



## What's Next for Israel in Prophecy?

Romans 11:25, 26: *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:*

### Special Guest: David Stein

Even a superficial reading of the Bible will demonstrate that Israel plays an important role in End Times. Students of the Bible have been much interested in Israel from a Biblical standpoint. But there are many legitimate questions about why she is still included in the Divine Plan and what exactly her role is to be.

### Questions for consideration:

1. Why is Israel important?
2. Why would God direct them since they don't believe in Jesus?
3. Has Bible prophecy already been fulfilled for Israel?
4. What's next for Israel according to the Bible?
5. How long before these things occur? (*Discussed in Part 2*)

In any study of prophecy, we remember we are students, not prophets. We study the scriptures and try to do our very best to arrange them in the proper order, but there is always an element of faith involved. We know that the prophecies we study today will have fulfillment; how that fulfillment is going to come about - the precise details of it - we will have to wait and see.

With the study of Israel, we have to make a distinction, because the church is also called "Israel." Interpretive measures must be made in order to distinguish if it is talking about the fleshly seed of Abraham or spiritual Israel.

### 1. Why Is Israel important?

There are many key Scriptures showing God's continuing interest in Israel:

Romans 11:1-2: How do we harmonize this with Jesus' words in Matthew 23:38? Clearly the Apostle Paul had the inspiration of God as well and seems to be stating the opposite. It is important to read verse 39 as well: Matthew 23:29: They collectively and nationally had been cast off. They had been God's special people for a very long time, and Jesus pronounced their time was up and began dealing with the Gentiles. But there will come a time "*till*" when God's attention would come back. Paul is saying that God did not cast them off forever. He still has something in mind for them.

We tend to look at many of these prophecies "dispensationally." A dispensation is a period of time by which God dispenses His blessings in a certain way. Prior to the time of Jesus, during the Jewish "dispensation," He was dispensing His blessings to Israel. Amos 3:2: Once the Gospel went out, the dispensing of blessings have been to the church - the followers of Jesus. Now that the call of the church is coming to an end, there is an overlap and God begins to turn his attention back to Israel. He has something in mind for them that is very important.

Ezekiel 43:7: The sin of Israel was idol worshipping contrary to the Law. God said there would be a time that was not going to happen anymore. Clearly he did not "dwell in the midst of the children of Israel" during the Gospel Age, because that is the "cast off" time. But there will come a time when He will dwell with them once again, but at that time, Jesus will be their King.

So why is Israel important? Because God worked His blessings through them at one time, and will continue to do so at some time in the future.

### 2. Why would God direct them since they don't believe in Jesus?

But isn't Israel still under judgment from God and alienated from Him? They certainly haven't accepted Jesus as Messiah! How can He still deal with them? Romans 11:25-29:

#### Observations from the Apostle Paul's comments:

1. "...*blindness in part is happened to Israel...*" They are *collectively* unable to see some of these things. We are not talking about *individuals*. The blindness is a national blindness. The phrase "in part" is interesting - it seems to leave room for the individual and also shows they have some responsibility.



2. "...until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in..." There comes a time when that blindness starts to be dealt with by God by returning His attention to Israel.
3. "...And so all Israel shall be saved..." There is an "Israel" that is spiritual - the Christian church, but there is also this fleshly "Israel." It appears Paul is talking about both - the saving of the Christian church unto kingship and priesthood and the saving of Israel to be the ones that are going to be blessed by those kings and priests. (See [Revelation 1:6](#) and [5:10](#))
4. "...they are beloved for the fathers' sakes..." God made a promise to their forefathers. God never goes back on a promise. The belief or disbelief, or sin or sinlessness of Israel becomes irrelevant. God made a promise to bless them.

### 3. Has Bible prophecy already been fulfilled for Israel?

[Jeremiah 30:3, 10, 11](#): The argument is that Israel was taken away by the Babylonians, but their land was then returned. Therefore, one might say, all of the prophecies about the return of their land were already fulfilled before Christ.

But these Scriptures provide details that did not apply back then: "...they shall possess it..." Israel did return to the land, but they were under the control of other kingships or powers. (Persians, Greeks, Romans) They hadn't yet possessed the land through ownership.

"...I make a full end of all nations..." Clearly that didn't come true prior to Jesus; this is an end time prophecy. The return of Israel is in connection with the overthrow of these worldly nations and the replacement of these kingdoms with the kingdom of Jesus.

