

What is the Biblical Process to Become Perfect? (Part III–Israel and the Nations)

Isaiah 11:9: (NASB) *They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.*



God gave us the ability to understand and appreciate His plan of the ages by revealing that plan within the pages of the Bible. This plan is focused on the necessary steps to bring ALL of His creation, both heavenly and earthly, to an existence that will completely and forever live in harmony with one another under His mighty hand and will. In Parts I and II of this series, we looked at how that shaping and revitalizing into a state of perfection takes place. It began with the Old Testament heroes of faith, continues with faithful disciples of Christ now, and will come to include an opportunity for each and every

human being later. In this episode, we look at the nations of the world, beginning with Israel. What does the Bible tell us about the perfecting process of all these nations? Plenty!

There are many scriptures that show us a clear perfecting process for the nations of the world.

One key factor is that the perfecting of the nations is always tied to the nation of Israel's perfecting:

Psalms 98:1-3: *1 O sing to the LORD a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. 2 The LORD has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. 3 He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*

We have God's righteousness revealed in the sight of all nations, and His lovingkindness and faithfulness to Israel. In the big picture, watch the relationship between Israel and the rest of the nations. Israel and the rest of the nations will dovetail in the future. Looking at them today, we would never think this could be!

The nation of Israel is an incredibly important element to the world's blessing.

Israel's beginning was based on the extraordinary faith and actions of one man:

Genesis 17:1-2: (KJV) *1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect <8549>. 2 And I will make My covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.*

Perfect: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #8549 *tamiym*;
entire (literally, figuratively or morally); also (as noun) integrity, truth

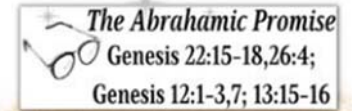
Abram became Abraham, who was chosen out of all the world because he was different. He looked upward towards God and had integrity.



Let's jump ahead in Abraham's life:

Genesis 22:15-18: *15 Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, 16 and said, By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.*

Abraham fulfilled what he was asked to do, and God rewarded him with a wonderful promise. We refer to this as the "Abrahamic Promise." It was given in the book of Genesis when God promised to make a great nation through Abraham. His seed (descendants) would be like the sand of the seashore and the stars of heaven. The promise continues, *In your seed shall all the nations of the earth shall be blessed*. Obviously, this last part is in the future, but again we see that clue of future blessings connected with and dependent on Israel.



Because all of humanity was and is sinful, the blessing from God needed to come through the high moral integrity of someone focused on and faithful to God.

That man was  Abraham

Abraham pictured God's willingness to sacrifice His son Jesus. Jesus was pictured by Isaac, Abraham's son. God made known His salvation through Abraham's faithfulness.

Israel did become a nation, but it was not consistently obedient to God and would eventually divide into two nations. Why? Because of a serious lack of integrity and focus on God, especially by King Solomon.

As its third king, Solomon ruled over a united kingdom of the 12 tribes of Israel. What began with wisdom and faithfulness, following God's laws and commandments like his father, David, ended up in the grip of hideous idolatry.

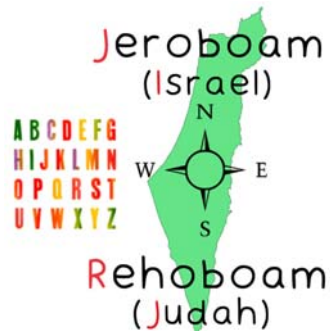
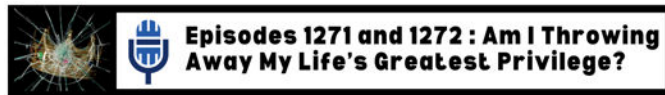
Sadly, **1 Kings 11:6** tells us, *Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD*.

For the faithfulness of his father David, God allowed Solomon to finish out his rule.

However, as a consequence, God told Solomon his kingdom would be split in two with the majority given to his servant:

1 Kings 11:12-13: *12 Nevertheless I will not do it in your days for the sake of your father David, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13 However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but 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.*

From that time on, Israel's unity fractured and they would never have a king to rule over the entire nation again. The ten tribes called "Israel" in the north were under the leadership of Solomon's servant, Jeroboam. The two tribes called "Judah" were in the south under the leadership of Solomon's son, Rehoboam. The nation's capital of Jerusalem and the worship center of the Temple were both in the south. To get all the important background on this, we recommend the following two episodes:



Remembering who was where is easy - it is all alphabetical. The nation split into two kingdoms - Israel and Judah. "I" for Israel with the 10 tribes in the north, "J" for the two tribes of Judah in the south. "J" for Jeroboam is on the top; "R" for Rehoboam is on the bottom.

Israel would now exist in this broken state and go through fluctuations of faithfulness and rebellion, even up to the time of Jesus.

Here was their promised Messiah, and yet they rejected him. This could only mean further consequences and challenges:

Matthew 23:37-39: 37 *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.* 38 *Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!* 39 *For I say to you, from now on you will not see me until (this word "until" is an important word because it means there's still hope!) you say, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!*

Jesus is letting them know they are cast off right here and now, and this will last for a long time *until...more on this soon!*

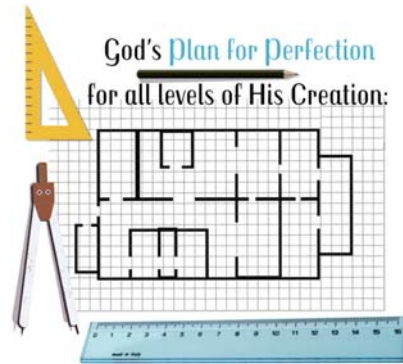
Let's go further with this casting off of Israel in the next chapter:

Matthew 24:1-2: 1 *Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when his disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to him.* 2 *And he said to them, Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down.*



History dramatically shows us that in AD 70, the Temple was destroyed and Jerusalem along with it. No longer was there a place to offer sacrifices, and the opportunity to serve the Lord according to the Law was over. Jerusalem fell into ruin, and the whole nation was expelled from their own land and dispersed throughout the world.

