

“THE MYSTERY TO THE GENTILES”

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We believe that this is a timely subject because it involves the right of Israel to a homeland, and it involves the position of the Arabs with relation to Israel. We feel that this discussion should enable anyone who believes the Bible to take the right position with respect to Israel. I think it is particularly important for the Lord's people to know what the Lord is doing, and as the subject develops I trust you will agree with me that it is very important.

The Apostle Paul alludes to this mystery to the Gentiles in Romans 11:25: "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."

I think it is well for us to consider that there was a mystery to the Jews in the first place. This is pointed out in the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians, chapter 3, verses 3-6: "Now that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words; Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; (What was this mystery?) That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."

This was the mystery to the Jews. They had trouble comprehending this. Again, in Colossians the first chapter, verses 25-27: "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God: Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints; To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

This was a great mystery to the early church, all of whom were Jews to the time of the conversion of Cornelius. This is clear from the chapter of Acts. We know that the Jews had difficulty in accepting Gentile converts. They felt that they had to become Jews first Jewish proselytes -- and then they would be in line for the special blessings. No, that was not God's arrangement. Skipping over some of these interesting points (the whole 15th chapter is very interesting) and beginning with the 6th verse -- "And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter (what obligation the Gentiles would have with respect to the law, etc.) And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose

up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.”

He pleaded very eloquently on this occasion, and he had a special vision to back him up. (Acts the 10th chapter) You remember, as he dozed on the rooftop while he was waiting for a meal, he had a vision; and in this vision a sheet was let down from heaven and upon the sheet were all manner of unclean animals according to the dietary laws of the Jews. And a voice from heaven commanded him to kill and eat these animals. He, of course, objected. He said, "Never have I eaten anything that is common or unclean." And then the voice said, "What God hath cleansed, call not thou unclean." And immediately the messengers from Cornelius, a Gentile, came and asked him to come to them and preach the gospel. That wasn't a coincidence. You couldn't talk Peter out of the idea that God had given him this special message and sent him to the Gentiles as well as the Jews. So on this occasion he spoke very eloquently on this subject, very convincingly, as we come down to those very familiar verses in Acts 15:13-17: "And after they had held their peace (of course, the testimony of Paul and Barnabas and others was added to that of Peter, but apparently Peter's testimony was most convincing because James alludes to that particularly) James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon (Simon Peter) hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. (This is the gospel church -- the bride takes the name of the bridegroom. James here for the first time in the early church understood the idea of the high calling in its relationship to the blessing of all the families of the earth. Notice how he puts it.) And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written. (There is no contradiction here, no change in plans. Here we have a parenthesis that they hadn't calculated on -- that first God would turn to the Gentiles for the purpose of selecting the church and then he says...) After this I will return and build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; (there is no question that he is talking about the Jewish system) and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; (we are living in a time when we are seeing this fulfilled in such a marvelous way -- such a miraculous way) That the residue of men might seek after the Lord (not just the few that are called to be of the church) and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."

This is to bring blessings to all the Gentiles in fulfillment of the promise to Abraham, "In thee and thy seed (the seed is primarily Christ and his church as shown in Galatians 3) shall all the families of the earth be blessed." O, what a comprehensive and glorious message this is! Most of our nominal church friends believe that when the church is

complete God's salvation is all over. But according to God's plan, and as pointed out so specifically and beautifully and clearly in Galatians 3:8, 16 and 29, when God has completed the church, only the seed of Abraham will be complete. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

And what was the promise? That the seed of Abraham would bless all the families of the earth. Well, what difference does it make? Well, it literally makes a world of difference. With the nominal church thought, if the church is all the salvation God has to offer then the world is lost -- but, of course, we can't get into that aspect of the subject. We are merely showing here that this was a great mystery to the Jews, to the believers even -- that the Gentiles could come in and be accepted along with the Jews. That mystery was resolved for the Jews.

