

THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS OF JEWISH HOPES

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One of the most satisfying aspects of the Christian life today is our possession of an understanding of God's purposes. We are abundantly supplied with understanding on all Christian subjects. We have six Studies in the Scriptures, Tabernacle Shadows, hundreds of Reprint articles; and in the back of our Berean Bibles we have 18 pages of detailed information about our Christian faith. It would take many hours to even briefly cover all the details of our precious understanding.

Some time ago, I thought I would gather the Scriptures together having to do with the basis of Jewish hopes. It was a fascinating study and very rewarding. When I got through with this study I had 17 typewritten pages of Scriptures. All of these were plain easily understood passages, not dependent upon philosophy or allegories. I would like to share the blessing with you.

To begin with, I will make a brief summary similar to the one found at the beginning of each new chapter in the Volumes. We will keep constantly in mind that we will be examining a list of Scriptures which reveal God's purposes toward natural Israel.

Naturally we start with the Abrahamic Promise. Then we will note how this promise was restated to Isaac and to Jacob and finally to the Israelites as a nation. Next we will take particular notice of the expressions which show that Israel was a chosen nation and that the endearing terms are extremely significant.

Other Scriptures picture the ingratitude and wickedness of the Israelitish nation; and then the crushing blow as expressed in the words of Jesus-"Your house is left unto you desolate." We will carefully note the fact that Jesus did not say that their house would be left desolate to them permanently. The Scriptures will be examined which indicate clearly that Israel is promised a restoration from their scattered condition amongst the nations of the earth, and they will be regathered to their own promised land.

Then we will notice that it is God's intention to not only restore Israel to the promised land, but Israel will be cleansed and their sins will not be remembered any longer--this to be accomplished by the New Covenant to be made with the natural house of Israel. And finally, in view of the fact that Israel's sins will be remembered no more, the original declaration of God toward Israel will be revived and the endearing terms will come to life again.

In the careful examination and study of this list of Scriptures, I was impressed with certain facts and principles. One in particular is that when God states in prophecy that Israel is to be reinstated to his favor again, it is not the proper thought to include all the

individuals of Jewish nationality that have ever lived since the Israelites became a nation. The proper thought seems to be that in the beginning of the restoration, the nation of Israel will include only those living at the time. There may be several hundred thousand or a few million who are gathered back to the land of Palestine, and these are dealt with at the time the Ancient Worthies are resurrected, and this will literally and truly be the restoration of God's chosen people.

Also, not all those living at the time of the restoration will be true Jews at heart and they will be excluded. Only the true hearted will be accepted and restored, and all the others will be excluded. To illustrate: when the Israelites returned to Jerusalem after the 70 years of desolation without an inhabitant, only a small number (around 50,000, was the number) returned of all the hundreds of thousands that were taken captive to Babylon and scattered to other countries. Yet, this was the return of Israel to Palestine--those who did not return but allowed themselves to be assimilated by the foreign nations, no longer counted as Israel.

In fact, when we study the Scriptures carefully, that have to do with the return of the Israelites to their promised land in our day, the thought is repeated a number of times that it will be only a "REMNANT." When we consider the many millions of Israelites that have ever lived and that have gone down into the death state, generation after generation, it is clear that the Jews living at the time the restoration begins, will be only a REMNANT, or a small number of the Israelites that have ever lived upon the earth.

Apropos to this is the fact that the ones who will look upon Jesus and mourn for him as their only son, when they come to recognize him as indeed the true Messiah, will not be the same individuals that literally looked upon Jesus when he was upon the cross and who literally witnessed the piercing of Jesus' side by the spear of a Roman soldier. No, the ones who will recognize Jesus as their Messiah and who will mourn for him, will be the ones living at the time the Ancient Worthies are resurrected, and they will fulfill the prophecy. As successive generations of Israelites are returned in the resurrection, they too, will recognize Jesus as the Messiah, and mourn for him as their only son. With these few remarks to preface our study, let us proceed with our examination of the list of Scriptures which show God's intentions toward natural Israel.

We begin now with the promise made to Abraham--Gen. 12:1-3: "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; AND IN THEE SHALL ALL FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED."

