

## ***Session 12: End-Time Judgment on Israel's Enemies (Joel 3:1-8)***

<sup>1</sup> “For behold, in those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land. <sup>3</sup> They have cast lots for My people, have given a boy as payment for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink. <sup>4</sup> Indeed, what have you to do with Me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Philistia? Will you retaliate against Me? But if you retaliate against Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your retaliation upon your own head; <sup>5</sup> because you have taken My silver and My gold, and have carried into your temples My prized possessions. <sup>6</sup> Also the people of Judah and the people of Jerusalem you have sold to the Greeks, that you may remove them far from their borders. <sup>7</sup> Behold, I will raise them out of the place to which you have sold them, and will return your retaliation upon your own head. <sup>8</sup> I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the people of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off; for the LORD has spoken.” (Joel 3:1-8)

### **I. THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS**

- A. Jesus is going to return to the earth. The events that precede and follow His return will constitute the greatest drama that will unfold before the eyes of all mankind, especially Israel. It will be a drama unsurpassed by any movie that has ever been produced or any story of heroism that was ever told. This great story has been planned by God from eternity past.
- B. Before Jesus returns, hostile anti-Semitic nations will once again take the Jewish people captive, even scattering some of them across the nations. There will be another massive deportation of Jewish captives before the Lord returns. Zechariah prophesied that half the city of Jerusalem will be taken into captivity. How staggering! About 600,000 Jews currently live in Jerusalem. Half the city of Jerusalem being deported could be as many as 300,000 Jewish people!
- <sup>2</sup> *For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. (Zech. 14:2)*
- C. Jesus prophesied that Israel would fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. This prophecy was partially fulfilled in 70 AD. In no sense did the Jews go into all nations as captives as Jesus prophesied. In other words, the complete fulfillment of this prophecy will occur in the generation in which Jesus returns as the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.
- <sup>24</sup> *They [Israel] will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. (Lk. 21:24)*
- D. After the rapture, Jesus will march through these nations killing His enemies and liberating Jewish prisoners in death camps and healing the infirm (blind, lame, etc., Isa. 35:5-6; 61:1; 42:6-7, 16; Mic. 4:6). Jesus will function as the “greater Moses.”
- E. Jesus the great Deliverer will show Himself strong on their behalf.

- F. When Jesus marches up through Edom (Jordan) as declared in Isaiah 63:1-6. He will gather Israel as He opens prison doors and liberates Jews in prison camps (Ps. 102:20; Isa. 27:12-13; 40:11; 42:7, 16, 22; 49:9-12, 21, 24-26; 61:1; Jer 30:3, 8, 10, 17; 31:16, 23; Ezek. 39:23-29; Joel 3:1-2; Amos 9:14; Mic 2:12-13; 4:6-7; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 9:11-12; 10:10; 13:8; 14:2; Mt. 25:43; Lk. 21:24).
- G. Some of Israel will go into captivity in the end times: Ps. 102:20; Isa. 27:13; 42:7, 22; 49:9, 21, 24-26; 61:1; Jer. 30:3, 8, 10, 17; 31:16, 23; Ezek. 39:23-29; Joel 3:1-2; Amos 9:14; Mic. 4:6; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 9:11-12; 13:8; 14:2; Mt. 25:43; Lk. 21:24. Jesus will assemble the remnant and captives of Israel, especially from Egypt and Assyria (parts of Iraq, Syria, and Jordan): Isa. 11:11-12, 16; 27:13; Hos. 11:11; Mic. 5:6; 7:12; Zech. 10:10-11. Israel will suffer affliction and desolation (Isa. 6:11-12; 30:26; 35:10; 58:12; 60:14-15, 18; 61:4; 62:4; 49:17-26; Jer. 30:3-8; 31:23; Ezek. 36:33-38; Mic. 2:12-13; 4:6; Zeph. 3:19-20); Jesus will gather Israel: Isa. 27:12; 40:11; 42:16; 49:9-12; Mic. 2:12-13; 4:6-7; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 10:10. Israel will have captives: Isa. 14:1-3; 11:14; 19:23; 45:14; 60:10, 12, 14; 61:5; Joel 3:8.

## II. WHY DO WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THIS?

- A. First, Jews being in prison camps is a prominent feature in end-time passages in the OT prophets. It reveals the nature of Satan's rage against Israel and the measure that God will use to purify Israel and the Church. God requires the Church to stand with Israel at this time as people like Corrie ten Boom and Bonhoeffer did in the 1940s with Hitler killing Jewish people.
- B. Second, it gives us insight into God's heart to restore any, who like Israel are under His severe discipline. As Israel repents, God will restore double to them (Isa. 40:1-2; 61:7). This is how God will relate to any who turn to Him. We see this illustrated in God's relationship with Israel. Israel forsook God, but God did not forsake Israel. He pursued her with His judgments to wake her up to His grace. God, who does this for rebellious Israel will do it for any others who call on Him.
- C. Third, many end-time passages in the Old Testament cannot be understood without seeing this significant part of God's plan. Thus, it is essential to understand this part of the end-time drama.