But now we have another one that comes a lot closer to home. If the mystery to the Jews was related to the Gentiles, their prejudice against them and reluctance to accept them in what God had to offer to the Gentiles, wouldn't it be reasonable (considering now from the standpoint of reason alone before we go to the Bible) that the mystery to the Gentiles would be with regard to the Jews -- prejudice and reluctance to accept the Jews to the full honor and position that God had to offer? I think that is a reasonable proposition, wouldn't you think so? You know, the Truth should be reasonable. God said, "Come, let us reason together." So I think we will find that that which is reasonable is also scriptural -- that the mystery to the Gentiles is their reluctance to recognize God's full provision for natural Israel.

Let's turn to our text again (Romans 11:25) and let's analyze it a little more closely. "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits (a feeling of superiority, boasting against the natural branches, as he mentions in other verses. If we are ignorant of this mystery, we are going to be putting Israel down and not recognizing her full position) that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

What then is the mystery specifically? Is the mystery the fact that Israel was once in God's favor and was later rejected? Is that a mystery to any Gentile Christians? Don't all denominations believe that Israel was once God's people and that they were rejected and the Gentiles were given special opportunity to come in - - that natural Israel was blinded to the Gospel truths? That's not the mystery.

No, the mystery is very accurately stated here -- the fact that it is only a partial blindness and more particularly for a limited time, with the implication that when that time expires

Israel is going to come back to her former glory. Now when you express it that way, how many people understand it? How many church denominations understand it? And now we can add to the list, how many Bible Students still understand it or believe it?

You know, a mystery is naturally something that is difficult to understand in the first place -- right? And, by the same token, a mystery would be the easiest thing to lose sight of in the whole repertoire of Present Truth teachings, and it is proving to be so -- this mystery to the Gentiles.

Going back to Genesis to a pair of very remarkable twins, Jacob and Esau -- they are remarkable in many ways, most particularly because they represent the twin or parallel dispensations -- the Jewish and Gospel ages, spiritual and fleshly Israel and the relationship between spiritual and fleshly Israel. In Genesis 27:38 we find that Esau asks a question of his father Isaac who had already given the blessing based on the birthright to Jacob: "And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? (That's what most people seem to think) bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice and wept."

What about this? Did Isaac have only one blessing to give? Did he only have a blessing for Jacob? Not according to the Apostle Paul --because when he recounts the exploits of the faithful ancient worthies, he says of Isaac, as recorded in Hebrews 11:20: "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come."

The Apostle Paul was a great Bible student. He knew the Hebrew scriptures better perhaps than any other writer of the Bible, and so of course when we turn to the Hebrew scriptures about Jacob and Esau we find that the Apostle Paul was right -- that there was a blessing for both Jacob and Esau. In Genesis 27:28-29 we have the blessing to Jacob: "Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine; Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee."

That was the promise to Abraham in the first place, and now it was brought down to Jacob -- wasn't it? And it is a fact of history that the nations that have persecuted the Jews, and particularly the individuals, have come to an ignominious end. We might mention a few. There was Haman and Hitler, and I just wonder if the untimely death of Nasser couldn't be a part of that whole picture. He died at 50 years of age at the height of his career after lashing out against Israel, threatening to drive them into the sea and destroy them as a nation. "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in

thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 12:3) That's the way it was expressed to Abraham.

Esau's blessing is recorded in Genesis 27:39-40 following the verse we read earlier, "Hast thou but one blessing, my father?" "And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above.

You know, that's all Esau ever wanted in the first place. He didn't care about the spiritual aspect of the promise, did he? He really wanted the earthly things, and according to this he was to get the fatness of the land. And it was a fact that he inherited the fatness of the land. He took over all the material assets of Isaac, his father; and as we shall see, Jacob super-added substantial riches besides. This we find in Genesis 32:17-20: "And he (Jacob) commanded the foremost (of the shepherds) saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee? Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he is behind us."