But this was not all--not only through Abraham would all the families of the earth be blessed, but God promised to Abraham that the land which he saw would be given to him and his seed as a possession forever. Gen. 13:14-17: "And the Lord said unto Abram, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." Even the boundary of the land is stated to Abraham so there would be no question in Abraham's mind where the land lay--Gen. 15:18: "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates." And if one looks at a map of this territory, it is quite large, several times the size of modern Palestine.

When Abraham was 99 years old, God made a covenant with him, the covenant of circumcision--Gen. 17:7: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And in the 19th verse God said, "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."

And when Abraham had performed the greatest feat of faith and faithfulness in being willing to offer his son Isaac in sacrifice, God said (Gen. 22: 16-18): "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies: AND IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

In a previous Scripture it was said that through Abraham all families of the earth would be blessed; and in this Scripture it was said that through Abraham's SEED all nations of the earth would be blessed. In a later time when there was a famine in the land and Isaac was about to leave and go to the land of Egypt, God said to him (Gen. 26:2-5): "Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." So the promise that was given to Abraham was extended to his son Isaac.

We remember the story of Jacob and Esau--how Jacob had respect for God's promises and purchased the birthright from Esau, the natural heir. We remember too, how Isaac did not want his son Jacob to marry any daughter of the Canaanites, but sent him away to Padanaram to take a wife from one of the daughters of Laban, his mother's brother.

Isaac pronounced a blessing upon Jacob--Gen. 28:3-5: "And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; **AND GIVE THEE THE BLESSING OF ABRAHAM, TO THEE, AND TO THY SEED WITH THEE** that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave to Abraham. And Isaac sent away Jacob."

While Jacob was on his way he had a marvelous dream--Gen. 28:12-14: ". . . behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south and **IN THEE AND IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED.**" So now the promise was made sure to Jacob and his seed--through them all the families of the earth were to be blessed.

Jacob was deeply impressed and "awakened out of his sleep, and said, surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not, And he was afraid and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first." (Gen. 28: 16-22) And Jacob made a vow to the Lord that he would give a tenth of his possessions to God.

A number of years later we find another important incident in the life of Jacob. It was when he was on his way back to his homeland with his wives and his family and all his possessions. One night Jacob wrestled with an angel who appeared in the form of a man--Jacob wanted a blessing from God, and the angel said to Jacob, "What is thy name? And he said Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." (Gen. 32:27, 28) And in the 35th chapter of Genesis, verses 10 to 12 we find that same thought expressed to Jacob--"And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; and the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land."

We skip over a number of years to the time when Jacob left his dwelling place and came into the land of Egypt and was reunited to his son Joseph. On his way to Egypt "God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And he said, I am God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation; I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes." (Gen. 46:2-4.)

When Jacob blessed his twelve sons he uttered a prophecy of great importance to the people of Israel, and for our instruction: "THE SCEPTRE SHALL NOT DEPART FROM JUDAH, NOR A LAWGIVER FROM BETWEEN HIS FEET, UNTILL SHILOH COME AND UNTO HIM SHALL THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE BE." (Gen. 49:10.) So it was no wonder that those who had faith in God's promises clung to the tribe of Judah--for out of Judah would come Shiloh, and to him would be the gathering of the people.

When Joseph was about to die, he said unto his brethren, "God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." (Gen. 50:24, 25.) And true to Joseph's belief, we read in Exodus 2:24, 25, "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them."

When God was giving directions to Moses, we find Him using an expression concerning the Israelites that is extremely significant, showing what his attitude was toward the Israelites--"And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel (i.e. the Israelites) IS MY SON, EVEN MY FIRSTBORN." (Exodus 4:22.) Now in those times the firstborn occupied a very favored position--and God called the Israelites "his son and firstborn."

And when God was speaking to Moses at the burning bush he said, "Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: AND I WILL TAKE YOU TO ME FOR A PEOPLE, AND I WILL BE TO YOU A GOD." (Exodus 6:3-8.)

And when God was about to consummate the Law Covenant with Israel he instructed Moses to speak these words to the Israelites: "Ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation." Exodus 19:4-6.