## III. FIVE DIFFERENT RESPONSES OF JEWISH PEOPLE IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL

- A. Many Jewish people will be deported out of the land of Israel as captives. Some will flee, others will stay in Jerusalem; and, of those who stay, some will be supernaturally protected and some will join the Antichrist. Still others will be raised up by God as missionaries, "sent ones" to come and go to the nations. There will be different responses to God in Israel during this time period.
- B. **Apostate Israel:** some will stay in the land and worship the Antichrist, joining his regime, thus, becoming reprobate. They will probably not be deported from the land.

- C. **Apostolic Israel:** some will remain in the land of Israel being protected by God (Joel 2:32; 3:16; Zech. 12:10; Isa. 4:3; Obad. 17). God will call some Jewish believers specifically to live in Israel throughout the Great Tribulation. Some will come and go, doing God's will with an apostolic anointing in the midst of great danger as token of the grace described in Isaiah 66:19.
- D. **Israel in flight:** some will leave the land of Israel under the Spirit's direction. Jesus taught, "When you see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place then let those who are in Jerusalem flee to the mountains" (Mt. 24:15, 16). In other words, "When they see the Antichrist desecrating the temple in Jerusalem and demanding that the whole earth worship him, then flee!"
- E. **Israel in prison:** Some will be taken from the land as prisoners (Zech. 14:2; Isa. 42:7, 22; 49:9, 24-25; Ps. 102:20)
- F. **Israel killed:** Some will die in Israel because of being persecuted for righteousness and others will die under the judgment of God. Zechariah prophesied that 2/3 of the nation will be killed (Zech. 13:8).

#### IV. JOEL PROPHESED THE RETURN OF JEWISH CAPTIVES TO ISRAEL

<sup>1</sup> **In those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem... (Joel 3:1)**

- A. Instead of winding the book down to a slow end, Joel continues to bring the message to a crescendo of revelation. The significance of his proclamation is building and broadening to a global dimension. Joel 3 is a continuation from Joel 2; there is no break in Joel's thought. The great outpouring of God's Spirit occurs in the same time period as when He brings back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem. Who are the captives and where have they been? These are the captives from Israel—citizens of Jerusalem and Judah that were scattered through the nations.
- B. There will be five things that will happen simultaneously in this dramatic time period as seen in Joel 2:28-3:2. First, there will be a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-29). Second, there will be supernatural deliverance of the Jews who call out to the Lord (Joel 2:32). Third, will be terrifying signs in the heavens (Joel 2:31). Fourth, is the liberation of Jews who were in prison camps (Joel 3:1). Fifth, is God's judgment on the anti-Semitic nations (Joel 3:2). These events will happen in the same time frame referred to as, "in those days" and "at that time" (Joel 3:1).
- C. Jesus will "bring back the captives" when He returns. This was not totally fulfilled in 1948, when Israel became a nation.
- D. Although some commentators interpret the captives of Joel 3:1 as the Jewish people imprisoned throughout history, the context is very specific, pointing to the time of the end-time outpouring of the Spirit. The glory that follows these captives will outweigh their suffering.

- E. Jesus said that the Lord anointed Him to preach good tidings to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to open the prison for those who are bound (Isa. 61:1). We often limit this to the spiritual deliverance that Jesus brought at His first coming. Jesus will open physical prison doors for the Jewish people at His second coming.

## V. GATHERING ALL NATIONS

*<sup>2</sup> I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land. (Joel 3:2)*

- A. The Lord will first gather all the nations together for judgment. He will bring them down into a specific geographic place—the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There is no place in Israel with this name. Therefore, some see it as symbolic of God's judgment. I believe that the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2, 12) is the Valley of Berachah. It is the place outside of Jerusalem that King Jehoshaphat gathered Israel to worship after they won a battle against Ammon and Moab (2 Chr. 20:26, 16).

*<sup>25</sup> When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found...an abundance of valuables...more than they could carry away...<sup>26</sup> On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berachah, for there they blessed the LORD... (2 Chr. 20:25-26)*

- B. Why is the Lord bringing judgment to the nations in Joel 3? One reason is because of their horrific treatment of Israel, His inheritance.