You notice how this is expressed. Jacob really was constituted the lord because he gained the birthright, but he being a true servant of the Lord caught the spirit of the Lord's new ruling in the matter of authority. The Lord said, "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant." (Matt. 23:11) Here is an example -- Jacob was the chief, and he said that he was the servant of Esau and these presents were for Esau. Just try to visualize this situation. Esau must have known that Jacob knew that Esau was a rich man; and if Jacob was giving Esau presents, he must be fabulously rich -- and being earthly minded that made quite an impression on Esau right from the start, didn't it? And so it gave assurance that he was not coming back to lord it over Esau. This is from your servant Jacob. Then verses 19 and 20-- "And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak to Esau, when ye find him. And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face: peradventure he will accept of me."

He sent three different herds of animals. The context shows there was a total of 580 animals in these three herds that were sent ahead to appease Esau. Well, what was the effect? This, I think, would be of special significance to us. It prefigures the proper attitude of the Jacob (spiritual Israel) class toward natural Israel. Genesis 33:4: "And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept."

This, I submit, should be the attitude and relationship between spiritual and fleshly Israel -- no stinginess on the part of spiritual Israel toward fleshly Israel. Now verses 8 to 11 show that Esau protested and said he didn't need these gifts, but Jacob said, yes, I want you to have them. Well, Esau didn't have to be asked twice. He accepted them. So Jacob became a benefactor of Esau in that very act, and Esau accepted that relationship.

You remember that Abraham wouldn't accept any gifts from the king of Sodom lest, he said, the king of Sodom would say, "I have made Abram rich." (Gen. 14:23) There is a contrast here, isn't there? Yes, Jacob became the benefactor of Esau. Now they both were fabulously rich, which shows that the Lord has blessings for everybody, especially for spiritual and fleshly Israel. Genesis 36:6-8: "And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob. For their riches were more than that they might dwell together, and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle."

Let's now go back to the original promise to Abraham. We won't take time to read these passages -- you are all familiar with them. (Genesis 12:3 also Genesis 13:14-17) The promise to Abraham and his seed "For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."

Now in the 15th chapter of Genesis the Lord identifies the branch of Abraham's descendants that would have a title to the land. This involves the controversy in the Middle East today. The reason the situation is so sticky over there is the fact that they are all descendants of Abraham, and the Arabs say they are the descendants of Abraham to inherit the land. The Jews have been out -- they were chased out centuries ago, and the Arabs have been living there now for centuries, and it seems they are inheriting the land as God promised to Abraham.

This is the situation that the United Nations can't touch at all. They can't understand it, and they are inclined to have sympathy with the Arabs. In fact, even Christian people are being deceived along this line. But the Lord indicated what branch of Abraham's descendants this promise applied to. (Genesis 15:13-16) I might mention here that in the controversy that followed the Six-Day War when Russia came to the United Nations determined to get a judgment against Israel, they came to the Security Council, and the United States vetoed the proposition there. They took it to the General Assembly thinking that those small nations would back the Arabs against Israel's aggression (as they called

it). Russia was defeated again, and Russia had suffered humiliation by the defeat of their Arab allies in the first place. Keep that in mind. They are a proud people and have long memories when it comes to things of that kind, and it probably will have some relation to the final attack on Israel, which we call Jacob's trouble -- by the hordes of Gog and Magog.

We previously had given to the Israeli Consulate my witness paper which follows the guidelines of Brother Russell's lecture to the Jews in 1910 showing that Israel was to be permanently established as a nation, etc. We know that they were favorably impressed because they had sent greetings to me through the head of the Clifton Jewish Center. Mr. Abba Eban had come over, you know, as a special representative for this occasion and spoke so eloquently before the Security Council and General Assembly. We called the Israeli Consulate and stated that if we couldn't speak to Mr. Abba Eban personally, we would like to speak to someone who had his ear, if they thought the message was worthwhile. I said, "I am not presuming to tell you what is in the Hebrew Bible (although you know the Hebrew Bible is the same as the others really) but if I can tell you something that should rally every Christian -- Protestant and Catholic -- rally them to the support of Israel, wouldn't you think that would be an important thing?"

