The Lord has appeared of old to me, saying: “**Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.*** 4*Again I will build you, and you shall be rebuilt, O virgin of Israel!*

You shall again be adorned with your tambourines, And shall go forth in the dances of those who rejoice. 5*You shall yet plant vines on the mountains of Samaria; The planters shall plant and eat them as ordinary food.* 6*For there shall be a day When the watchmen will cry on Mount Ephraim, **Arise, and let us go up to Zion, to the Lord our God.***

Vines. Mountains. Worship centered in Zion. The pattern is real. Israel is to be a real nation, a literal nation, restored to her original beauty and enhanced. Such love! Such commitment to a promise!

And in the same chapter:

Jeremiah 31:7-11,

*7For thus says the Lord: "Sing with gladness for Jacob, And shout among the chief of the nations; Proclaim, give praise, and say, 'O Lord, save Your people, **The remnant of Israel!**'
8Behold, I will bring them from the north country, And gather them from the ends of the earth, Among them the blind and the lame, the woman with child And the one who labors with child, together; A great throng shall return there.*

Did you catch it? "The ends of the earth." How many times have we heard that phrase in the prophecies? The scattered nation is regathered by God Himself.

9They shall come with weeping, and with supplications I will lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters, in a straight way in which they shall not stumble; For I am a Father to Israel, And Ephraim is My firstborn.

*10Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, And declare it in the isles afar off, and say, **He who scattered Israel will gather him, And keep him as a shepherd does his flock.***

The gathering at the end of our present age. The rivers. The isles. The Shepherd Jesus. A literal earth where literal Israel will prosper at last.

Moving on in the chapter:

Jeremiah 31:12-14

*12Therefore **they shall come and sing in the height of Zion**, Streaming to the goodness of the Lord— For wheat and new wine and oil, For the young of the flock and the herd; Their souls shall be like a well-watered garden, And they shall **sorrow no more** at all. 13Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, And the young men and the old, together; For I will turn their mourning to joy, Will comfort them, and make them rejoice rather than sorrow. 14I will satiate the soul of the priests with abundance, And My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, says the Lord.*

No more sorrow. Hasn't happened. Mourning turned to joy. Hasn't happened in Israel! Priests?! (See Ezekiel...) God's people totally satisfied.

This is prophetic vision, the real deal. Why do we have to endure the "prophets" of our own day when we have such glorious promises in the Book?

But the best of this chapter comes toward the end of it. The famous promise of a New Covenant! What? The New Covenant is in the Old Testament?

Folks, the Old Testament, or Covenant, is Moses. The Law. The New Covenant is grace, foretold by more than one prophet. Grace and forgiveness and mercy! Unconditional promises. Look what is coming to *Israel!* Yes, yes, Gentile, you may partake, but remember that the promise of everything you enjoy was first made to *Israel* and shall be enjoyed by her forever!

Jeremiah 31:31-37.

*31Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a **new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah**— 32not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord.*

*33But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: **I will put My law in their minds**, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*

35Thus says the Lord, Who gives the sun for a light by day, The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, and its waves roar. (The Lord of hosts is His name): 36If those ordinances depart from before Me, says the Lord, Then the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever." 37Thus says the Lord: If heaven above can be measured, And the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel For all that they have done, says the Lord.

A New Covenant will rule the new kingdom. Certainly this portion of the prophecy is visible among Kingdom people in our own day, but will make more sense when the final rule is established. In that day, everyone [left] in the world will know Jesus! Everyone will be called to worship Jesus! And notice the promise to the nation Israel and her seed. Though we Gentiles have been grafted in by the grace of God, we need to understand that *Israel's God, Israel's ways, Israel's everything*, will be the focus of that coming kingdom.

Then specific details of a geographical nature are added to Jeremiah's 31st, (verses 38-40) once more letting us know that the kingdom coming is as literal as literal can be. "Spiritualizing" the Word of God, when it is already spiritual, is dangerous business.

What else did Jeremiah receive from the Lord about Israel's future?

Jeremiah 32:36-44.

36“Now therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning this city of which you say, ‘It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: **37Behold, I will gather them out of all countries where I have driven them in My anger, in My fury, and in great wrath; I will bring them back to this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely.** 38They shall be My people, and I will be their God;

39then I will give them **one heart** and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. **40And I will make an everlasting covenant with them,** that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me. 41Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will assuredly plant them in this land, with all My heart and with all My soul.’