## VI. GOD'S JUDGMENT OF SOME NATIONS: THREE REASONS

*<sup>2</sup> I will also gather all nations...and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land.<sup>3</sup> They have cast lots for My people, have given a boy as payment for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink. (Joel 3:2-3)*

- A. The judgment of the nations is related in part to their ungodly treatment of the Jewish people. In Joel 3:2-3, Joel reveals three specific sins that the nations have committed throughout history. First, they have scattered God's heritage, Israel, among the nations. Second, they have divided up God's land. Third, they have enslaved, or cast lots, for God's people, the Israelites. However, in the generation in which the Lord returns, these sins will reach their greatest measure.
- B. *Scattering Israel* – the nations still seek to scatter the people of Israel from their land and they will succeed to some degree for a short time. This is a hard truth for those living in Israel to accept. Joel's main point here is not what sinful nations will do to Israel, but what God will do to the nations that do this to Israel.

- C. ***Dividing up the land*** – God charges the Gentile nations for dividing His land and using it in ways contrary to His purpose. He will bring them into judgment over this issue. This speaks of the way the nations have seized the land of Israel and divided geographic areas for their own agenda, making their own political domains and governmental divisions. This is what the Antichrist will do when he sets up part of his headquarters in Israel (Dan. 11:45). He will use the nation for his own purposes, in spite of this warning.
- D. ***Enslaving the Israelites*** – God's third controversy with the Gentile nations is that they have and will continue to cast lots for the people of Israel. In other words, they have enslaved His people (Joel 3:6). This will do this again in the end times. Joel specifies that they have given a Jewish boy as payment for a harlot, and sold a Jewish girl for wine, that they may drink (Joel 3:3). In other words, they so devalued young Jewish boys that they used him as payment for a prostitute. They have sold a young girl in exchange for one glass of wine, esteeming her life as of less worth. God's dispute with these nations is that they have so despised the lives of the Jewish people, counting them as worthless. They sold them in large numbers at low prices.
- E. The three transgressions—scattering the Jews among the nations, dividing up their land, and selling their people into slavery—have happened at various times throughout history. These sins will see their ultimate and most intense expression in the end times.
- F. The greatest expression of the mistreatment of the Jews was in the Nazi camps (1941–1945).
- G. Israel will face anti-Semitism that will be even more severe than what they encountered in Nazi Germany. It will be during the Tribulation, in a time that Jeremiah referred to as *Jacob's Trouble* (Dan. 12:1; Jer. 30:7). This will Israel's most difficult hour in history.

## VII. GOD'S CHALLENGE TO THE NATIONS

<sup>4</sup> *“Indeed, what have you to do with Me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Philistia? Will you retaliate against Me? but if you retaliate against Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your retaliation upon your own head; <sup>5</sup> because you have taken My silver and My gold, and have carried into your temples My prized possessions. <sup>6</sup> Also the people of Judah and the people of Jerusalem you have sold to the Greeks, that you may remove them far from their borders. <sup>7</sup> Behold, I will raise them out of the place to which you have sold them, and will return your retaliation upon your own head. <sup>8</sup> I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the people of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off; for the LORD has spoken.”* (Joel 3:4-8)

- A. Joel records a “dialogue” between God and the obstinate nations who resist Him by persecuting Israel. Though the exact words of the nations are not recorded, God's response to them reveals their position before Him. It is this arrogant posture that the Lord challenges when He says, “Indeed, what have you to do with Me?” (Joel 3:4). He is cross-examining them: “Do you think there is any agreement between us in what you are doing?” They are provoked by God's claim that He is going to judge them for their treatment of Israel; out of their mouths spurt offensive declarations to the effect of, “We are not worried about God! You will not prevail over us!”

- B. Addressing Tyre, Sidon, and all of the coasts of Philistia, God asks, “Will you retaliate against Me?” Historically, these nations have rebelled against God. In Joel’s day, this was partially fulfilled. Tyre and Sidon are modern-day Lebanon, just north of Israel; Philistia was an area in the southwest of Israel (modern-day Gaza). The name Palestinians comes from the Philistines.
1. Currently, Lebanon has great hostility towards Israel. The Palestinians are still doing what they did in the days of old.
  2. In Joel 3, the Lord speaks to Lebanon and the Palestinians of today, using their ancestral names. They will be at the center of this resistance against Israel in the end times.
- C. To these nations, the Lord essentially says, “Do you think that you will retaliate against Me? Do you think that you will resist My will and defeat Me because you are in alignment with the Antichrist’s worldwide government? Do you think that will change your standing before Me?”
1. God uses the word “*retaliate*” as though they were paying Him back for something He did wrong. Yet what they retaliate against is the covenant He made with Abraham to give the Jewish people the land.
  2. Enraged by His covenant, they challenge God as though they have a just case. They charge God with misbehavior.
- D. Through Ezekiel, the Lord tells us some of the reasons that the nations hate Israel. He says in essence, “You hate them because you want what is theirs, including their land.” Cutting through their political rhetoric, He exposes their motivations. The nations are angry because they want what God has given Israel.
- <sup>11</sup> “Therefore, as I live,” says the Lord GOD, “I will do according to your anger and according to the envy which you showed in your hatred against them; and I will make Myself known among them when I judge you.” (Ezek. 35:11)*
- E. God tells them that the reason they hate Israel is because of bitterness, anger, greed, and envy.
- F. The Lord promises to swiftly and speedily judge them. This swift judgment has yet to occur.
- <sup>4</sup> Indeed, what have you to do with Me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Philistia? Will you retaliate against Me? But if you retaliate against Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your retaliation upon your own head; (Joel 3:4)*
- G. The Lord continues with His promises of judgment upon these nations:
- <sup>7</sup> Behold, I will raise them out of the place to which you have sold them, and will return your retaliation upon your own head. (Joel 3:7)*