The girl said, "It certainly would." So she switched me to another lady, presumably a secretary closer to the Consulate or the one handling Abba Eban's affairs over here, and I read them the passage and told them this is in all the Christian Bibles, and this clearly indicates that God intended that the descendants of Jacob should possess that land -- at least have a homeland there. Notice how this is expressed, beginning with Genesis 15:13 through 16: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years. (Is there any doubt about what that is? It's the Egyptian bondage -- and who were involved in the Egyptian bondage? The descendants of Esau are eliminated. The descendants of Ishmael are eliminated, because only Jacob and the 70 souls of his family went down into Egypt and finally came into this bondage. See how God is singling out that branch of Abraham's seed as being the ones who are to have a title to the land.) And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge, and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."

Well, the lady thanked me. I don't know if it had any effect. But I did like them to know that they had some friends in that situation anyway. It is what we are obliged to believe if we believe the Bible.

This passage follows the special sacrifice that God told Abraham to make. You remember Abraham said, "Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" (Genesis 15:8,9): "And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon."

In your Berean comment Bible you find the suggestion that the aggregate of eleven symbolic years -- symbolic times -- bridges the time from this promise to Abraham to 1914 when the Times of the Gentiles ended. There are only two alternatives -- first there are the Times of Israel, and then the rulership of the earth was given over to the Gentiles for a period of seven times. When the seven times ends, then what would we have? It would revert to the Times of Israel again. So 1914 marked the beginning of the Times of Israel and the beginning of the war which liberated Palestine from the implacable Turks, and made it possible for Israel to become established there. In fact, the war didn't end until Britain had agreed to promote the idea of a homeland for the Jews. That was in connection with special inventions they were getting from Chaim Weizmann, who later became the first President of Israel. In order to get valuable chemical secrets that he had, they were willing to give him almost anything. He didn't ask for worldly possessions. He didn't ask to be created a lord or anything like that. He said he would like to have Britain go on record as being in favor of a homeland for the Jews. Shortly after Britain promised to do that, they won the war. They drove the Turks out of Palestine; and just as they had driven them across the old Solomon-Davidic border, the farthest extent of Israel, the Armistice was signed. Discount everything that happened on the Western Front. The important thing that happened in 1914-18 occurred in Israel.

Many people get hung up on God's dealing with Israel. They say, O, yes, you try to tell me that they are God's pets, and He just drove these people out and let the Israelites come in. But think about this. The descendants of Jacob were kept in abject slavery in Egypt while these wicked nations in Canaan were cavorting around, polluting the land, desecrating themselves, and building their iniquities and sins up to heaven -- "for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." (Gen. 15:16) But when finally they had reached that point and the scales of justice were tipped against them, they had forfeited the land. Not one of those nations had any title to the land. They had forfeited it because of wickedness, and God said the land just "spewed them out." Only then did He permit Israel to come in. He gave Israel His laws and kept them under pretty strict discipline.

Now the question comes up, why did God choose Jacob, and wasn't there something peculiar about the deal whereby Jacob got the birthright? In the first place, let's remember that "the path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect

day." (Prov. 4:18) The Christian is not supposed to live down to the Old Testament standards. We don't have to justify the actions back there. The Bible says that in times of ignorance God winked at some of the things that went on. He couldn't expect anything better, and He didn't. He condescended to work with them anyway.