The fact that Israel does not to this day dwell in safety, nor is the fear of God in their hearts, lets us know that the final planting has not taken place. But it will.

Is there still more?

Jeremiah 33:7-26.

7And I will cause the captives of Judah and the captives of Israel to return, and will rebuild those places as at the first. **8I will cleanse them from all their iniquity** by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned and by which they have transgressed against Me. 9Then it shall be to Me a name of joy, a praise, and an honor before all nations of the earth, who shall hear all the good that I do to them; they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and all the prosperity that I provide for it.’

Done yet? No.

10“Thus says the Lord: ‘Again there shall be heard in this place—of which you say, “It is desolate, without man and without beast”—in the cities of Judah, in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and without beast, **11the voice of joy and the voice of gladness,** the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who will say: “Praise the Lord of hosts, For the Lord is good, For His mercy endures forever”— and of **those who will bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord.** For I will cause the captives of the land to return as at the first,’ says the Lord.

Happening? No.

12“Thus says the Lord of hosts: **‘In this place** which is desolate, without man and without beast, and in all its cities, there shall again be a dwelling place of shepherds causing their flocks to lie down. 13In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the lowland, in the cities of the South, in

the land of Benjamin, in the places around Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, the flocks shall again pass under the hands of him who counts them,' says the Lord.

*14'Behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'that I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah: 15'In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to **David A Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 16In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.'***

The Branch of David has grown up over Israel? No. Not yet. Jerusalem is known to be a righteous city? No. Definitely not yet.

17"For thus says the Lord: 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; 18nor shall the priests, the Levites, lack a man to offer burnt offerings before Me, to kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice continually.' "

The throne of the house of Israel is occupied? No. Not yet. Priests offering sacrifices? No. Not yet.

19And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, 20"Thus says the Lord: 'If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, 21then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers. 22As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.' "

23Moreover the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, 24"Have you not considered what these people have spoken, saying, 'The two families which the Lord has chosen, He has also cast them off'? Thus they have despised My people, as if they should no more be a nation before them.

*25"Thus says the Lord: 'If My covenant is not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, 26then I will cast away the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, so that I will not take any of his descendants to be rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. **For I will cause their captives to return, and will have mercy on them.'** "*

Will God ever break even the smallest of His promises to Israel? No.

One last word from this Voice in Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 46:27-28.

27*“But do not fear, O My servant Jacob, And do not be dismayed, O Israel! **For behold, I will save you from afar, And your offspring from the land of their captivity; Jacob shall return, have rest and be at ease; No one shall make him afraid.** 28Do not fear, O Jacob My servant,” says the Lord, “For I am with you; For I will make a complete end of all the nations To which I have driven you, **But I will not make a complete end of you.** I will rightly correct you, For I will not leave you wholly unpunished.”*

Will God punish Israel? Yes. Will that mean the end of Israel? No. A Thousand times NO.

27. 600 B.C., The Kingdom and Jeconiah

It looked on the outside that there were two kingdoms with two sets of kings for hundreds of years. But the kings of the north [called Israel] never measured up to God’s standards; they all worshiped in the wrong place, continued on in idol-worship, until they were taken away altogether from the land given to them centuries before.

So Judah, in the south, excelled and lived happily ever after. No. Not at all. Judah could see what happened to her sister Israel, but eventually followed her into the same abyss.

End of kingdom.

Still, no. Just when the Biblical text seems the harshest on Israel, a dim light keeps hope, and the kingdom, alive.

But as Judah, the southern kingdom, is about to pass into oblivion because of its wretched evil ways, Jeremiah, who lives during this time, prophesies a seemingly fatal blow to the whole kingdom idea:

Jeremiah 22:29-30:

29O earth, earth, earth, Hear the word of the LORD! 30Thus says the LORD: ‘Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not prosper in his days; for none of his descendants shall prosper, sitting on the throne of David, and ruling anymore in Judah.’

Who is “this man” of the prophecy? That would be Coniah or Jeconiah. And who is Jeconiah? He is the son of Jehoiakim, who is one of the sons of Josiah, who was the last righteous king of Judah. And Josiah, as all the kings of Judah, is descended directly from King David. Therefore Jeconiah is in that line, too.