And when the Lord gave the Israelites careful instructions as to their conduct in their promised land he said: "I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD, WHICH HAVE SEPARATED YOU FROM OTHER PEOPLE." (Lev. 20:24.) And again when the Lord spoke unto Israel, he said: "For unto me the children of Israel are servants; THEY ARE MY SERVANTS, WHOM I BROUGHT FORTH OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT: I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD." (Lev. 25:55.)

The 7th chapter of Deut. (verses 6 to 14) is fairly throbbing with God's love toward his chosen people--"FOR THOU ART AN HOLY PEOPLE UNTO THE LORD THY GOD: THE LORD THY GOD HATH CHOSEN THEE TO BE A SPECIAL PEOPLE UNTO HIMSELF, ABOVE ALL PEOPLE THAT ARE UPON THE FACE OF THE EARTH. THE LORD DID NOT SET HIS LOVE UPON YOU, NOR CHOOSE YOU, BECAUSE YE WERE MORE IN NUMBERS THAN ANY PEOPLE: FOR YE WERE THE FEWEST OF ALL PEOPLE: BUT BECAUSE THE LORD LOVED YOU, AND BECAUSE HE WOULD KEEP THE OATH WHICH HE HAD SWORN UNTO YOUR FATHERS, HATH THE LORD BROUGHT YOU OUT WITH A MIGHTY HAND, AND REDEEMED YOU OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDMEN, FROM THE HAND OF PHARAOH KING OF EGYPT. KNOW THEREFORE THAT THE LORD THY GOD, HE IS GOD, THE FAITHFUL GOD, WHICH KEEPETH COVENANT AND MERCY WITH THEM THAT LOVE HIM AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, TO A THOUSAND GENERATIONS: . . AND HE WILL LOVE THEE, AND BLESS THEE, AND MULTIPLY THEE: . . THOU STALL BE BLESSED ABOVE ALL PEOPLE: . ."

And in the 14th chapter we find more of the same--"YE ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE LORD YOUR GOD: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead: FOR THOU ART AN HOLY PEOPLE UNTO THE LORD THY GOD, AND THE LORD HATH CHOSEN THEE TO BE A PECULIAR PEOPLE UNTO HIMSELF, ABOVE ALL THE NATIONS THAT ARE UPON THE EARTH." (Deut. 14:1, 2.) And more in the 15th chapter, verse 6, "FOR THE LORD THY GOD BLESSETH THEE, AS HE PROMISED THEE: AND THOU SHALT LEND UNTO MANY NATIONS, BUT THOU SHALT NOT BORROW: AND THOU SHALT REIGN OVER MANY NATIONS, BUT THEY SHALL NOT REIGN OVER THEE."

In Deut 26:18 and 19 we find these words: "AND THE LORD HATH AVOUCHED THEE THIS DAY TO BE HIS PECULIAR PEOPLE, AND HE HATH PROMISED THEE, AND THAT THOU SHOULDEST KEEP ALL HIS COMMANDMENTS: AND TO MAKE THEE HIGH ABOVE ALL NATIONS WHICH HE HATH MADE, IN PRAISE, AND IN NAME, AND IN HONOUR: AND THAT THOU MAYEST BE AN HOLY PEOPLE UNTO THE LORD THY GOD, AS HE HATH SPOKEN." And in the 27th chapter, verse 9 we read: "AND MOSES, AND THE PRIESTS THE LEVITES,

SPAKE UNTO ALL ISRAEL, SAYING, TAKE HEED, AND HEARKEN, O ISRAEL: THIS DAY THOU ART BECOME THE PEOPLE OF THE LORD THY GOD."

It seems to us that it is extremely important to take note of God's attitude toward the Israelites if they are faithful to him, for God is not changeable; and if it works out that Israel is finally cleansed of her sins, and is forgiven, and has a NEW heart to be faithful to God, then all that God has said about his love for Israel will still be true, and Israel will indeed be God's special people over all other people on earth.