We see the incredible beginning with all the hope encompassed in the promised seed, Isaac. After this incredible beginning, Israel goes through many years to a point of disaster, breaking apart and scattering. The prophesied scattering of the Jewish people had now become obvious.



Recapping Israel's history: From the integrity of Abraham, to their establishment as a nation through Moses and deliverance, to wanting a king, to becoming severely idolatrous, to being divided into two nations and to receiving and rejecting Messiah. Israel would now be scattered throughout the world. Yet, through all of this, God would keep His promise that they would bless all the families of the earth!

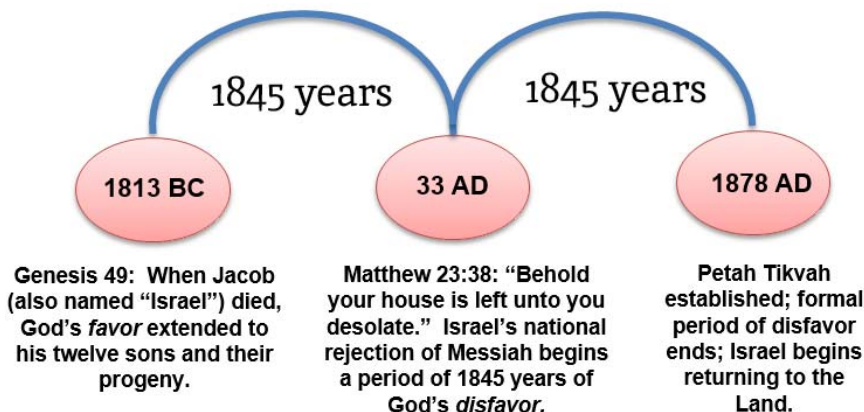
God promised they would bless all the families of the earth, but at this point, they are not even a nation anymore! How would God keep His promise?

God knew what would happen. His promises are sure, even when the pieces look impossible. This is the beauty of looking at the perfecting processes God has put in place.

This whirlwind look at Israel in the light of God's promise keeping is a staggering example of the power and integrity of our God!

Israel was divided and scattered. How does this show us God's plan for perfecting them as a nation?

One of the key approaches to true Bible study is understanding that God's timeframe for His plan is far beyond our comprehension. We need patience, and we need to carefully observe. Jesus proclaimed the desolation of Jerusalem in AD 33. It happened. Fast forward 1845 years, and we see the very small beginnings of Israel being brought back to their country. *Petah Tikvah* was the first Jewish settlement where Jews were again allowed to own land in their old homeland.



Petah Tikvah means "Door of Hope," taken from **Hosea 2:15**. This settlement was cause for a new hope that hadn't existed for thousands of years.

God's perfecting process for Israel as a nation had begun! It is a slow and methodical process, and it is alluded to in many biblical prophecies.

Before we look at one detailed prophecy as a basis for unfolding just how this perfecting process works, let's go back to Jesus' own words about Israel.

Jesus had shown the "death" of the nation of Israel both in his direct words to the Pharisees and in picture language. For example, Jesus told the Parable of the Fig Tree, as found in **Luke 13:6-9**.



Jesus had just warned the crowd they needed to repent, but they were not responding to his message. They were being "watered" by words of truth but not bearing fruit. According to **Isaiah 5:7**, Israel was *the vineyard of the LORD of hosts*. They enjoyed a privileged relationship with God, who had provided the best conditions for bearing *fruits of righteousness*. Then Jesus told the story about the fig tree that hadn't been producing fruit for the past three years. (This approximately corresponds to the length of Jesus' ministry up until that time.) The fig tree was to be given additional attention and a final chance to bear fruit. But if it didn't, it would be cut down. In other words, Israel would either repent or be removed from their unique position as God's people.

God, represented as the owner of the vineyard, was willing to wait for the fruit, but righteously judged that the tree would be destroyed if it remained non-productive:
Luke 13:6-9: 6 ...A man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and did not find any. 7 And he said to the vineyard-keeper, Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down! Why does it even use up the ground? 8 And he answered and said to him, Let it alone, sir, for this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer; 9 and if it bears fruit next year, fine; but if not, cut it down.

By this parable where Israel represents the fig tree, Jesus proclaimed the ending of Israel's opportunity to be that promised blessing - *In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed*. This seems to go against God's promise to Abraham, but we have to look further.

After riding triumphantly into Jerusalem and cleansing the temple, Jesus showed what would happen to Israel through his treatment of a literal fig tree:

Matthew 21:18-19: 18 Now in the morning, when he was returning to the city, he became hungry. 19 Seeing a lone fig tree by the road, he came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only; and he said to it, *No longer shall there ever be any fruit from you. And at once the fig tree withered.*

A withered tree is a dead tree. This seems to have been the only miracle in which Jesus used his power to destroy, to annihilate something. *It also is the only miracle which was of no direct benefit to anyone.* All other miracles were done to help someone.



He cursed the fig tree, picturing Israel, for its lack of fruit. It was spiritually barren and now the nation would be judged. The proclamation of **Matthew 23:37-39**, *Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!* would become a reality.

Let's stop for a moment and talk about "Replacement Theology," also called "Supersessionism." This idea apparently started as early as 200 AD. The belief is that God, in His anger for the part the Jews played in putting Jesus to death, revoked His covenant with Israel. The idea says they are no longer His chosen people, that they are outside of divine grace and that the Christians are His new chosen people fully replacing Israel.