If you are not a little confused by now, you ought to be. I quoted earlier God’s promise to David (2 Samuel 7:16) that David’s house and kingdom would be established forever. Yet now Jeremiah’s talk of the end of the line brings it to a screeching halt?

No. All we are told here is that the line from David to Jeconiah via Solomon is cut off. But there are other lines that come from David. For this bit of information we must go for a moment into the New Testament and look at one of those long lists of names that the apostles gave us. Let’s check out Luke 3. And Matthew 1.

It is commonly held that while Matthew traced the genealogy of Joseph, Luke followed that of Mary.

In Matthew (v. 16) a man called Jacob is called the father of Joseph (Jesus’ foster-father). And then, instead of following the pattern of the entire chapter (he begat him and then he begat him etc.) Matthew says simply that Joseph was *the husband of Mary of whom the Christ was born*, implying that Joseph had no hand in this matter. Jesus, humanly speaking, was of Mary.

Note carefully, back in verses six and following, that the lineage of David follows Solomon and all those kings mentioned in first and second Kings, including Jeconiah.

But Jeconiah’s line will not produce another ruler in Israel, says Jeremiah. *And Joseph did not produce the one who would rule.*

Now look at Luke 3. Verse 23 says that Jesus was supposed, or thought, to be the son of Joseph. But He wasn’t really the son of Joseph, right? Now look at Joseph’s father. It is not Jacob any longer, but one called Heli. Tracing this man, who was probably Mary’s father, all the way back to David, we see that son Solomon *is not mentioned*, but rather, Nathan, a son born to David in Jerusalem before Solomon, per 2 Samuel 5:14. [Not to be confused with David’s personal prophet Nathan.]

The blood line is therefore intact. Jesus is the son – descendant – of David and therefore in line for all the kingdom promises, not because of great and wise king Solomon, and in spite of the wicked men who ended Judah’s reign, but because of the promise of God, who cannot lie, fulfilled by the unknown Nathan.

28. 600 B.C., The Kingdom and Ezekiel.

Let's just say it before we begin. Ezekiel predicts animal sacrifices. *Now what do we do with literal prophecies?*

With Ezekiel some think we hit a wall. Consistency demands that we continue the treatment of Scripture literally. If Isaiah and Jeremiah and the Psalms are literal, why not Ezekiel? But how can Ezekiel be literal?

Not long ago I put together a commentary on this incredible book. I remember struggling a little when I came to those chapters that seem to indicate something very Jewish in our future. The thought came to me as it does to all who approach Ezekiel: This all looks familiar.

Yes, indeed. We have seen it before. In the Torah. In Moses. What in the world is Ezekiel talking about?

The anti-Millennialist will fairly shout at us, Do not resurrect Moses! The sacrificial system is done, for goodness' sake! Read Hebrews. Read the entire New Testament. Everyone knows that bulls and birds and all the rest cannot take away sin! It is finished!

Granted. No millennial person would disagree with those shoutings. We are even a bit humiliated that someone would think that of us.

But then, Ezekiel? Does he not speak of a temple whose specifications in no way match the rebuilt – then refurbished – temple of Ezra and Nehemiah, and Herod? What temple is he talking about?

And does Ezekiel not speak of a priesthood (as do Isaiah and Jeremiah and the Psalmists, by the way!) And an altar? And sin offerings?

Some of course write it off as Ezekiel's bad guess. These are men whose scissors we mentioned earlier. Anything they cannot accept, they write off and cut out.

They do this with Genesis 1, too. How many nominal Christians substitute the entire evolutionary theory for the very words of God in the Genesis account of the creation?

Others say this or that text may be true, but only figuratively. This means this, and that means that, and on and on. You must learn to interpret correctly [meaning, allegorically, as we do. And you must agree with our particular interpretations].

My approach in my Ezekiel commentary, and now, is to take the challenge of following a prophecy wherever it leads, literally. And I believe I can do that without denying "It is finished!"

And a news flash to our "It is finished" crowd: the blood of bulls and goats *never did take away sin!* Not one sin of one sinner of any era was ever removed by animal blood. Jesus not only finished true blood sacrifice, but He also began it. The entire work was done on a Roman cross, 30 some A.D.

The Mosaic sacrificial system was always just a picture, nothing more. It looked *ahead* to Jesus. Why cannot that picture return and do the same thing it always did: point to Christ, looking *back*?