But there is another aspect to this. Esau had forfeited his right to his birthright because of his own wicked course. He had the example of Abraham making Eliezer swear that he would not take a wife for Isaac from among the wicked people of the land and sending him back to his own people to the faith seed. You know, there is something to the law of heredity. Remember what Paul said about Timothy's mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois, he saw this faith in them, and he said, "I am persuaded that it is in thee also." (II Tim. 1:5) Now what is the basis for that? You can't tell me that the law of heredity doesn't play some part in it. That was the reason the restrictions were placed. But in the face of this fact -- Esau knew that Isaac had been forbidden to take a wife from the people of the land -- it says in Genesis 26:34-35 that Esau took two wives from the daughters of the Hittites. This almost broke Rebekah's heart. In Genesis 27:46 and 28:1-2 it shows that Rebekah insisted that Jacob go back to her people to select a wife, and she says if Jacob went out and did as Esau did that it would kill her. Read this account. It is very interesting and has an important bearing on this whole matter of why Esau disqualified himself. Let's not get hung up on this in sympathy for the descendants of Esau. They don't have a claim according to the word of God. It's their own fault because they didn't adhere to the faith of Abraham.

Anyway, Esau couldn't carry on the line -- this "faith of Abraham" seed. You remember Jacob was sent away to his own people where he got his wives from Laban's family. Then when Esau found out and saw what had happened and that he had lost favor in the sight of his parents, it says he took the daughter of Ishmael for his wife, trying to remedy the situation. Well, that didn't improve matters much, did it? Because Ishmael wasn't in God's favor either.

We have learned that the iniquity of the Canaanite nations had come to the full. In Exodus 34:10-12 God said that the Israelites were to drive out six nations of the Canaanites, that they were to destroy their idols and tear down their altars. Leviticus 18:24-28 and the context (verses 6-23) describes the wickedness of the people of the land. The language of verses 6-23 is too indelicate to even read in public. That's how wicked they were; also Leviticus 20:1-24 (particularly 23-24) -- skip the others unless you have a strong stomach. And there was a warning given to Israel. God says that the land would spew these nations out. Now their wickedness had reached the point where God could have destroyed them like Sodom and Gomorrah. But there is a practical reason why that wouldn't have

worked. To destroy a city is one thing -- but to destroy a large rural area is something else. If God had wiped out all those people, the land would have gone to ruin. That's what the Lord said. That's why He appointed Israel to go in and destroy them.

People get hung up on that, too. You shouldn't blame Israel for carrying out God's instructions. He could have wiped them out like Sodom and Gomorrah and nobody could have complained. They could not have, in view of their wickedness. But He says that the Israelites were to drive them out gradually lest the land go to ruin. This is recorded in Deuteronomy 7:22-23. Then in Deuteronomy 9:4-5, He says He is doing these things for Israel not because they are so righteous but because the other nations were so much more wicked than they. That has a bearing on it, too, doesn't it?

In Romans 4:16 Paul says, "that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham." Notice how this is phrased -- it was a fore-gone conclusion back there that natural Israel was in the picture. Let's not lose sight of this mystery.

In the 9th chapter of Romans, verses 3-5 and up to verse 12, Paul clearly shows the two seeds of Abraham, the spiritual seed being the most important. I suggest that you read the whole 11th chapter of Romans with the Pastor's comments. He was right on the beam on this subject. You know one of the saddest experiences I have had in the past few years is to see this precious heritage that the Pastor has left us being frittered away until this glorious truth is lost. Yes, the mystery has become dim. The subject of Israel in relation to God's plan is like the bottom line on an eye chart. It is the one you are apt to lose sight of first. It happens to be the one error that was first promoted about 12 or 14 years ago. My heart sank when I saw it in print because I knew the brethren were confident that it would be accepted among the brethren. And to think that a spirit of almost anti-Semitism in some cases should ever come in among the Lord's people. It is saddening -- it is a calamity, really. So read the 11th chapter of Romans with the comments and you will get a thrill out of it.

The question of accepting Israel should have been decided when we consecrated. If we want to do the Lord's will, we want to accept God's people, too, don't we? Maybe like a little dog we might not like some strangers, but when the master shakes hands with them and pats them on the shoulder, the little dog is supposed to take the cue and learn to like them -- and that's the way with us. If there is any prejudice there at all, it has to be resolved in a hurry if we are going to be faithful to our loving Master. His people are going to have to be our people, too.