This is a misrepresentation, as the Scriptures do NOT teach Replacement Theology. We will quote many scriptures to disprove it.

We do see Christians as God's chosen people, but we also see Israel as God's chosen people. Yes, there is room for both to work together. We will see that Replacement Theology is wrong.

The prophet Ezekiel gave us a different picture of the same literal event.



EZEKIEL 37: THE PROPHECY OF THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES:

As a nation, this prophecy describes Israel as a nation being completely lifeless.

Just like a withered tree is a dead tree, there is no life in the dry bones. As a nation, this prophecy describes Israel as being completely lifeless.

In this figurative picture, Ezekiel is shown how these bones will come to life, stand, live and become a great multitude.

This prophecy is unmistakable as to its meaning, as it is basically interpreted for us!

Ezekiel 37:11-14: *11 Then He said to me, son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off.*

We know that after 70 AD when the temple was destroyed, the Jewish people were scattered throughout the world.

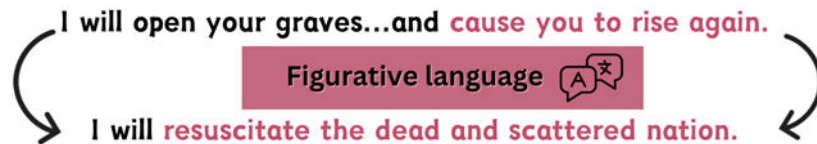
12 Therefore prophesy and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel.

In 1878, Jewish settlers could once again own property in Israel.



13 Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves and caused you to come up out of your graves, My people. 14 I will put My spirit within you and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done it, declares the LORD.

I will...cause you to come up out of your graves – the New Living Translation says, I will open your graves of exile and cause you to rise again. Then I will bring you back to the land of Israel. The language is used figuratively for the resuscitation of the dead and scattered nation and not literally for the resurrection of deceased individuals.



We have watched this happen to Israel in these last few generations. What we have seen happen with the Jewish people returning to their homeland is a remarkable fulfillment of prophecy with much more to come.

When Jesus prophesied the signs of his return, he quietly told us Israel's regathering and beginning stages of favor would be one of those signs:

Luke 21:29-31: *29 Then he told them a parable: Behold the fig tree (Israel) and all the trees (other nations); 30 as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near. 31 So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.*

 **Israel is compared to a fig tree in Hosea 9:10**

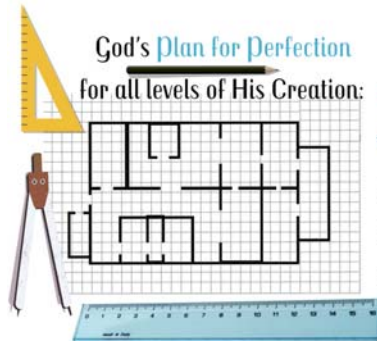
Notice again the connection between Israel as a fig tree and the other nations, *all the trees*. Respecting the other "trees," there were about 62 sovereign nations in 1914. According to Wikipedia, there are now 206. *Putting forth leaves* – in other words, many sovereign nations were established.

This prophecy is speaking of what is happening at the time of Jesus' return. We can see the unequivocal evidence in our day that helps us understand where we are in the stream of time.

- ⇒ Parable of the Fig Tree: Withering, dying trees being cut down, representing Israel as a nation being cut off from God's favor for not showing spiritual growth, even though the Messiah was in their midst.
- ⇒ Jesus speaking of the fig tree putting forth leaves – Israel as a nation is restored.
[It is about the nation.](#)

Jesus told the Parable of the Fig Tree on the same day when the barren fig tree was cursed. As a result of the rejection of the Messiah on the part of the Jews during his **first advent**, God's favor was turned away from them, as shown in the withered tree. Conversely, the softening of the branches and the bringing forth of leaves represented the return of favor to Israel during the time of the establishment of the kingdom in Christ's **second advent**.

Right now, we are seeing a small beginning step of God's perfecting process for Israel as a nation. They are not perfected yet, but God's timeframe is much longer than ours.



Israel's perfecting process has its small beginning in the replanting, the reestablishing of the nation. This is a long process, and it looks more like a chaotic series of events rather than a perfecting work. As with the other perfecting works in this age of sin, it is surrounded by controversy, persecution, and a need to grow into godly loyalty.

Remember when we talked about Israel being a divided kingdom after the death of King Solomon? While both David and Solomon ruled over a united kingdom of the twelve tribes of Israel, during both reigns tribal jealousies were prevalent between the northern and southern regions. This was especially true between Judah, the leading tribe in the south, and Ephraim, the leading tribe in the north.

Ezekiel 37:15-22: *15 The word of the LORD came again to me saying, 16 And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, for Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions'; then take another stick and write on it, for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions.*

Joseph was the father of Ephraim, the name of the leading tribe in the north.

17 Then join them for yourself one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. 18 When the sons of your people speak to you saying, Will you not declare to us what you mean by these 19 say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.

In other words, the splintered kingdoms would be mended and reunited as one.

20 The sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes. 21 Say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; 22 and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations and no longer be divided into two kingdoms.



Israel went from a split nation, to a dead nation with dry bones, and now one nation brought back into their original land promised by God. This prophecy came true! Never in the history of humanity had a people been completely scattered to the ends of the earth and be regathered to the exact same land thousands of years later, while keeping their national and religious identity strong.

It is a miracle! It was prophesied long before it could possibly be known.

God will heal what human sinfulness broke.