Do we not, in these days, partake of a Supper that is a picture of what Jesus did? Why do we do that? "In remembrance of Me," Jesus said. We *look back* to the cross in this way, the very center of our existence. There is nothing salvific in that remembrance, though Rome and others might try to make us believe so.

The only way I can explain the words of Ezekiel is in this literal way. Evidently, God has decided to continue making the sacrifice of Jesus real to the peoples of earth. Every piece of the celebrations that will occur in the Holy Land will cause people to love King Jesus more and more.

By the way, when we arrive at the prophecy of Zechariah, we'll see how people will be dealt with who decide they don't need to participate in the Mosaic offerings. Just sayin'.

So buckle up. Let's take a trip through the work of perhaps the most unusual prophet of all. And he is, amazingly yet predictably, in agreement with the other prophets and the apostles when he speaks of what is coming. God gave him a couple of extra revelations too...

Ezekiel 8 and 9 tell in detail the evils being committed by Israel, even after the invasion of Babylon. Here is a nation that has totally abandoned the Lord God of their fathers and that is seeking nature and every other abominable source for its life. Many are slain. God is not moved even by the prophet's pleadings.

*7Then He said to them, "Defile the temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!" And they went out and killed in the city. 8So it was, that while they were killing them, I was left alone; and I fell on my face and cried out, and said, "Ah, Lord God! Will You destroy all the remnant of Israel in pouring out Your fury on Jerusalem?" 9Then He said to me, "The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great, and the land is full of bloodshed, and the city full of perversity; for they say, 'The Lord has forsaken the land, and the Lord does not see!' 10And as for Me also, **My eye will neither spare, nor will I have pity, but I will recompense their deeds on their own head.**"*

Then the unthinkable. The glory of the Lord departs from the Temple, and thus, Israel. It seems to happen in stages, as though God is reluctant to leave, but must leave anyway.

Ezekiel 10:18, 11:23

18Then the glory of the Lord departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. 23And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city.

So once again we are faced with the end of Israel as a nation, yes? Once again we say, *absolutely not*. In that **same eleventh chapter** we read:

Ezekiel 11:17-20.

*17Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "**I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.**" ' 18And they will go there, and they will take away all its detestable things and all its abominations from there. **19Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh,** 20that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God.*

The gathering we have seen before. Notice the new covenant details we saw in Jeremiah 31. Obviously, the return of the Jews that we saw in 1948 is *not the return talked about here*.

The promises via Ezekiel continue:

Ezekiel 16:60-63

*60“Nevertheless **I will remember My covenant with you** in the days of your youth, and **I will establish an everlasting covenant** with you. 61Then you will remember your ways and **be ashamed**, when you receive your older and your younger sisters; for I will give them to you for daughters, but not because of My covenant with you. 62And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I am the Lord, 63that you may remember and be ashamed, and never open your mouth anymore because of your shame, **when I provide you an atonement for all you have done,**” says the Lord God.’ ”*

So chapter 16 brings up another theme of Israel prophecies, the idea of shame, that is loathing themselves for all they have done. It is a good practice for all of God’s people. The Jews will one day experience it as a nation. Many individuals have already gone there.

Ezekiel 17:22-24.

*22Thus says the Lord God: “I will take also **one of the highest branches of the high cedar** and set it out. I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, **and will plant it on a high and prominent mountain.** 23**On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it;** and it will bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a majestic cedar. Under it will dwell birds of every sort; in the shadow of its branches they will dwell. 24And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the Lord, have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree, dried up the green tree and made the dry tree flourish; I, the Lord, have spoken and have done it.”*

Here, those who love allegory can enjoy themselves. This is a picture of the Lord’s bringing down of all the nations that have come against Israel, and elevating Israel to a place of prominence in her final status on earth.

Ezekiel 20:33-44.

*33“As I live,” says the Lord God, “surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, **I will rule over you.** 34I will bring you out from the peoples and **gather you out of the countries where you are scattered,** with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out. 35And I will bring you **into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will plead My case with you face to face.** 36Just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead My case with you,” says the Lord God.*

Chapter 20 tells us, as in Revelation and elsewhere, that there is to come a time upon Jesus' return and their own return, when they shall meet with their Messiah face to face, and suddenly realize what they have done, and how wrong they have been.

37 "I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; 38 I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

Yes, trouble is coming, but not to destroy, only to purge out the wickedness.