Satan knows who the true Israel is. Have you ever thought of that? That's a negative approach, but it's a double check on this thing. He has tried to wipe them out. He isn't satisfied to just persecute them. He wants to wipe them out. He knows that Israel is in the picture.

Israel has served a long, hard sentence -- and when any prisoner has served his sentence, particularly when it is a just one as it is in this case, he goes free. You have to accept him. Israel admittedly lost the special spiritual favor, but if they have lost the earthly favor too, then they would have suffered double jeopardy, something which is not countenanced by any civilization in the world today.

One thing that I want to particularly emphasize to avoid any misunderstanding is that we don't expect Israel in their present condition to carry out any program for the Lord. We have to believe what the Lord says, that this is all going to change, which may seem very difficult; it may even stagger our faith to believe these things, but if the Lord says so, we must believe it. I think one of the most pointed scriptures on this is Zechariah 12:10,12.

You know, there is one thing that distinguishes the Truth from all denominations. That is that the Lord is going to make the first move and then expect a response -- whereas all other groups, including now the J. W. 's, feel it's up to the sinner to make the first move. Here the sinner is down in the gutter, wounded and weak, and they say in effect, "Come over here, and I will pick you up." The Lord doesn't operate that way. The Lord is going to pick them up. They are going to be rehabilitated to a reasonable extent, given a knowledge of the Truth, and then the Lord will expect a response. And we believe that He is going to get the response, too, don't we? Isn't that a precious message that we have? We are apt to get fouled up in the same way about Israel.

I have heard brethren say, "Well, Israel is going to have to have a lot more punishment before they will recognize the Lord." Have you ever heard of a blind person getting his sight by being punished? And Israel is blinded, and punishment is not going to open their eyes -- not at all. In fact, the Lord makes it very clear how their eyes will be opened --and it brings it right into the pattern of how God operates in the first place. He is going to make the first move. He is going to give them the motivation. It doesn't say that by reason of punishment they are going to recognize him whom they have pierced. Let's read the scripture for what it really says, and then believe it. Zechariah 12:10 and 12: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications (that's the first move, and following this...) they shall look upon me whom they have pierced and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn....And

the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart."

And it continues to the end of the chapter describing the deep mourning that they will have over the fact that they have rejected this son. After all, everyone believes that Jesus was a Jew, so why shouldn't the Jews rejoice in this fact, eventually? We know that the Pastor has stated this over and over again, that the Jews will respond and be first among the nations to respond by reason of their training and the Lord pouring this spirit on them first. We know the role of the ancient worthies -- they come first. They will be the princes and leaders. The nation of Israel comes into the picture, too. Let's not be stingy with them.

Another point I'd like to mention is that many good Christian people are falling for the line of Arab propaganda about the refugees. And I would like to just mention something else. We want to clear these little obstacles out of our minds because we are going to have to be in sympathy with what the Lord is doing. You know what the Apostle Paul says, "through your mercy they may obtain mercy." I think we are going to have to be in harmony with the Lord's program, which includes Israel as the first item on the agenda.

Practically all of the Jews in Israel are refugees, and they take care of their refugees. But the Arabs in contrast, keep the refugees as a running sore -- and Christians being unmindful of what we have tried to explain, that Israel has a right to a homeland, and then seeing the plight of these refugees, they blame Israel for that. But what are the facts? The Arab countries are actually very rich. In fact, they don't have to turn a hand to collect huge royalties on their rich oil resources. Isn't that true? But these dividends or royalties are gobbled up by the sheiks and the kings and princes of the Arabs -- and instead of helping their unfortunate brothers, they just buy a few more Cadillacs and take on a few more wives. These are the facts of this matter. They could take care of those refugees, and there is plenty of room for all of them and they would be blessed if they would only allow what God had intended in the first place about Israel.