The Apostle Paul knew about and looked forward to the restoring of Israel to godly favor. He obviously did not believe in Replacement Theology:

Romans 11:12: *Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!*

Romans 11:12: (NLT) *Now if the Gentiles were enriched because the Jews turned down God's offer of salvation, think how much greater a blessing the world will share when the Jews finally accept it.*

By not following Jesus, the Jews as the nation turned down the offer of salvation in heaven, so the gospel was spread to the Gentiles. The Apostle Paul is explaining that their failure brought "riches" (blessings and opportunity) to the Gentiles. It brought a call to be part of Christ's church that they would not have had except for Israel's failure. This shows us consequences for wrong actions versus blessings for godly obedience.

Romans 11:15: *For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?*

Like the Dry Bones prophecy of Ezekiel 37!

The Apostle Paul tells us without any doubt, ISRAEL AS A PHYSICAL NATION WILL BE BACK. And he's telling us that even before they were dispersed! He lived before the dispersion happened, yet he was already telling them about their death as a nation, as well as their return.

Soon, the regathering and restoring of Israel back to full favor with God WILL BE recognized as one of the most powerful and unequivocal proofs of God's power and plan throughout all of the world!

The elephant in the room among all these wonderful scriptures about Israel is that in modern day, the nation is hated. Antisemitism and antizionism are visible to a shocking degree. Yes, the Jewish people are restored to their homeland, but after near extermination in World War II, they are under constant war or threat of war from the surrounding Arab peoples.



This doesn't seem like a happy ending at this point. Is prophecy out of touch with today's dire headlines?



No, today's experiences are out of touch with prophecy. Prophecy is the bigger picture. Today we only see a small cog in the machinery that's part of the bigger picture. Watch to see it unfold!

Paul sets us on a path of prophecy as he continues describing Israel's regathering and restoration:

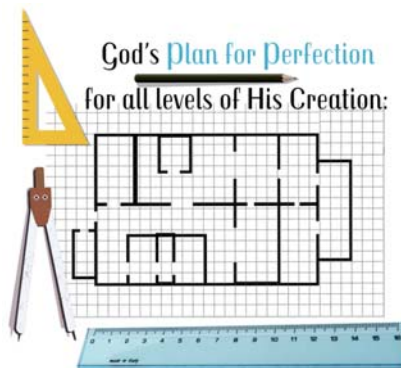
Romans 11:25-27: 25 *For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery... that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and so all Israel will be saved (meaning "recovered to favor"); just as it is written, the deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob. 27 This is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.*



An interesting clue when reading prophecy about Israel - sometimes "Israel" means "spiritual" Israel, that is, faithful Christians who have been grafted into God's favor and who, if faithful, receive a heavenly reward. But **spiritual Israel** is never referred to as "Jacob." When we read, *the deliverer...will remove all ungodliness from Jacob*, we know it is referring to **natural Israel**.

This is important because Israel had two parts in God's plan. The Abrahamic Promise shows the spiritual seed as the *stars of heaven*, and the earthly seed as *sands of the seashore*.

Here in Romans 11, Paul looks back at Old Testament prophecy from Isaiah 59 and Isaiah 27, saying this is what is going to happen. He verified what was said generations before he was alive.



Israel's perfecting process proceeds with a newly UNIFIED Israel. This helps us to comprehend that God has ALL of the details in place, long before it's time to reveal them.

This next step of Israel's perfecting teaches them that they are all one under the God of Abraham and Moses.

While we have seen the Jewish people miraculously restored to the physical land of Israel, we haven't seen the nation come to that point of understanding that they are one under the God of Abraham and Moses. The completed prophecies will take time, but God has all of this in hand.

Seeing the very beginning stages of all of this happen before our eyes is an amazing testament to the truth of Bible prophecy!

What are the further results of Israel's perfecting? What must they do to become the nation that God will use to bless the world?

Think about what we have seen thus far. There was righteous Abraham and the seed of promise. Then there was a nation, but it was broken. Upon their rejection of their Messiah, they were dispersed, only to be regathered generations later.

Now we are seeing them beginning to be blessed. God is methodically putting Israel into position to be able to fully accept His will.

God is much more patient than we are. When His plan uses small little steps, we want Him to get on with it! The steps He puts in place may look tiny, but they are magnificent in what they accomplish.

We will now focus on how the perfecting of Israel will work. Ezekiel 37 lays out the building process verse-by-verse.

Perfecting of Israel:

As one nation, they will experience a thorough spiritual cleansing:

Ezekiel 37:23: *They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God.*



What is meant by a “spiritual cleansing”?



The nation will have to come before God with humility and put aside whatever drew their attention away from their God who delivered them from the land of Egypt way back when. They have to prepare themselves to be His people again.

This is similar to the sanctifying work Israel had to do with Moses before coming before God. They had to physically cleanse themselves before coming to God. In the future, they will need to be spiritually clean.

They will be My people, and I will be their God, doesn't sound like they have been replaced! This acknowledges their idolatrous history and sins, but now they are cleansed and reinstated into a relationship with God.

People get confused thinking there is only one path. But the Old Testament Jews were never promised a heavenly reward. *They were promised earthly blessings and they will receive those blessings in the future kingdom. Followers of Jesus are on a different path, with the promise of a heavenly reward.* It's not one or the other; it is both.

Ezekiel 37 describes the earthly path that runs through the nation of Israel.

Perfecting of Israel:

They will see and accept Jesus' rulership as their Messiah sent from God:

Ezekiel 37:24: *My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them.*

My servant David will be king over them - meaning Jesus will be their ruler. They will accept him and be loyal to him, and therefore loyal to Almighty God whom Jesus serves.