"...yet will I not make a full end of thee..." This goes back to what Paul said. They were blind in part. There was some responsibility on their part, so God will come back and punish them because they weren't as faithful as they could be, even in their blinded state. Whether made to Israel or others, God keeps promises; but we are still responsible for our own actions. Association with God includes chastisements.

[Amos 9:11, 14, 15](#): "they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them..." This is a very good scripture to differentiate the return back to Israel in the times before Christ and today. Israel is now in their land and they will never be removed from it again. We want to use prophecy to not only give us a strong sense of where we are, but also where we are going.

[Jeremiah 16:16](#): As mentioned earlier, the close of the Gospel Age corresponds with the return of favor to Israel. There is an overlapping period of time where God has two works going on. It is God's will that the Jews of Israel return to their land. The land was always tied up with the promises that God gave them. Unfortunately, there wasn't the response in the 19th century to come back to the land for the vast majority.

[Fishers](#): These were the voices of the Zionist Movement to gather Jews back to their land. A lot of people were "fished."

[Hunters](#): These were the persecutors who showed the Jews they had no true homeland other than Israel and provided an unintentional incentive to move home such as with the Russian Pogroms and the Nazi Holocaust.

The fishers and the hunters in effect forced them to return to their land. Israel as a nation according to [Jeremiah 16:16](#) chose a path more difficult than listening to God to return to their land voluntarily. As a nation, however, they learned. After WWII, they began to realize that even though they were Russian Jews, and German Jews, Polish Jews, American Jews and so forth, they were still aliens, even with generations of citizens. They began to realize their home was in the land of Israel. [Hosea 2:15](#): Prior to 1878, Jewish people were not allowed to own land in Israel. The establishment of the first Jewish kibbutz (agricultural settlement) in 1878 was called "Petah Tikvah!" [Zechariah 12:6](#): This wasn't fulfilled until after the 6 Day War in 1967 when Jerusalem was regained. It had not been part of Israel after the war of Independence in 1948.

### 4. What's next for Israel according to the Bible?

There are two future battles described that we will discuss. Part of our challenge as Bible students is to try to sequence them and put them in some kind of order. The order we suggest is just a suggestion, and we will present our reasons why. [Psalms 83:1-5](#): These first four verses

could be today's headlines! The Iranian President Ahmadinajad says these literal words regularly. Psalms 83:6-7: This is the list of enemies, which is different from the list of enemies in Ezekiel 38. This is one reason why we think they are two separate and distinct battles. What do these ancient tribes who were in fact enemies of Israel mean? We note that this particular confederacy of enemies never actually happened in the past, which is why we say this is a prophecy yet to be fulfilled. However, these ancient tribes no longer exist, so how do we interpret them?

One approach is the geographic approach, to see where these tribes were physically located and look at who is there today.

Where were these tribes located in ancient times?

1. Edom - Southwest Jordan
2. Ishmaelites - Southern Jordan
3. Moab - Jordan
4. Hagarenes - Lived east of Israel; Jordan, possibly including Damascus
5. Gebel - Lebanon; also called Byblos
6. Ammon- Jordan; Ahman, the modern spelling of Ammon, is the capital of Jordan. (While the government of Jordan has a peace treaty with Israel, we should remember that some 70% of Jordan's population is "Palestinian" and in fact the country was originally formed to be the Palestinian home land.)
7. Amalek - South of Israel, Sinai area; the Amalekites lived in Israel's southern desert and Philistia settled in Gaza on Israel's southern border.
8. Philistines - Gaza (Hamas)
9. Tyre - Lebanon (Hezbollah)

These are all Semitic nations, who are descendants of Shem like Israel. One could say they are Israel's "cousins." What about Iran? Iran, while a Muslim country, is not Semitic but Aryan. (Wikipedia definition of Aryan: Self designation of the Indo-Iranian languages and their speakers.) Although one of the biggest haters of Israel today, they are not mentioned in this particular battle. Today these are all Israel's nearest neighbors, and they all have animosity towards Israel, all of them sworn to Israel's destruction.

Psalms 83:8: Assur is ancient Assyria, not a Semitic nation. They help the children of Lot, who are Semitic. Assyria would conquer Aram shortly after Psalms 83 was written and the descendants of Lot is another reference to Jordan. Remember, Moab and Ammon were the sons of an incestuous union between Lot and his two daughters.