- H. This divine retaliation had a partial fulfillment in history, yet once again, it is not only a history lesson, but a declaration of what is to come. This sort of judgment has happened in history as a pattern of what will happen again in these nations in the end times.
- I. Joel's main point is to emphasize God's zeal to confront those who abuse Israel and to reward those who honor God's sovereignty by serving His purpose in Israel.

## VIII. GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

- A. God's sovereignty is the foundational premise behind the entire story of human history. God has the right to choose *what* He was to do. He wants Jesus to rule all the nations for 1,000 years during the Millennium (Rev. 20:4-6). God has the right to decide *who* He chooses to be first in authority. He chose the Jewish people. He has the right to choose *where*, and He chose the city of Jerusalem. God chooses *how* the great drama will unfold and come to completion. He chose to gather all the nations in a military conflict, referred to as the Armageddon Campaign.
- B. God chose Zion, the city of Jerusalem (Ps. 132:13-14; Jer. 3:17; Zech. 1:14). In man's unrenewed thinking, they do not like this. They want God to rule the earth from their nations.  
*<sup>17</sup> At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. (Jer. 3:17)*  
*<sup>13</sup> For the LORD has chosen Zion [Jerusalem]; He has desired it for His dwelling place: <sup>14</sup> "This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it. (Ps. 132:13-14)*  
*<sup>14</sup> I am zealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great zeal. (Zech. 1:14)*
- C. God chose Israel and has orchestrated all history to reveal the glory of His name (Ezek. 36:22).
- D. God's call on Israel is rooted in God glorifying His own name. The issue is not about Israel being God's favorite, but about the Father's sovereignty over the nations.
- E. The covenant God made with Israel displays His sovereignty to all the earth. God has based His holy covenants upon geographic areas and bloodlines. These covenants are important to Him. Once we have revelation of His sovereignty, then it is no longer an issue of which city or nation God has chosen, but simply that He has chosen it.

## IX. JESUS' ACTIVITY AT THE SECOND COMING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS

- A. There is significant information in the Old Testament prophecies concerning Jesus' second coming. There are two often overlooked aspects. First, Israel being desolate in prison camps. Second, Jesus leading Jewish captives in an Exodus-type journey back to Israel (Isa. 42:14-17).
- B. An end-time theme emphasized in the Old Testament is that of Jesus releasing Jewish prisoners

<sup>1</sup> *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me ... He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison... (Isa. 61:1)*

<sup>6</sup> *I, the LORD ... will give You as a covenant to the people ... <sup>7</sup> to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house. (Isa. 42:6-7)*

<sup>16</sup> *I will bring the blind by a way they did not know ... <sup>22</sup> But this is a people [Israel] robbed and plundered; all of them are snared in holes, and they are hidden in prison houses; they are for prey, and no one delivers; for plunder, and no one says, "Restore!" (Isa. 42:16, 22)*

<sup>9</sup> *That You [Jesus] may say to the prisoners, "Go forth," to those who are in darkness, "Show yourselves." (Isa. 49:9)*

C. Jesus will bring deliverance that reverses all Israel's oppression. Jesus will then restore Israel to the land with God's favor making her the nation that leads all other nations.

D. Israel is pictured as completely shattered in the end times.

<sup>7</sup> *I heard the man clothed in linen ... he held up his right hand ... and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time [ $3\frac{1}{2}$  years]; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished. (Dan. 12:7)*

E. Micah and Jeremiah declared that the Lord is responsible for afflicting Israel in the end times.

<sup>6</sup> *"In that day," says the LORD, "... I will gather the outcast and those whom I have afflicted"*

<sup>7</sup> *... the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on, even forever. (Mic. 4:6-7)*

<sup>3</sup> *I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back ... <sup>8</sup> the LORD who brought up and led ... the house of Israel from the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them. (Jer. 23:3-8)*

F. Jesus releases prisoners (Isa. 49:9, 19-21, 24-25), then takes the captives to Israel (Isa. 49:9-12). God gives Jesus as a covenant to the nations (Isa. 42:6) that results in restoring the earth from the curse of sin to its millennial glory. The desolate heritages of the earth will come under His leadership. Jesus will free prisoners at the time of His second coming.