Perfecting of Israel:

They will permanently dwell in their God-given land, under their leader Jesus:

Ezekiel 37:25: *They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and David My servant will be their prince forever.*

There's *Jacob* again. But how will David be their prince forever? Most Christians would agree that this text refers to Jesus. In **Luke 18:38**, Jesus is referred to by the title "son of David," meaning part of David's lineage. When he triumphantly rode into Jerusalem, the people shouted *Hosanna to the son of David*. There are several examples where long-range prophecies referring to David are fulfilled by Jesus as his descendant.

For example, in Psalm 110, Jehovah is speaking to David. Verse 4 says David is like the priest Melchizedek. In **Hebrews 5:5,6**, Apostle Paul quotes Psalm 110 and explicitly applies this text that applied to David as prophetically applying to Jesus in the bigger picture.

As David's descendent, Jesus occupies the throne of David. Jesus will rule the nation just as David ruled the nation back in the ancient days.

Perfecting of Israel:

They will be the recipients of an eternal covenant of peace from God:

Ezekiel 37:26-27: *26 I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever. 27 My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.*

It is hard to imagine now an everlasting peace in Israel, but God's covenants and promises do not go unfulfilled. God knew the end from the beginning; He knew Israel would reject Messiah, and yet they still have a future role in blessing the nations of the world.

This is important. This covenant is a sacred promise from God, and when God makes a promise, it's as good as done. Even if it looks like it is impossible, if He promised, it will happen.

Let's focus on this *everlasting covenant*.

Perfecting of Israel:

This New Covenant will be written on their hearts, guiding them from within, as individuals AND as a nation:

Jeremiah 31:31-34: *31 Behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them, declares the LORD. 33 But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD, I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

34 They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know the LORD, for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, declares the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

A new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah - this was written at a time when the ten northern tribes of Israel were separate from the two of Judah, so it was necessary for the prophet to mention both, in order not to be misunderstood to mean the ten tribes only. But they are joined as one *Israel*, confirmed by the later verses 38-40 that describe locations in both parts of the split kingdom.



The original tablets of the Law Covenant given to Moses were written on stone. The New Covenant will be written within them on their hearts. Humility of heart, because of their past, will be a constant reminder of God's tender mercy upon them in the future.

Why didn't God write the original covenant on their hearts then? Because the process of the permission of evil needed to be set up and allowed to run its course. Israel was given the Ten Commandments by God in the wilderness. They swore they would follow them and be loyal to God but failed almost immediately. Free will becomes a free for all and then a free fall!

After all of those lessons for thousands of years, the New Covenant will be a part of them because they will finally be ready to receive it.

There will be a higher level of living standard for Israel as a result of this New Covenant being written on their hearts:

Isaiah 60:17-18: 17 Instead of bronze I will bring gold, and instead of iron I will bring silver, and instead of wood, bronze, and instead of stones, iron. And I will make peace your administrators and righteousness your overseers. 18 Violence will not be heard again in your land, nor devastation or destruction within your borders; but you will call your walls salvation, and your gates praise.

What a beautiful promise! This shows a dramatic upgrade: stones to iron, iron to silver, bronze (or copper) to gold. All commonplace parts of life are transformed into that which is of much greater value.

All of this comes from God, the source of all good and all light:

Isaiah 60:19-22: 19 No longer will you have the sun for light by day, nor for brightness will the moon give you light; but you will have the LORD for an everlasting light, and your God for your glory. 20 Your sun will no longer set, nor will your moon wane; for you will have the LORD for an everlasting light, and the days of your mourning will be over. 21 Then all your people will be righteous; they will possess the land forever, the branch of My planting, The work of My hands, that I may be glorified. 22 The smallest one will become a clan, and the least one a mighty nation. I, the LORD, will hasten it in its time.

In summary, you will walk in the light of God forever.

There is a lot in this prophecy. *Instead of bronze I will bring gold...instead of iron I will bring silver.* In other words, *I am upgrading you from a worldly, earthly existence to one that has Me, God Almighty, in it. I am going to give you a prospering and a spirituality you have never had.*

Remember, the Law will be in their hearts. *I'm going to upgrade you to spiritual privilege,* because their governing will be from a heavenly source and not an earthly source.

Israel will be the centerpiece of the world, and its spiritual headquarters. The Law was earthly and their priesthood was earthly, but the New Covenant is spiritually-driven by a spiritual priesthood. More on this soon.



God is saying: I will be with you. You're not going to be run by people anymore. You're now going to be guided by Me. No longer will you have the sun for light – as metaphorically they will have the everlasting light of the Father.

God guiding the nation is a remarkable prophecy of Israel's perfecting.

Perfecting of Israel:

Their regathering and blessing will be a powerful message that God is with them:

Ezekiel 37:28: *And the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forever.*

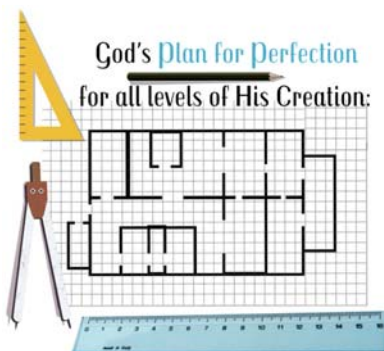
The nations are watching what happens with Israel and will see that God is leading them. While the nations certainly have their eye on Israel these days, this is still yet a future prophecy.

We have seen how Ezekiel 37 talked about the physical nation of Israel getting themselves in order by God's grace, God's strength, God's guidance and God's deliverance. At the end it says, *the nations will know.* That's the segue into the next piece, the relationship between future Israel and the future nations of the world.

Perfecting of Israel:



- ✓ Spiritual cleansing.
- ✓ Accepting Jesus' rulership.
- ✓ Dwelling in their God-given land.
- ✓ Recipients of a New Covenant of peace that will be written on their hearts.
- ✓ Other nations will recognize God is with Israel.