For example we take special notice of what God said about Israel in Deut. 28:1, 9, 10, 13: "AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS, IF THOU SHALT HEARKEN DILIGENTLY UNTO THE VOICE OF THE LORD THY GOD, TO OBSERVE AND TO DO ALL HIS COMMANDMENTS WHICH I COMMAND THEE THIS DAY, THAT THE LORD THY GOD WILL SET THEE ON HIGH ABOVE ALL NATIONS OF THE EARTH. THE LORD SHALL ESTABLISH THEE AN HOLY PEOPLE UNTO HIMSELF AS HE HATH SWORN UNTO THEE, IF THOU SHALT KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD THY GOD, AND WALK IN HIS WAYS. AND ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE EARTH SHALL SEE THOU ART CALLED BY THE NAME OF THE LORD: AND THEY SHALL BE AFRAID OF THEE. AND THE LORD SHALL MAKE THEE THE HEAD, AND NOT THE TAIL: AND THOU SHALT BE ABOVE ONLY, AND THOU SHALT NOT BE BENEATH: IF THAT THOU HEARKEN UNTO THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD THY GOD, WHICH I COMMAND THEE THIS DAY TO OBSERVE AND TO DO THEM."

More of God's love for natural Israel is expressed in Deut. 30:1-5: "AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS, WHEN ALL THESE THINGS ARE COME UPON THEE, THE BLESSING AND THE CURSE WHICH I HAVE SET BEFORE THEE, AND THOU SHALT CALL THEM TO MIND AMONG ALL THE NATIONS WHITHER THE LORD THY GOD HATH DRIVEN THEE. AND SHALT RETURN UNTO THE LORD THY GOD, AND SHALT OBEY HIS VOICE ACCORDING TO ALL THAT I COMMAND THEE THIS DAY, THOU AND THY CHILDREN, WITH ALL THINE HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL: THAT THEN THE LORD THY GOD WILL TURN THY CAPTIVITY, AND HAVE COMPASSION UPON THEE, AND WILL RETURN AND GATHER THEE FROM ALL THE NATIONS, WHITHER THE LORD THY GOD HATH SCATTERED THEE. IF ANY OF THINE BE DRIVEN OUT UNTO THE UTMOST PARTS OF HEAVEN, FROM THENCE WILL THE LORD THY GOD GATHER THEE, AND FROM THENCE WILL HE FETCH THEE: AND THE LORD THY GOD WILL BRING THEE INTO THE LAND WHICH THY FATHERS POSSESSED, AND THOU SHALT POSSESS IT: AND HE WILL DO THEE GOOD, AND MULTIPLY THEE ABOVE THY FATHERS." Precious are the words of 1 Sam. 12:22 to natural Israel: "FOR THE LORD WILL NOT FORSAKE HIS

PEOPLE FOR HIS GREAT NAME'S SAKE: BECAUSE IT HATH PLEASED THE LORD TO MAKE YOU HIS PEOPLE."

Now if this was the way God felt toward Israel in the early days, and, if Israel is to be regathered, and cleansed and given a new heart, then he will still feel the same love toward his chosen people. And as it is stated in 2 Chron. 7:14: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." And we know from prophecy that in the very last days, Israel will humble themselves and will turn from their wicked ways and God will forgive them and will remember their sins no more. Nehemiah 1: 8 and 9 expresses the matter in these words: "Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandest thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: but if ye turn unto me, and keep my -commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there."

Now we note the thrilling prophecy of Isaiah 2:1-4: "The word that Isaiah the son of Amos saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days" (we note this carefully--"THE LAST DAYS") "that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths--for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

In Isa. 9:6, 7 we read a prophecy concerning Jesus and that he will sit upon the throne of David- "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Then in Isaiah, 11th chapter, verses 1 to 16 we find another prophecy concerning Jesus and the character of his reign of righteousness. He is spoken of as "a rod out of the stem of Jesse," and "the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him." In "righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." At that time there will no longer be any enmity between animals, and "a little child shall lead them." In this mountain

(kingdom), nothing shall hurt or destroy, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. This glorious root of Jesse shall stand for an ensign of the people and to it shall the Gentiles seek; "and his rest shall be glorious." And in this prophecy it is said that the Lord "shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people."

What a glorious picture of the restored earth and restored Israel is given us in Isa. 60:1-22. This is the way the prophecy starts out: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee."

Then later in the prophecy we read: "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows?" (I am wondering if this could refer to people going to Israel by jet plane travel, to be instructed in the law of the Lord.) "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee." Then on farther in the prophecy we read: "Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." "The sons also 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. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shall suck the breasts of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders: but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."