There is another line of reasoning that could bother us. For instance, it is argued that an antitype is always larger than the type -- that it was the nation of Israel in the type, so it can't be the nation of Israel in the antitype, but it's the whole world of mankind. Well, it is true that the whole world of mankind is included, but it doesn't preclude the thought that Israel will have a special blessing. Now let's prove this. We should reason from the known to the unknown, shouldn't we? And we should allow scripture to interpret scripture. Now what are the facts with respect to the type? Well, the Jewish priesthood represented the new creation, both Jew and Gentile, isn't that true? They were all priests,

they were all Israelites, they all had to come from a definite family. But they represented the entire church, Jew and Gentile. That didn't preclude the fact that all the Apostles were Jews, and the first Christians were Jews. So now if we just follow that pattern to its application to the world, which of course is still future, then the nation of Israel represents the whole world of mankind -- Jews and Gentiles, but the implication is that the Jews will be first, just as it was in the church. We have an indication there how this would apply. So Israel would indeed fit into this picture.

Just one remark in closing. Ezekiel 16:58-60 shows that God is going to renew His covenant with those that broke the first covenant. Here Israel is likened to an unfaithful wife. That is particularly true in Hosea 2:13-20. He says He is going to remarry Israel. What could be clearer than that -- that He is going to renew the covenant with Israel.

Following are some choice scriptures on Israel's position in the kingdom and also some of Brother Russell's references on the subject -- and as usual he is on the beam, he is right in harmony with the scriptures. I trust that these will be helpful for your further study.

HOW NATURAL ISRAEL WILL ASSIST GENTILE NATIONS

"He shall cause them that come of Jacob (Berean comment: fleshly Israel) to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." Isaiah 27:6 (This implies, no doubt, religious as well as natural fruit).

"In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem . . . I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame." Zeph. 3:16, 19

"But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me . . . can a woman forget her sucking child?...yea they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. . . Thus saith the Lord God, behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles. . . and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; and they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth." Isa. 49:14, 15, 22, 23

"They have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before me. Thus saith the Lord, If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed (spiritual) to be rulers over the seed (fleshly)

of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Jer. 33:24-26 (Both seeds are mentioned distinctly, hence both seeds will "bless all families of earth.")

"And they shall build the old wastes...the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen, and your vinedressers. But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord; men shall call you the ministers of our God." Isa. 61:4-6 (This clearly indicates that the Gentiles will help with the secular work so the Jews can minister in worship.)

"And they shall bring your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all the nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts (modern transportation?), to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord...and I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord. For as the NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed (HEAVENLY AND EARTHLY JUST MENTIONED) and your name remain." Isa. 66:20-22

"Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, (the second part of the seed of Abraham which is to assist in blessing all the families of the earth) which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that IN THE PLACE where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, THERE it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God." Hos. 1:10 (visit or serve other nations)

"Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. (Israel will do a lot of entertaining.) Ten men shall take hold...of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you." Zech. 8:22,23 (Number 10 represents Gentiles)

"When thy sisters Sodom...Samaria...Syria...Philistines...(return to former estate) I will establish unto thee (Israel) an everlasting covenant. Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger; and I will GIVE THEM UNTO THEE FOR DAUGHTERS." Ezek. 16:55-61 (Israel will lead)

"As ye have been a curse among the heathen...so ye shall be a blessing." Zech. 8:13,16

"He that is feeble among them (Israel) shall be as David (subdue enemies); and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them." Zech. 12:8

"The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass...and as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep." Micah 5:7,8 (Israel will be like a visible police force.)

"And I will make...her that was cast off a strong nation...Arise and thresh O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thine hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many people." Micah 4:7,13 (Natural Israel, under the little flock and ancient worthies

"For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob (Berean comment: natural Israel)... and the strangers shall be joined with them...Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids; and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were, and they shall rule over their oppressors." Isa. 14:1,2 (To bless them, of course)

"The ships of Tarshish (Western world?) first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them...And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls and their kings shall minister unto thee...The sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, the Zion of the holy one of Israel...A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." Isa. 60:9,10,14,22 (See Rep. 2086 and 4623-5. Above texts support the Pastor.)