Israel's perfecting process precedes the perfecting of the nations because the nations will need a template to follow to comprehend how truly righteous governing and living looks.

God's work with Israel through Jesus and all the faithful from this present evil world will be dramatic, positive and undeniable proof of the path they are all to follow.

The “all and forever” of these prophecies are stated consistently throughout the Bible. This is a never-ending completeness. Finally, Israel will be recognized as God's chosen people for all time. God keeps His promises.

When God chooses a people for His name, He really means it! Aren't we blessed with a God of such power, foresight, wisdom and love!

Israel's regathering, reconciliation and blessing are dramatically marked in Scripture. Is the path of other nations also marked?

Not only is it marked, but it is usually marked in direct relation to what has already happened in Israel. Why? Because God is merciful and wise. He knows how sinful the nations have been without Him and will give them more than ample evidence and direction to come to His glory. God has every detail in order. He understands how far away the nations have gotten from Him. His plan puts everything in place. He knows they will come back in the resurrection with the same thoughts. He knows how to bring them to true loyalty.

We have all heard the phrase “practice makes perfect.” That is not quite right. Practice does not make perfect, PERFECT practice makes perfect. If we practice the wrong things, we will never perfect anything except failure. If we practice the right things, success follows. We will see how “perfect practice” comes into play for the nations of the world.

Let's remember that the existing governments of this world will not be the governing methods being perfected in God's kingdom:

Daniel 2:44: (KJV) *And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*

The kingdom of God crushes and destroys all the kingdoms of the current world. That can seem scary, but the ending is much bigger and better. Having been broken down into chaotic rubble, the nations - meaning the geographically located groups of people - will need to regroup in righteousness and seek out appropriate direction and help.



When does all this happen? Are these prophecies about God's future kingdom on earth specific enough to pinpoint a timeframe of when they happen?



Ezekiel 37 had its beginnings in our world today. But its endings are far beyond the world today. As for **Daniel 2:44**, we are in the process of watching the beginnings of the crushing of the kingdoms of this earth today as well. These things are unfolding over time. We need to be patient, realizing that when we see certain things happening, we know that we're onto another step. Much of what we're going to be discussing is post-resurrection.

Perfecting of the Nations:

Learning what is righteously honorable will be a primary lesson:

Ezekiel 28:25-26: *25 Thus says the Lord GOD, When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and will manifest My holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they will live in their land which I gave to My servant Jacob. 26 They will live in it securely; and they will build houses, plant vineyards and live securely when I execute judgments upon all who scorn them round about them. Then they will know that I am the LORD their God.*

Learning what is righteously honorable - perfect practice will make perfect.

We know what we are looking for now:



- ✓ We have the gathered house of Israel, so they are no longer divided.
- ✓ The other nations see God's holiness in relation to Israel.
- ✓ Israel is living securely in the physical land of Jacob (Israel).

And the obvious part, there are actual people alive in the land they were promised.
They are NOT burning in eternal torture after they were resurrected.

Notice there are *judgments upon all who scorn them round about them*. Isn't it interesting that it is the Arab nations who are currently *round about them*? Many other nations also showed cruelty towards Israel. Hatred and scorn will not work anymore. Israel will be favored by God, and the nations will need to recognize this.

Israel's government, like the rest of the world's, is imperfect now, but we are looking at the future. In the future, God will have His hand so directly upon Israel, it will become unmistakable that they are favored by God.

We are already beginning to see just the beginning edges of the unfolding of His judgments upon those who scorned them. More will manifest as time goes on.

Learning what is righteously honorable is similar to parents telling their children not to touch a hot stove, and the child touches it anyway. The nations, especially in the time of resurrection, when they are scorning Israel, are "touching the stove," resulting in consequences.



Perfecting of the Nations:

Seeing the raw power of God's might and righteousness through Israel and to the nations and realizing that salvation is present for any who seek it:

Isaiah 52:8-10: *8 Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices, they shout joyfully together; for they will see with their own eyes when the LORD restores Zion. 9 Break forth, shout joyfully together, you waste places of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem. 10 The LORD has bared His holy arm in the sight of all the nations, that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our God.*

All the nations will learn to *see the salvation of our God*. Perfect practice makes perfect. *The Lord has bared His holy arm*. The Lord has shown His strength that will come through Christ. God will direct Israel, and the nations will see His strength. When such strength is exhibited through compassion, justice, wisdom and mercy, it is respected because it is not angry or retributive. It is upbuilding and full of life and of moving forward with loyalty to the Almighty.

Perfecting of the Nations:

Humbly responding to the light of God's blessing will be a next step:

Isaiah 60:1-3: *1 Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. 2 For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; but the LORD will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. 3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.*

Wouldn't we say that this entire 6,000 years of human history since Adam's disobedience has been a nighttime of "darkness"? And Satan blinding the minds of the people is well described as "gross darkness." This image of God's glory rising as light is beautiful.

From all of these prophecies that clearly haven't come true yet, we get the sense that there will be social groupings of people in the form of nations. *Kings* would seem to mean the natural leaders of those nations, as we know the only true king will be Christ.

Humility will be a must to honor Israel as the kingdom's leading nation, especially from those who hated her.



Israel is tiny, about the size of the state of New Jersey in the United States. How does it have such a big impact? All these groupings of people will be working together, learning to humbly recognize the light of God's glory.

Perfecting of the Nations:

Accepting God's will and way will be exhibited in gathering to and rallying around Israel and Jerusalem as the source of the world's blessings:

Jeremiah 3:17-18: *17 At that time they will call Jerusalem The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the LORD; nor will they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart. 18 In those days the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel, and they will come together from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers as an inheritance.*

Perfect practice makes perfect.