Assyria here, as the only non-Semitic nation, would seem to refer to some nation or nations north of Israel who are helping Israel's enemies, militarily and in other ways. This certainly describes Russia, which is north of the region and could also include Iran to the northwest which had sent equipment to Hezbollah through Syria. (Both Russia and Iran are Aryan nations.) **What will be the result of this conflict?**

Psalms 83:9-18: In all of these battles that Israel had with specific enemies, what happened to the Midianites? To Sisera? To Jabin? There was a total and complete military loss for these enemies and they never again threatened

Israel! We believe that when the battle of Psalms 83 takes place, it will be an evisceration of the military strength and will of the enemies all around them. Their ability to make war with Israel will be defused.

Observations on the Results of Psalms 83: Removal of Arab threat; Describes a battle yet future with Israel's neighbors; Not necessarily devoid of diplomatic factors; There will be a thorough military defeat of Israel's enemies with possible unification of spirit between these enemies; The result gives Israel a condition of peace and security.

This brings us to Ezekiel 38! Ezekiel 38:8, 11, 14: Gog is one of the chief adversaries listed, and it is Gog who starts to see the relative safety of Israel. Prior to the attack of Ezekiel 38, Israel is dwelling safety, or at least in relative safety. That certainly is not true today, as Israel is built up militarily to protect itself from constant attack from her neighbors. That antagonism is removed



by the battle of Psalms 83 and gives them a condition of relative safety. This is the primary reason we believe the Psalms 83 battle precedes the Ezekiel 38 battle.

Ezekiel 38:2-6: Interesting that all of these nations are Aryan nations!

1. Persia - Iran
2. Ethiopia - Sudan (Cush or Ethiopia of ancient times)
3. Libya - Libya
4. Gomer - Ancient Cimmerians - Northeast Asia Minor
5. Togarmah of the north quarters - Eastern Turkey
6. "and many people with thee" - a mixed company from elsewhere



Gog - Ancient King, leader of attack force - Satan? All of those aligned on the side of Satan?

Magog - Descendents of Magog - a people to the North of Israel, possibly Northern Iraq.

Meshech - A land to the north - some associate with Moscow, although this is not warranted linguistically.

Tubal - Another land to the north - some associate with Tobolsk in Russia, which is linguistically consistent.

Some Christians believe Russia will be involved and they point to the Hebrew word "Rosh." In the King James Version, this is "*the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.*" There seems to be some debate as to where Rosh was a real geographic location in ancient times. So the application of the name to geographical Russia is interesting although some may challenge it. The bottom line is that this is a group of Aryan nations to

the north and somewhat to the east of Israel that come down.

One would have to draw the conclusion that this is a different battle from Psalms 83 because the participants are different. So the challenge is to properly line them up chronologically. The final enemies recognizing "unwalled villages" is a clue. The condition of peace in Israel is incentive for these enemies to come down from the north to "seek a spoil." What is the spoil?

People have speculated that perhaps there will be major food shortages, and Israel is a great food exporter. Agriculture and technology are big industries there. Perhaps there is oil just offshore from Israel. What would happen if they became a major oil producer?

God gives us prophecy to build faith. Based on faith, we don't always have the details. As we fix in our minds what the Scriptures say, when the real things happen - even if we were wrong in our expectation - we will recognize it and it will build our faith.

**Now what happens? This is the final battle. Ezekiel 38:7-14**

#### A Word on the "Observer Nations"

1. Sheba - Saudi Arabia (who probably has the least antagonistic view towards Israel)
2. Dedan - Saudi Arabia
3. (merchants of) Tarshish - Spain, which was way out to the west at that time → Western Powers (including the United States, in an economic, political or military situation that they cannot help Israel.)

These nations are speaking to Gog. These nations will not take part in the attack and will rather lamely protest it. At the end of Ezekiel 38, we find that God fights for Israel and the aggressor nations are defeated. (*verses 18-23*) But there are other prophecies that give us a microscope and show there is a lot more that happens, including that it appears Israel loses the first attack. Stay tuned and we will explore these in Part 2.

*In Summary:* How does Israel fit into the plan of God? It is a centerpiece, not only for the people but the land as well. **WATCH ISRAEL!** (and listen for Part 2!)

*So what's next for Israel in prophecy?  
For Jonathan and Rick (and David!) and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*