WHAT THE PASTOR TAUGHT ABOUT THE NATURAL SEED OF ABRAHAM IN THE KINGDOM

"God knew the end from the beginning; He knew that Israel would reject Messiah; and His unequivocal promises to them in view of this knowledge give us assurance that Israel is yet to be used of the Lord in service, as His agency in blessing the world." A299:2

"They were chosen to receive special earthly favors from God." B211 top

"Persecutions...remind them that they are heirs of certain rich earthly promises." B221:1

"They were cast off from divine favor, and from earthly covenants still theirs, until the fullness or complete number from the Gentiles has come in." B223 bot.

"Those from whom the favor was taken for the rejection and crucifixion of the Lord are the ones to whom the favor is to return now...it is the Jew that will now be restored to favor as the natural 'seed of Abraham.' These with the spiritual seed...are to be God's agencies for blessing all the families of the earth." C253 top "At first, few but Jews will be blessed." C253:1 "Few will be so well prepared as the Jew for that strict obedience."

C254 bot. "'Salvation is of the Jews', or covenant-keeping Israelites (note - Ezek. 36:27 reads: "I will put my Spirit within you, and CAUSE you to WALK IN MY STATUTES, and ye SHALL KEEP MY JUDGMENTS and DO THEM") in the sense that (1) our Lord Jesus the Savior, came in this line; (2) in that a remnant of these Jews (the Apostles and most of the early church)...became ministers of reconciliation to bear the message to the Gentiles; and (3)...fleshly Israel, recovered from blindness, shall be used as a medium through whom the streams of salvation, issuing from the glorified spiritual Israel, shall flow to all the families of the earth (Isa. 2:3)." C293:2 "They must either be united to the spiritual Israel...or with the literal Judah at Jerusalem, in order to share his portion in the coming times of restitution." C294:1 "We are expecting blessings upon the Israelites who are according to the flesh, and the turning away of their blindness...After they have received mercy through the complete and glorified Church of Christ, they will indeed be used as the Lord's instruments for blessing all the families of the earth, and thus the Abrahamic promises will be fulfilled to both the seeds -- both that which is according to the flesh, and that which is according to the spirit (Rom. 4:6)." C299:1

"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power' (Psa. 110:3). It will be just what Israel has waited for...only it will be much grander and more enduring than anything they ever conceived of." D632:1 "The Gentiles shall come to thy light', (This will apply to the spiritual Israel, the Sun of Righteousness but also to its earthly representatives fleshly Israel restored to favor)." D638:2 "'A nation shall be born in a day', (Isa. 66:8). Israel will be that nation; (1) Spiritual Israel, the 'holy nation'; (2) Fleshly Israel its earthly representative." D638 See also D651:2,3; F118:2; F178:1

Also many Reprint references. In some places the Pastor speaks of the Ancient Worthies as the earthly PHASE of the kingdom and Christ's agents. There is no contradiction. Of course, the perfect "princes" will head the leading nation -- the natural descendants of Abraham.

THE NEW COVENANT (Heb. 8:9) "Then God's favor will return to natural Israel...God purposes to make with that nation, and with that nation alone, a new covenant. Not a single statement of Scripture identifies the New Covenant with the Gentiles...The more closely we investigate the New Covenant, the more we must be convinced of this fact -- that it belongs to Israel alone." Rep. 4319:8,9 "This expression, New Covenant, is not used in connection with any others of mankind than the Jews...Hence we should understand that all references to the New Covenant are references to God's arrangements with the Jewish people to supplant the old arrangement under Moses." Rep. 4659:5 "The promise is that this New Covenant will be made with Israel. In order to avail themselves of this Covenant, therefore, ALL OTHER NATIONS and PEOPLES will be obliged to

become a PART OF ISRAEL.... The New Covenant goes fully into operation at the BEGINNING of the Millenium." Rep. 4902