That split between the two kingdoms and now the repair with the house of Judah and the house of Israel coming together is a big point shown again and again in Scripture! We are not really told the logistics of Jerusalem being *the throne of the LORD*, and how *all the* nations will be gathered to it.

It wouldn't require every single person to make a pilgrimage; rather, there will be an acceptance and willingness to acknowledge the throne of God in principle and actions, mind and heart. We can imagine representatives from each nation (perhaps like the Olympics!) will show their allegiance, loyalty and honor, sending their best to represent them in this honorable position.

Perfecting of the Nations:

Responding to all they have seen by taking action, by intentionally seeking God's favor for themselves by seeking God where He will be found, in Jerusalem:

Zechariah 8:20-23: *20 Thus says the LORD of hosts, It will yet be that peoples will come, even the inhabitants of many cities. 21 The inhabitants of one will go to another, saying, Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I will also go. 22 So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD. 23 Thus says the LORD of hosts, In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*

Let us go with you - where you go, Israel, we want to go. This perfect practice makes for perfect learning and precisely following after godliness.

See Bonus Material for more on the "skirt" or "garment of a Jew."

As the world recognizes these miraculous things taking place in Israel, blessings will start to migrate out to the rest of the world.

Perfecting of the Nations:

Embracing and praising the magnificence of God and His kingdom:

Psalms 67:1-4: *1 God be gracious to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us—Selah. 2 That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations. 3 Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. 4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You will judge the peoples with uprightness and guide the nations on the earth. Selah.*

Nations singing for joy – perfect practice makes perfect.

Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh (Matthew 12:34) - here is where that singing for joy comes. They are in a different place; in compliance; nothing but joy. The nations have been transformed to righteousness, praising God from the heart just like Israel will have learned to do.

Perfecting of the Nations:

Living in peace, righteousness and godliness:

Micah 4:3-4: *3 And He will judge between many peoples and render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they train for war. 4 Each of them will sit under his vine (symbolizing Jesus and his faithful bride) and under his fig tree (Israel), with no one to make them afraid, for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.*

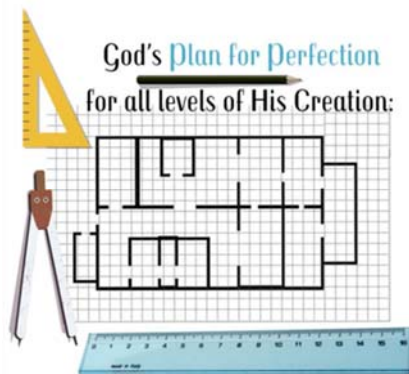
All of that perfect practice will have brought perfection, peace, harmony, love, loyalty and wisdom to all the nations of the world! Amen!

Humanity will dwell in peace and safety under the vine, symbolizing Jesus and his faithful church (we know this from other scriptures), and the fig tree symbolizing Israel. All of God's highly favored will be watching over all of God's favored. What a time that will be! This is the connection between the nations of the earth and Israel.

Perfecting of the Nations:



- ✓ They must learn what is righteously honorable.
- ✓ They will see the raw power of God's might at work, especially with Israel.
- ✓ They will humbly respond to the light of God's blessing.
- ✓ They will accept God's will in God's way by rallying around Israel.
- ✓ They will intentionally seek God's favor administered from Jerusalem.
- ✓ They will embrace and praise God.
- ✓ They will live in peace, righteousness and godliness.



The nations will be tasked with learning justice, righteousness, godliness, humility and loyalty to God. Once learned and internalized, all of these things will bring them to eternal earthly life in God's kingdom. This aspect of God's perfecting work will put the last pieces of His plan in place.

God's plan for perfecting all has a glorious result!

This remarkable result has all been pre-planned. We are now living at a time where we can see its tiny beginnings.

We live in a difficult, dark time, but look what is guaranteed:

Revelation 21:1,4: (KJV) *1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

And they lived righteously ever after! The plan of God is comprehensive for ALL.

God has a perfecting process, not just for those who are called out to follow Jesus at this time, and not just for those ancient ones in the Old Testament. It is not just for individual people who will be raised at the time of resurrection and go through the day of judgment, but also for the nation of Israel.

They will learn His righteousness and accept Jesus as their Messiah. Then the nations of the world will be blessed to have the template, the model, of God working with Israel to see how life is supposed to be. This is how righteousness rules. This is how there is truly peace on earth and goodwill toward men. They will see, they will acknowledge and they will grow into the kingdom of God forever.

**So, what is the biblical process to become perfect for Israel and the nations?
For Rick, Jonathan, Julie and Christian Questions...
...Think about it!**

All scriptures cited are from the NASB1995 translation unless otherwise noted.



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More scriptures that show this incredible perfecting process:

Isaiah 55:7-11: (KJV) *7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. 8 For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. 10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: 11 So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

Verses 1 -3 of this Psalm speak about the regathering and blessing of Israel.