<sup>8</sup> *Thus says the LORD: "... in the day of salvation ... I will preserve You and give You as a covenant to the people, to restore the earth, to cause them to inherit the desolate heritages; <sup>9</sup> that You may say to the prisoners, 'Go forth,' to those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves.' They shall feed along the roads, and their pastures shall be on all desolate heights. <sup>10</sup> They shall neither hunger nor thirst, neither heat nor sun shall strike them; for He who has mercy on them will lead them, even by the springs of water He will guide them." (Isa. 49:8-10)*

G. Jesus will take the captives on an Exodus-type journey back to Israel (Isa. 49:9-12). This is deliberately described in a way that is to be understood as a repeat of the Exodus. God guided Israel with the pillar of cloud and fire (Ex. 12:21) and led them to water (Ex. 17:6).

<sup>9</sup> They shall feed along the roads, and their pastures shall be on all desolate heights. <sup>10</sup> They shall neither hunger nor thirst, neither heat nor sun shall strike them; for He who has mercy on them will lead them, even by the springs of water He will guide them. <sup>11</sup> I will make each of My mountains a road, and My highways shall be elevated. (Isa. 49:9-11)

<sup>7</sup> The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water... (Isa. 35:7)

## X. GOD WILL RESTORE ISRAEL (ISA. 49:17-26)

A. God promises to restore Israel after she has been laid waste during the Great Tribulation.

<sup>17</sup> Your sons shall make haste [to return to Israel]; Your destroyers and those who laid you waste shall go away from you [be killed]. <sup>18</sup> Lift up your eyes, look around and see; all these gather together and come to you. (Isa. 49:17-18)

B. Jesus will gather Israel from the nations; causing her to be adorned with her children (Isa. 51:11, 16, 18-20; 52:1; 54:1-8; 66:7-14). Israel's children will be her glory (Isa. 61:10; Zech. 9:16).

C. God promises to restore Israel after her destruction during the Great Tribulation. God promises to reverse things so that Gentiles serve Israel. Isaiah described end-time Israel as the "land of destruction" that is wasted and made desolate as her children are lost (killed) while she becomes a wandering captive nation.

<sup>19</sup> "For your waste and desolate places, and the land of your destruction, will even now be too small for the inhabitants; and those who swallowed you up will be far away. <sup>20</sup> The children you will have, after you have lost the others, will say again in your ears, 'The place is too small for me; give me a place where I may dwell.' <sup>21</sup> Then you will say in your heart, 'Who has begotten these for me, since I have lost my children and am desolate, a captive, and wandering to and fro? And who has brought these up? There I was, left alone; but these, where were they?' (Isa. 49:19-21)

1. Wretched Israel thought she was finished without hope of recovery. Suddenly, because of Jesus' return, she will be utterly amazed as her children fill the land to overflowing. She is stunned over the turn of events. To "say in her ears" means to "say in her hearing."

2. She is pictured as thinking to herself about this indescribable reversal of fortunes. She is overwhelmed with joy as she asks, "Who is responsible for doing this" for Israel? God answers this question in the next verse (v. 22).

D. Jesus, at the second coming, will raise up a royal standard to call Israel's children from the nations to come to Israel. Jesus will raise His hand in power, causing Gentile kings to serve His purpose in Israel. Jesus will raise His royal standard that all nations will know that He has been crowned king. To raise His standard is to enforce what is implied by Him taking active leadership in the nations. Jesus will publish (make known) His decrees about Israel. Jesus will require that Israel's children be taken home from the nations.

***22 I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, and set up My standard for the peoples [Gentiles]; they [Israel's former oppressors] shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders; <sup>23</sup> kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers; they shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD, for they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me [who do not give up praying and expecting]. (Isa. 49:22-23)***

1. Jesus made an oath that He will set up a standard (banner) that the nations will recognize as a call to bring the Jewish survivors back to Israel (Isa. 11:12; Isa. 62:10). The leaders of the nations who attacked Israel will be killed and replaced by kings who will serve and honor her. This will include providing the means for her children to relocate to Israel.
  2. This oath includes Jesus personally leading captives to Israel from Egypt and Assyria. He will command Gentile kings to serve Him in this (Isa. 11:11-16; 49:22-23; 60:3-4, 9). He will also send Jews from Israel to lead Jewish survivors back to the land (Isa. 66:19-21).
  3. Jesus will mandate that the top leadership of the nations help in this cause. He will command Gentile kings to provide for Jewish survivors to get home to Israel (Isa. 11:11-16; 49:22-23; 60:3-4, 9). Gentile kings will personally bring some Jews to Israel.
  4. Kings and queens will extravagantly care for and nourish Israel's children who are in their nation. They shall "bow down," as they are conscious of guilt and thus "lick the dust" under Israel's feet. In other words, they will humble themselves before Israel as part of their humbling before God for personal and national restoration.
- E. In these decrees, Jesus' sovereign power will be on display as well as His covenant-keeping faithfulness and tenderness to Israel in this great sudden reversal that begins with winning the Battle of Jerusalem, then giving international decrees to reverse the way the Jews are treated in all the nations. Israel's restoration process will occur over many stages just as the global restoration process of other nations will. It will take years to complete the process.
- F. Nations will be responsible to obey Jesus in this issue of helping Jews return to Israel. This will be the top priority of all nations worldwide in the time immediately after the devastation of the Great Tribulation and Armageddon. The most natural thing would be to attend to national needs only. Think of the people of New Orleans after Katrina, how they were fully preoccupied with their recovery and survival. Yet, a Jewish king in Jerusalem will demand that they all participate in the recovery of the Jewish refugees.
- G. Isaiah describes the dramatic reversal of the attitude of the Gentile kings who have no option but to embrace God's purpose for Israel. Jesus' ultimatum produces meekness in the Gentile nations.