Turning to the book of Jeremiah we find many more prophecies concerning the gathering of Israel and their restoration to God's favor. Jer. 3:17, 18 is a good example: "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem, neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers." Jer. 16:14 and 15 is along much the same line: "Therefore behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them; and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers." The same glorious prophecy is expressed again in Jer. 23:5-8: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land."

We find an interesting prophecy in Jer. 30:11, "For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."

One of the most striking of the prophecies found in the book of Jeremiah is in the 31st chapter, verses 27 to 40. Because it is clear and simple it is thrilling to read: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel, and the house of Judah, with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down; and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the Lord. In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge, but every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord; but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know

the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Now let us take special notice of this part of the prophecy: "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is his name: if those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord, If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth be searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Lord."

A similar prophecy is found in Jer. 32:37-44, and in the 46th chapter, verses 27 and 28-- "But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make him afraid. Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord; for I am with thee: for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished."

The book of Ezekiel is fairly loaded with prophecies concerning the regathering of Israel and their restoration to God's special favor. Ezek. 11:16-20 gives us a wonderful picture of Israel's future. "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."

In the 16th chapter of Ezekiel we are told how the Lord took hold of the nation of Israel and cared for it and blessed it with special favors. Notwithstanding all this favor from God, Israel was unfaithful to her benefactor and polluted herself with surrounding heathen nations who knew not God and were wicked. Then the prophecy ends up with these words: "Nevertheless, I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee 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, but not by thy covenant. And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God."

In the 37th chapter of Ezekiel is the famous prophecy having to do with the valley of dry bones. God said that he is going to open the graves of the Israelites and bring them back, and he is going to put his spirit upon them and they will be placed in their own land.

God's promise is that he will take the children of Israel from among the heathen and gather them to their promised land, and they will be cleansed and Jehovah will be their God. And they will walk in God's judgments and observe his statutes.

The prophecy ends with these thrilling words: "And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, for ever; and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them, it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. **AND THE HEATHEN SHALL KNOW THAT I THE LORD DO SANCTIFY ISRAEL, WHEN MY SANCTUARY SHALL BE IN THE MIDST OF THEM FOR EVERMORE.**" We take particular notice that the heathen shall know all about this for they will actually see Israel regathered to their promised land and restored to their original favor with God.

Another thrilling prophecy is found in Amos 9:11-15 which reads in part as follows: "And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God."

What joyous thoughts are found in Micah's prophecy, chapter 4, verses 1 to 8: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." And the prophecy goes on to say that "Strong nations afar off shall be rebuked" and they will no longer manufacture war materials or learn war, but they will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. And every man "shall sit under his own vine and his own fig tree, and none shall make the afraid for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it."

We revel in the prophecy of Zech. 3:3, 22, 23: "Thus saith the Lord, I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called, a City of Truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain. . . Yes, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you."

It is clearly evident that when Jesus declared to Israel that their house was left unto them desolate that this was not intended to be a permanent thing. In fact the double upon Israel plainly shows that there was a time of favor upon Israel and then Israel had a like period of time of disfavor, and then God's favor would begin to return. There could be no purpose in having a double of favor and then disfavor, if it were not meant that at the end of the second double, the favor of the Lord would return to Israel. If God's favor were not to return to Israel, then there could be no such thing as a double--the second double meant that favor would be withheld from Israel until a set time, and then when that set time arrived the disfavor would end and Israel would be restored to favor again. THIS IS JUST PLAIN LOGIC.

In closing this study I think it would be instructive to consider the 11th chapter of Romans. We start out now with the 1st verse: "I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid, For I am also an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." Paul knew that he was being dealt with in a special way, and he knew too that he was a natural Israelite, so it was apparent to him that God had not cast off his natural people.