39 "As for you, O house of Israel," thus says the Lord God: "Go, serve every one of you his idols—and hereafter—if you will not obey Me; but profane My holy name no more with your gifts and your idols. 40 For on My holy mountain, on the mountain height of Israel," says the Lord God, "there all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, shall serve Me; there I will accept them, and there I will require your offerings and the firstfruits of your sacrifices, together with all your holy things.

The constant mention of the "mountain" in Israel prophecies, and the worship and offerings from the nations, are clues needed to know what this is all about, the coming promised literal kingdom.

*41 I will accept you as a sweet aroma when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered; and I will be hallowed in you before the Gentiles. 42 Then you shall know that I am the Lord, **when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for which I raised My hand in an oath to give to your fathers.** 43 And there you shall remember your ways and all your doings with which you were defiled; and you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight because of all the evils that you have committed. 44 Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have dealt with you for My name's sake, not according to your wicked ways nor according to your corrupt doings, O house of Israel," says the Lord God.' "*

Does a passage like this really need explaining? I'll gather you out from where you have been, bring you to your promised land. You will loathe yourselves, but recognize Me from that day on.

Chapter 20 speaks more of the restoration coming, a description that matches as yet nothing we have seen in Israel's history.

A quick word from chapter 28 is next. More review of Ezekiel and the long list of prophets who have said the same thing.

Ezekiel 28:25-26.

25'Thus says the Lord God: "When I have **gathered** the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and am hallowed in them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they will dwell in **their own land** which I gave to My servant Jacob. 26And they will dwell **safely** there, build houses, and plant vineyards; yes, they will dwell **securely**, when I execute judgments on all those around them who despise them. Then they shall know that I am the Lord their God." ' "

Then chapter 34 contains another repeat of the promise, in the picture of sheep, as Jesus often used.

Ezekiel 34:11-31.

11'For thus says the Lord God: "Indeed **I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep** and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. 13And I will **bring them out** from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. 15I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord God. 16"I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment."

17'And as for you, O My flock, thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats. 18Is it too little for you to have eaten up the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pasture—and to have drunk of the clear waters, that you must foul the residue with your feet? 19And as for My flock, they eat what you have trampled with your feet, and they drink what you have fouled with your feet."

20'Therefore thus says the Lord God to them: "Behold, I Myself will judge between the fat and the lean sheep. 21Because you have pushed with side and shoulder, butted all the weak ones with your horns, and scattered them abroad, **22therefore I will save My flock, and they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. 23I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. 24And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.**

David again. Could it be that David is meant? Can we trust God to say what He means and mean what He says, literally? Why not David, serving under Jesus?

25*"I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause **wild beasts to cease from the land**; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. 26I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing.*

27*Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them. 28And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make them afraid. 29I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore. 30Thus they shall know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and they, the house of Israel, are My people," says the Lord God.'*

31*"**You are My flock, the flock of My pasture**; you are men, and I am your God," says the Lord God.*

Ezekiel is now directed to talk to the mountains of Israel!

Ezekiel 36:1-15, 23-38.

1*"And you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel, and say, 'O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord! 2Thus says the Lord God: "Because the enemy has said of you, 'Aha! The ancient heights have become our possession,' " ' 3therefore prophesy, and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Because they made you desolate and swallowed you up on every side, so that you became the possession of the rest of the nations, and you are taken up by the lips of talkers and slandered by the people"— 4therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God to the mountains, the hills, the rivers, the valleys, the desolate wastes, and the cities that have been forsaken, which became plunder and mockery to the rest of the nations all around— 5therefore thus says the Lord God: "Surely I have spoken in My burning jealousy **against the rest of the nations** and against all Edom, who gave My land to themselves as a possession, with wholehearted joy and spiteful minds, in order to plunder its open country." ' "*

And to all the land of Israel:

6*"Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains, the hills, the rivers, and the valleys, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I have spoken in My jealousy and My fury, because **you have borne the shame of the nations.**" 7Therefore thus says the Lord God: "I have raised My hand in an oath that surely **the nations that are around you shall bear their own shame.** 8But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches and yield your*

fruit to My people Israel, for they are about to come. 9For **indeed I am for you**, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown. 10I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. 11I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bear young; I will make you inhabited as in former times, and do better for you than at your beginnings. Then you shall know that I am the Lord. 12Yes, I will cause men to walk on you, My people Israel; they shall take possession of you, and you shall be their inheritance; no more shall you bereave them of children.”