***11 Your gates shall be open continually ... that men may bring to you the wealth of the Gentiles, and their kings in procession. <sup>12</sup> For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall perish, and those nations shall be utterly ruined...*** (Isa. 60:11-12)

- H. Israel's condition just before Jesus' coming is as prey and captives of nations who are mighty and terrible and who contend with and oppress Israel (Isa. 49:24-26). Jesus will reverse this. Israel's children will come from all the nations in which they were held captive.

***<sup>24</sup> Shall the prey be taken from the mighty [Antichrist's system], or the captives of the righteous [awe-inspiring] be delivered? <sup>25</sup> Even the captives [of Israel] of the mighty [evil leaders] shall be taken away, and the prey [Israel] of the terrible [strong evil leaders] be delivered; for I will contend with him who contends with you, and I will save your children [orphaned]. <sup>26</sup> I will feed those who oppress you with their own flesh, and they shall be drunk with their blood ... All flesh [Gentiles] shall know that I, the LORD, am your Savior, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. (Isa. 49:24-26)***

1. God asks a rhetorical question (v. 24) and then makes a prophetic declaration (v. 25) that He will contend with those who contend with Israel.
2. Since slave labor is free labor, it is seen as a valuable resource to evil nations. The mighty leaders of evil nations will not easily give up their slave labor. However, what is impossible for man is possible with God (Mk. 10:27). How will these nations be motivated to give up their captives? It is by the second coming of Jesus.
3. Israel's children will come from all the nations in which they were held captive. This is a restatement of vv. 22-23. The word righteous (v. 24) is translated by some as "awe-inspiring" or "a captive of an awesome one." It is parallel to the next phrase translated "the terrible" (v. 25).

## **XI. JESUS WILL SET THE JEWISH CAPTIVES FREE IN EGYPT AND ASSYRIA**

- A. Jesus will assemble the captives of the remnant of Israel. The primary two nations in which this happens are Egypt and ancient Assyria (regions of modern-day Jordan, Syria, and Iraq were previously called the Transjordan; Isa. 11:11, 16; 27:13; Hos. 11:11; Mic. 7:12; Zech. 10:10-11)
- B. A "highway" or road will be built up specifically for the return of the Jewish captives (Isa. 19:23; 35:8; 49:11; 62:10). The captives of Israel are called the outcasts and the dispersed ones (Isa. 11:11-16; 40:10-11; Hos. 11:10-11; Zech. 10:10).

***<sup>11</sup> It shall come to pass in that day that the LORD shall set His hand again the second time [the first time for 2,500 years was in 1948] to recover the remnant of His people who are LEFT, from Assyria [Jordan, Syria, Iraq] and Egypt, from Pathros [island of Pathros near Nile Valley in Egypt] and Cush [Ethiopia], from Elam [Persia] and Shinar [southern Iraq], from Hamath [Syria] and the islands of the sea [Mediterranean]. <sup>12</sup> He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth ... <sup>15</sup> The LORD will utterly destroy the tongue of the Sea of Egypt [Red Sea]; with His mighty wind He will shake His fist over the River [Euphrates at Assyria], and strike it in the seven streams, and make men cross over dry-shod. <sup>16</sup>***

***There will be a highway for the remnant of His people who will be LEFT from Assyria, as it was for Israel in the day that he came up from the land of Egypt. (Isa. 11:11-16)***

- C. Jesus brings Jewish captives back from Egypt and gathers them from Assyria.

***<sup>10</sup> I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt, and gather them from Assyria. I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon, until no more room is found for them. <sup>11</sup> He shall pass through the sea with affliction [power against the sea], and strike the waves of the sea: all the depths of the River shall dry up [Rev. 16:12; Isa. 11:15]. Then the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart. (Zech. 10:10-11)***

- D. Jesus will thresh from the Euphrates River in Assyria to Egypt as He gathers, one by one, the Jewish outcasts (prisoners) in Egypt and Assyria who were about to perish. He will do this when the great trumpet is blown. He will then lead them to Jerusalem that they might worship Him. This will parallel the time when God told Pharaoh to let His people go so that they might worship Him (Ex. 4:23; 7:16; 8:1).