Then Paul continued: "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." Then he refers to Elias' experience--how Elijah was downcast and thought that everyone of his kinsmen were rejected of God; and God's reply to him was that there were 7,000 men who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Then Paul says that there was a similar situation in his day--there was a remnant according to the election of grace--and this remnant was not acceptable to God because of their works, but because God had made provision through the redemption which was in Christ Jesus to make this remnant acceptable. Then Paul says, "What then: Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." The natural Israelites were seeking for and expecting to be in line for the very best that God had to offer in His Divine Plan, and they thought this because of God's past favors to the nation and because they were the natural children of Abraham. But their works were imperfect, their hearts were not in tune with God's law and spirit, and they were not humble. Consequently the nation itself was judged unworthy and only a small number were acceptable to God--"a remnant according to the election of grace."

Paul then quoted from Isaiah: "God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear; unto this day." And David said "Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompense unto them: let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back away."

We quote now from the 11th and 12th verses: "I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall God forbid but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for

to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness?" The Weymouth translation is tremendously interesting: "I ask next, Have they stumbled irretrievably? God forbid! But by their lapse salvation has come to the Gentiles in order to arouse their jealousy; and if their lapse is the enrichment of the world, and their defeat the enrichment of the Gentiles, what an enrichment will follow their reinstatement!" Moffatt's translation also illuminates the subject: "Now I ask, have they stumbled to their ruin? Never! The truth is, that by their lapse salvation has passed to the Gentiles, so as to make them jealous. Well, if their lapse has enriched the world, if their defection is the gain of the Gentiles, what will it mean when they all come in?" The Diaglott uses a different word than jealousy: "to excite them to emulation."

The thought of these two verses is that because of the stumbling of natural Israel, special favor has come to the Gentiles--even redemption and the high calling, the same special favor that was extended to the remnant of natural Israel. And this would have the effect of exciting some in Israel to cut loose from the fallen nation and have a part in the blessing of God's grace of redemption and the high calling. Then Paul says, as worded in the Weymouth: "and if their lapse is the enrichment of the world, and their defeat the enrichment of the Gentiles, what an enrichment will follow their reinstatement?" And in the 15th verse Paul reveals what an enrichment will follow when Israel is reinstated--"LIFE FROM THE DEAD." Yes, there will be a resurrection for all mankind, including Israel.

In the 17th verse Paul says, "For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump (or mass) is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches." The root is the Abrahamic promise--"in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The first fruits of this promise is the church, but there is to be an after fruit--all mankind will be blessed.

In the 17th to 24th verses Paul warns the Gentile branches not to feel superior to the natural branches that were broken off--"because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee."

In the 25th verse Paul gives us an important key to understanding natural Israel's status: "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." Yes, Israel is partly blind, but when the full number from the Gentiles has been chosen to make up the church, then God's favor will return to Israel and they shall have their blindness done away--this will be the same time when God will have all men to be saved--to come to a knowledge of the truth.

We note Paul's continuation of thought, beginning with the 26th verse: "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

What election is referred to here? Not the election of the high calling, for as Paul says, "as touching the election, THEY are beloved for the fathers' sakes." Who are "they"? "They" are NATURAL Israel--and we remember all the Scriptures we quoted from the old Testament--how Israel was his chosen people, his "elect".

In closing let us call to mind a few expressions that we quoted in the earlier part of our study: "Israel is my son, even my firstborn"; "I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God"; "ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people"; "I have separated you from other people"; "you are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt"; "thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God"; "the Lord will set thee on high above all the nations of earth"; "all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord"; "happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord."

And the prophecies are plain regarding the regathering of Israel to their promised land and how all nations will see this and come to Israel for instruction in the law of God. As expressed in Mal. 3:12: "And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts."

How thrilling are the final words of Paul in this chapter, verses 30 to 36: "For as ye (ye Gentiles) in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief, even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen." (Rom. 11:30 to 36.)

I would like to call your attention to a splendid article on the subject entitled NATURAL ISRAEL NOT HEIRS TO SPIRITUAL PROMISES on reprint page 5836.

(The foregoing study and discourse was given to the Bellingham Home Ecclesia, Jan. 21, 1968.)

To be successful in your Christian life BE THOROUGH.

To overcome childishness and levity, remember the dignity, the nobility and stateliness of the Truth and the Christian religion.

In humility, one should realize that he is no better than any of the rest of the brethren, and should not expect SPECIAL favors or release from trials, any more than the rest of the brethren.