Israel to be a place of honor, not shame:

13‘Thus says the Lord God: “Because they say to you, ‘You devour men and bereave your nation of children,’ 14therefore you shall devour men no more, nor bereave your nation anymore,” says the Lord God. 15“**Nor will I let you hear the taunts of the nations anymore, nor bear the reproach of the peoples anymore, nor shall you cause your nation to stumble anymore,**” says the Lord God.’ ”

23And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord,” says the Lord God, “when I am hallowed in you before their eyes.

Next, a national cleansing upon the return of Israel! Sounds much like the “New Covenant” of Jeremiah 31!

24For I will take you **from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land**. 25Then I will sprinkle **clean water** on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from **all your filthiness** and from all your idols. 26I will give **you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh**. 27I will put **My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them**. 28Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. 29I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. 30And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. 31Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. 32Not for your sake do I do this,” says the Lord God, “let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!”

The land no longer desolate. Rebuilding after “Jacob’s Trouble.”

33‘Thus says the Lord God: “On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. 34The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. 35So they will say, ‘This land that was

desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.’ 36Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it.”

A multitude of people will live in the new land!

37Thus says the Lord God: “I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will increase their men like a flock. 38Like a flock offered as holy sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.” ’ ’ ”

Jews will come in from everywhere. When they come in, they will be born again. The remnant of Israel will be saved.

And once more the *material earthly* promises, letting us know that the scene is earth, not Heaven. This is not the new heavens and new earth, just a renewal of the old earth. And why fortified? Because even though the earth will be ruled by a perfect Lord, its subjects will not all be perfect.

Now consider the dry bones of chapter 37, which retells this story yet *another* time. Notice in the following that people are not being saved and whisked away to heaven. They are resurrected and regathered and brought back to *their land*.

Ezekiel 37:1-28.

*1The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. 2Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry. 3And He said to me, “Son of man, **can these bones live?**” So I answered, “O Lord God, You know.”*

4Again He said to me, “Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! 5Thus says the Lord God to these bones: “Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. 6I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the Lord.” ’ ’ ”

7So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to bone. 8Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them over; but there was no breath in them.

9Also He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." ' " 10So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.

11Then He said to me, "**Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.** They indeed say, 'Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!' 12Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, O My people, **I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.** 13Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. **14I will put My Spirit in you,** and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it," says the Lord.' "

No more "Israel" and "Judah" in kingdom days. One nation:

15Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 16"As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: 'For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions.' Then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.' 17Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand. 18"And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, 'Will you not show us what you mean by these?'— 19say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand." ' 20And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes.

The promises repeated:

21"Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Surely **I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; 22and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all;** they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again. 23They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God.

24"David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. 25Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell

there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever. 26Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. 27My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 28The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore." ' "

David will be king. Also called *the prince*. There's a prince later in the book, though not called David, who seems to be leading the people. Now, we know that this prince of later chapters *cannot be the Lord* because of the sacrifices he is asked to make for himself and his family.

Ezekiel 39:21-29.

*21" I will set My glory among the nations; all the nations shall see My judgment which I have executed, and My hand which I have laid on them. 22So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day forward. 23**The Gentiles shall know** that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they were unfaithful to Me, therefore I hid My face from them. I gave them into the hand of their enemies, and they all fell by the sword. 24According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I have dealt with them, and hidden My face from them." ' "*

*25" Therefore thus says the Lord God: '**Now I will bring back the captives of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel;** and I will be jealous for My holy name— 26after they have borne their shame, and all their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, when they dwelt safely in their own land and no one made them afraid. 27When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations, 28then they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them captive any longer. 29**And I will not hide My face from them anymore;** for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,' says the Lord God."*

Yes, Israel comes and goes from the land over the years. But this passage, as so many others, is talking about the final desolation and the final return and the final entrance of the King to reign over His people.

Now we enter those last nine chapters in Ezekiel, where the prophet seems to have gone off the deep end. But as we have not doubted his words until now (have we?), let's follow and see what he has to say. I reproduce here the entire NKJV text of these chapters, in my desire to have before you all that God has said about what is coming. My comments must be few. I only say here again, why not just believe the Word of the Lord as it is?