***<sup>12</sup> In that day that the LORD will thresh, from the channel of the River [Euphrates River in Assyria] to the Brook of Egypt; and you will be gathered one by one, O you children of Israel. <sup>13</sup> So it shall be in that day: the great trumpet will be blown; they will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, and they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem. (Isa. 27:12-13)***

- E. The captives of Israel will come back from Egypt and Assyria.

***<sup>10</sup> “They [Israel] shall walk after the LORD. He will roar like a lion. When He [Jesus] roars, then His sons shall come trembling from the west; <sup>11</sup> They shall come trembling like a bird from Egypt, like a dove from the land of Assyria. And I will let them dwell in their houses,” says the LORD. (Hos. 11:10-11)***

***<sup>12</sup> In that day they [Jewish exiles] shall come to you from Assyria and the fortified cities [literally the cities of Egypt], from the fortress to the River, from sea to sea ... <sup>13</sup> Yet the land shall be desolate because of those who dwell in it, and for the fruit of their deeds. <sup>14</sup> Shepherd Your people with Your staff ... as in days of old. <sup>15</sup> As in the days when you came out of Egypt, I will show them wonders. (Mic. 7:12-15)***

***<sup>6</sup> They shall waste with the sword the land of Assyria ... thus He shall deliver us from the Assyrian [Antichrist], when he comes into our land... (Mic. 5:6)***

- F. Jesus will use a strong hand (miracles) when He leads the captives to Jerusalem.

***<sup>10</sup> The Lord shall come with a strong hand ... <sup>11</sup> He will feed His flock ... He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young. (Isa. 40:10-11)***

- G. Jesus leads them out of the gate of the prison camps to Jerusalem. Jesus breaks open and then breaks out. This is the language of prison camps.
- H. Jesus will gather a large number of Jewish prisoners together as He marches them to Israel.  
*<sup>12</sup> I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together like sheep of the fold ... they shall make a loud noise because of so many people. <sup>13</sup> The One who breaks open [Jesus] will come up before them; they [Jewish captives] will break out [prison camps], pass through the gate, and go out by it; their King [Jesus] will pass before them, [even] with the LORD [Jesus] at their head. (Mic. 2:12-13)*
1. Jesus will gather a multitude of captive Jews like sheep in a pen. This promise of vv. 12-13 will be fulfilled in the context of Jesus' second coming (Mic. 4:1-8; 5:2-9; Ezek. 20:33-44; Zech. 9:9-10; Rev. 19:11-16). In this passage, Micah refers to Jesus in three ways, as the "One who breaks open," "their King," and "the LORD at their head." The Rabbinic tradition interprets all three titles as referring to their coming Messiah.
  2. First, Jesus is called "the One who breaks open" or "the Breaker," who breaks open the doors of the prison camps so the Jewish captives can pass through the gate of the city in which they were held captive.
  3. Second, Jesus is called their "King," who will pass before them to lead them to Israel.
  4. Third, Jesus is described as "the LORD," who keeps His covenant with them.
- I. This prophecy has not yet been fulfilled. However, some amillennialists see the passage as referring to the refugees who fled to Jerusalem because of the Assyrian invasion of Judah and Jerusalem's deliverance from King Sennacherib's siege (701 BC) or the restoration from Babylonian exile (538 BC) after the deportations of 597 and 586 BC. All attempts to explain this passage as being completely fulfilled in history are problematic.
- J. Micah declares the Lord is ultimately the One responsible for afflicting Israel at this time.  
*<sup>6</sup> "In that day," says the LORD, "I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast and those whom I have afflicted" <sup>7</sup> ... the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on, even forever. (Mic. 4:6-7)*
- <sup>22</sup> But this is a people [end-time Israel] robbed and plundered; all of them are snared in holes, and they are hidden in prison houses; They are for prey, and no one delivers ... <sup>24</sup> Who gave Jacob for plunder, and Israel to the robbers? Was it not the LORD, He against whom we have sinned? (Isa. 42:22-24)*
- <sup>21</sup> "I will set My glory among the nations; all the nations shall see My judgment which I have executed, and My hand which I have laid on them. <sup>22</sup> So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day forward. <sup>23</sup> The Gentiles shall know that Israel went*

into captivity for their iniquity; because they were unfaithful to Me, therefore I hid My face from them. I gave them into the hand of their enemies ...<sup>24</sup> According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I have dealt with them, and hidden My face from them.<sup>25</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Now I will bring back the captives of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name—<sup>26</sup> after they have borne their shame, and all their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, when they dwelt safely in their own land and no one made them afraid.<sup>27</sup> When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations,<sup>28</sup> then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their own land, and left none of them captive any longer.'" (Ezek. 39:21-28)