These verses show us the result of that regathering and blessing upon ALL nations:

Psalms 98:4-9: *4 Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth; break forth and sing for joy and sing praises. 5 Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody. 6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn shout joyfully before the King, the LORD. 7 Let the sea roar and all it contains, the world and those who dwell in it. 8 Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy 9 before the LORD, for He is coming to judge the earth; He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with equity.*

Isaiah 65:17-25: *17 For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing and her people for gladness. 19 I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; and there will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the sound of crying. 20 No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his days; for the youth will die at the age of one hundred and the one who does not reach the age of one hundred will be thought accursed. 21 They will build houses and inhabit them; they will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22 They will not build and another inhabit, they will not plant and another eat; for as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people, and My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands. 23 They will not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD, and their descendants with them. 24 It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent's food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain, says the LORD.*

Isaiah 25:6-9: *6 The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; a banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, and refined, aged wine. 7 And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, even the veil which is stretched over all nations. 8 He will swallow up death for all time, and the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; for the LORD has spoken. 9 And it will be said in that day, Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.*

The process for Israel:

Ezekiel 11:14-21: *14 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 15 son of man, your brothers, your relatives, your fellow exiles and the whole house of Israel, all of them, are those to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Go far from the LORD; this land has been given us as a possession. 16 Therefore say, Thus says the Lord GOD, Though I had removed them far away among the nations and though I had scattered them among the countries, yet I was a sanctuary for them a little while in the countries where they had gone. 17 Therefore say, Thus says the Lord GOD, I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries among which you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. 18 When they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it. 19 And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, 20 that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God. 21 But as for those whose hearts go after their detestable things and abominations, I will bring their conduct down on their heads, declares the Lord GOD.*

(Source: Biblical commentary by Jamieson, Fausset and Brown) *men of thy kindred* — literally, “of thy redemption,” that is, the nearest relatives, whose duty it was to do the part of Goel, or vindicator and redeemer of a forfeited inheritance (Leviticus 25:25). Ezekiel, seeing the priesthood doomed to destruction, as a priest, felt anxious to vindicate their cause, as if they were his nearest kinsmen and he their Goel. But he is told to look for his true kinsmen in those, his fellow exiles, whom his natural kinsmen at Jerusalem despised, and he is to be their vindicator. Spiritual ties, as in the case of Levi (De 33:9), the type of Messiah (Matthew 12:47-50) are to supersede natural ones where the two clash. The hope of better days was to rise from the despised exiles. The gospel principle is shadowed forth here, that the despised of men are often the chosen of God and the highly esteemed among men are often an abomination before Him (Luke 16:15 1 Corinthians 1:26-28). “No door of hope but in the valley of Achor” (“trouble,” Hosea 2:15).

(Source: Patrick Fairbairn) Get you far...unto us is this land - the contemptuous words of those left still in the city at the carrying away of Jeconiah to the exiles, “However far ye be outcasts from the Lord and His temple, we are secure in our possession of the land.”

The Skirt of the Jew

Excerpted from: http://www.heraldmag.org/literature/proph_23.htm

It is worthy of note that in our text, it is the "skirt" of the Jew which is grasped. This is not a coincidental idiom but one that is full of meaning. We meet up with it twice in the life of Jesus. In Matthew 9:20, we read of the woman who was healed from an issue of blood by following Jesus in a thronging crowd and touching the hem of his garment. Again, in Matthew 14:35,36, we read of his visit to the area of Gennesaret, "And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased; and besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole."

In both of the above cases the text emphasizes the desire to touch "the hem of his garment." In order to grasp the full significance of this symbol, we need to refer to the Old Testament. There we read in Numbers 15:38,39, Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: and it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring.

These blue fringes in the hem of the garment were to be a constant reminder to the Jewish people of their responsibilities to God's law and, by extension, showed their sincerity in trying to keep the Lord's commandments.

In fact, it was the recognition of Jesus keeping the Law that the faith of those healed was placed. This was virtually tantamount to accepting him as the promised Messiah.

Study QUESTIONS

Ep. 1311: What is the Biblical Process to Become Perfect? (Part III)

See:  **CQ.Rewind**
SHOW NOTES

<https://christianquestions.com/current-events/1311-perfect-nations/>

1. In Psalm 98:3, what does God tell us about His plans for the future of the world? What is the Abrahamic promise and how does it connect Israel with the nations? How is God's plan pictured by Abraham's experience? (Genesis 17:1-2, Genesis 22:15-18)
2. What happened to Israel during Solomon's reign? What was Jesus' prediction about Israel's future after they rejected him? What was their experience following his crucifixion? (I Kings 11:12-13, Matthew 23:37-39, Matthew 24:1-2)
3. What illustration did Jesus use to show the "death" of the nation of Israel? What opportunity ended for Israel when they did not repent and accept Jesus as Messiah? Did Israel's lack of "fruit-bearing" invalidate the Abrahamic promise? (Luke 13:6-9, Matthew 21:18-19)
4. How do we know that the dry bones prophecy in Ezekiel 37 refers to Israel? How do we know this describes the resuscitation of the nation rather than the resurrection of individuals? (Ezekiel 37:11-14)
5. How does Luke 21:29-31 link Israel to all the nations of the world? How does this parable help us to understand the timeline of Jesus' second advent and the perfecting of Israel?
6. How did Israel's failure as a nation bring "riches" to the Gentiles? What was Paul's understanding of the future of Israel? How do we know that Paul is referring to natural Israel in these verses and not spiritual Israel? (Romans 11:12,15, 25-27)
7. What is the first step in perfecting Israel? How do the promised rewards to Israel and the promised rewards to Christians differ? How will Israel's attitude toward Jesus change during this process? (Ezekiel 37:23-25)
8. Describe the New Covenant. What are the differences between it and the original Law Covenant? What was the purpose of giving the Law Covenant first? How will the New Covenant be an improvement over the Law Covenant? (Ezekiel 37:26-27, Jeremiah 31:31-34)
9. What needs to happen to the nations before God's government is set up? Trace the steps the nations will need to follow on their journeys to perfection. (Daniel 2:44, Ezekiel 28:25-26, Isaiah 52:8-10, Isaiah 60:1-3, Jeremiah 3:17-18, Zechariah 8:20-23, Psalm 67:1-4, Micah 4:3-4)
10. Who is affected by God's comprehensive plan? How will Israel become the blessing nation to bring peace and righteousness to the entire world?
11. Did this study enhance your understanding of Israel's future role in God's plan?