K. The Lord will give up Israel until the time when the nation as a whole returns to the Lord.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore He shall give them up, until the time that she [Israel] who is in labor has given birth; then the remnant of His brethren shall return to the children of Israel. 4 And He [Jesus] shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD His God ... for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth ...<sup>5</sup> When the Assyrian [Antichrist] comes into our land, and when he treads in our palaces, then we will raise against him ...<sup>6</sup> thus He shall deliver us from the Assyrian, when he [Antichrist] comes into our land and when he treads within our borders.<sup>7</sup> Then the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples [nations] ...<sup>8</sup> And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest. (Mic. 5:3-9)

L. The captives of Israel will return on horseback from the surrounding nations.

<sup>20</sup> "Then they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the LORD out of all nations, on horses and in chariots and in litters, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem," says the LORD, "as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD." (Isa. 66:20)

## XII. PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE FROM CAPTIVITY BY EZEKIEL

<sup>25</sup> "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Now I will bring back the captives of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name—<sup>26</sup> after they have borne their shame, and all their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, when they dwelt safely in their own land and no one made them afraid.<sup>27</sup> When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations,<sup>28</sup> then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their own land, and left none of them captive any longer.<sup>29</sup> And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,' says the Lord GOD." (Ezek. 39:25-29)

## XIII. PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE FROM CAPTIVITY BY ZEPHANIAH

<sup>17</sup> “Behold, at that time I will deal with all who afflict you; I will save the lame, and gather those who were driven out; I will appoint them for praise and fame in every land where they were put to shame.  
<sup>20</sup> At that time I will bring you back, even at the time I gather you; for I will give you fame and praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I return your captives before your eyes...” (Zeph. 3:17-20)

#### XIV. PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE FROM CAPTIVITY BY JEREMIAH

<sup>1</sup> “At the same time,” says the LORD, “I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people.” <sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD: “The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness—Israel, when I went to give him rest ... <sup>4</sup> Again I will build you, and you shall be rebuilt, O virgin of Israel ... <sup>8</sup> Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the ends of the earth, among them the blind and the lame ... a great throng shall return there. <sup>9</sup> They shall come with weeping, and with supplications I will lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters, in a straight way in which they shall not stumble; for I am a Father to Israel ... <sup>11</sup> For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of one stronger [Antichrist] than he...”<sup>15</sup> Thus says the LORD: “A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.” <sup>16</sup> Thus says the LORD: “Refrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears ... they shall come back from the land of the enemy. <sup>17</sup> There is hope in your future, says the LORD, that your children shall come back to their own border. <sup>20</sup> Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For though I spoke against him, I earnestly remember him still; therefore My heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, says the LORD. <sup>21</sup> Set up signposts, make landmarks; set your heart toward the highway, the way in which you went. Turn back, O virgin of Israel, Turn back to these your cities. <sup>23</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: They shall again use this speech in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I bring back their captivity: ‘The LORD bless you, O home of justice, and mountain of holiness!’” (Jer. 31:1-23)

<sup>3</sup> “‘For behold, the days are coming,’ says the LORD, ‘that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah,’ says the LORD. ‘And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.’”<sup>4</sup> Now these are the words that the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah. <sup>5</sup> “‘For thus says the LORD: ‘We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. <sup>6</sup> Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale? <sup>7</sup> Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob’s trouble, But he shall be saved out of it. <sup>8</sup> ‘For it shall come to pass in that day,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘That I will break his yoke from your neck, and will burst your bonds; foreigners shall no more enslave them. <sup>9</sup> But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.’” (Jer. 30:3-9)

#### XV. PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE FROM CAPTIVITY BY AMOS

<sup>8</sup> ***“Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom [Antichrist kingdom in league with apostate Israel], and I will destroy it from the face of the earth; yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,” says the LORD.*** <sup>9</sup> ***“For surely I will command, and will sift the house of Israel among all nations, as grain is sifted in a sieve; yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground.*** <sup>10</sup> ***All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword, who say, ‘The calamity shall not overtake nor confront us.’*** <sup>11</sup> ***On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down ...*** <sup>13</sup> ***Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed ...*** <sup>14</sup> ***I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them.*** <sup>15</sup> ***I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them,” says the LORD your God. (Amos 9:8-15)***

- A. The sinful Antichrist kingdom will be based in Jerusalem. God will destroy it from the earth. Yet He will save a remnant of Israel.
- B. God will sift the nation of Israel when the tabernacle of David is in place. The tabernacle of David is the theocratic government of Jesus in the millennial kingdom that has a spirit of worship in its foundation.
- C. This is when God will bring back the captives of Israel from the waste cities.