

## Introduction to Lesson 5

### The Return of Israel

No study of Biblical prophecy would be complete without a discussion of the remarkable regathering of Israel back to her land in these last days. The Bible is specific that there will be a worldwide re-gathering of Israel into her land in the end-times. In fact, the Bible is clear that this will take place in two parts. First there will be a gathering in unbelief, then will come a gathering in belief. This can be seen in the following Scriptures:<sup>1</sup>

**First** – In unbelief in preparation for judgment, as since 1948:

**Ezek 20:33** As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a **mighty hand**, and with a **stretched out arm**, and **with fury poured out**, will I rule over you:

**34** And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a **mighty hand**, and with a **stretched out arm**, and **with fury poured out**.

**35** And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and **there will I plead with you** face to face.

**36** Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God.

**37** And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant:

**38** And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

**Ezek 22:17** And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

**18** Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver.

**19** Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.

**20** As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you.

**21** Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof.

**22** As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you.

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<sup>1</sup> See: Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, A Study of the Sequence of Prophetic Events, Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 2003, 2004, pp. 97-104.

This gathering in unbelief is to be before the Tribulation (The Day of the Lord; The Time of Jacob's Trouble). This is the situation today.

**Zeph 2:1** Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired;  
**2** Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, **before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you.**

God brings them to Jerusalem for judgment to refine them and bring them to national repentance. When they are purified they will return to the Lord. (See: Isa 1:22, 25; 48:10; Jer 6:27-30, 9:7; Zec 13:9; Mal 3:2-3).

During the severe persecution by Satan and his Antichrist (Rev 12), two-thirds of the Jewish population will die. God will refine and preserve the remaining one-third.

**Zech 13:8** And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, **two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.**  
**9** And **I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.**

The initial regathering takes place before their repentance and refining (Eze 36:22-24). The Gog and Magog war of Ezekiel 38 and 39 is during the time that Israel is gathered into their land in unbelief.<sup>2</sup>

The Tribulation particularly relates to God's dealing with Israel as seen by Jeremiah:<sup>3</sup>

**Jer 30:4** And these are the words that the Lord spake **concerning Israel and concerning Judah.**  
**5** For thus saith the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace.  
**6** Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?  
**7** Alas! for **that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.**

Israel's relationship to God is that of a first born:

**Exo 4:22** And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, **Israel is my son, even my firstborn:**

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<sup>2</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 123.

<sup>3</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, pp. 278, 279.

Because of this unique relationship to God, Israel will suffer greatly in her refinement during the Tribulation, receiving a double portion for her sins.

**Isa 40:1** O Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

**2** Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that **her iniquity is pardoned**: for **she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins**.

**Jer 16:16** Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

**17** For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.

**18** And **first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things**.

**Second** – In belief, in faith for blessing, in preparation for the Messianic Kingdom.

There are four groups of Jews to be considered.<sup>4</sup>

- 1. Apostate Jews, “the many” of Daniel 9:27** – These are those that enter into the Seven-Year Covenant with Antichrist, about two-thirds of the nation. They will die in the worldwide persecution in the Tribulation.
- 2. The 144,000 Jews (Rev 7:3-8)** – Part of the one-third that will survive the Tribulation.
- 3. Other Jewish Believers** – Those Jews who come to belief through the ministry of the 144,000 (Rev 7), or through the ministry of the Two Witnesses, or in some other way. Some will be martyred with the two-thirds, while others may remain as part of the one-third.
- 4. The Faithful Remnant** – This group will make up the majority of the one-third of the nation that will survive the Tribulation. They will be unbelievers in the Messiahship of Jesus, and they will not be fooled by the Antichrist, nor agreeable to his Seven-Year Covenant. They are the ones that “shall not be in haste.”

**Isa 28:16** Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: **he that believeth shall not make haste**.

**17** Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

**18** And **your covenant with death** shall be disannulled, and **your agreement with hell** shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

This Remnant will survive the Tribulation as recorded in Isaiah:

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<sup>4</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, pp. 286, 287.

**Isa 10:20** And it shall come to pass in that day, that **the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob**, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

**21** The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.

**22** For though **thy people Israel** be as the sand of the sea, yet **a remnant of them shall return**: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.

**23** For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.

At first they will trust in God, but not necessarily in Jesus as their Messiah (see also: Isa 4:2; 37:31, 32; Joel 2:32; Obadiah 17).<sup>5</sup>

The Remnant will be protected during the Tribulation (Isa 41:8-16).<sup>6</sup>

The Remnant will be provided for during the Tribulation (Isa 41:17-20; Isa 65:8-16).<sup>7</sup>

The Remnant will have a specific place of refuge prepared in advance for that purpose (Matt 24:16; Rev 12:6, 14; Isa 33:13-16). The specific place is clearly identified in Micah:<sup>8</sup>

**Mic 2:12** I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; **I will surely gather the remnant of Israel**; I will put them **together as the sheep of Bozrah**, as the flock **in the midst of their fold**: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men.

Bozrah is located in ancient Edom, in the region of Mount Seir, where the rocky fortress of Petra is located. The name Bozrah means “sheepfold.” Petra, with its restricted access is shaped like a giant sheepfold.<sup>9</sup>

In describing the Antichrist’s campaign to conquer the world, Daniel records that three nations will escape his onslaught:

**Dan 11:41** He [Antichrist] shall enter also into **the glorious land [Israel]**, and **many countries shall be overthrown**: but **these shall escape out of his hand**, even **Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon**.

It is significant to realize that all three nations, Edom, Moab, and Ammon comprise the modern Kingdom of Jordan, in the very place where Petra is located, a place safe from the Antichrist’s grip.<sup>10</sup>

The restoration of Israel in faith is covered by Ezekiel 40-through 48.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 287.

<sup>6</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 288.

<sup>7</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, pp. 288-290.

<sup>8</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, pp. 290-292.

<sup>9</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 292-293.

<sup>10</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 293.

<sup>11</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 123.

Isaiah comments that a **second gathering** of Israel will take place, this time in belief.

**Isa 11:11** And it shall come to pass in that day, that **the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people**, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

**12** And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah **from the four corners of the earth**.

The context of Isaiah 11:11-12:6 is the return of Israel in preparation for blessing, not in unbelief for judgment. This regathering for blessing will occur after Israel's repentance and regeneration, after the Time of Jacob's Trouble (the Tribulation), and before the Millennium. The curses that were on Israel will now be applied to her enemies, the Gentiles. Israel will now obey.<sup>12</sup>

**Deut 30:4** If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will **the Lord thy God gather thee**, and from thence will he fetch thee:

**5** 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.

**6** And the Lord thy God will **circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed**, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

**7** And **the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies**, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.

**8** And **thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord**, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.

Although many commentators describe the return from the Babylonian captivity as the first regathering, it cannot be because the return from Babylon was not a worldwide regathering as is described for the first regathering in unbelief.<sup>13</sup>

The final regathering in belief is best illustrated by the prophecy found in Isaiah 43:<sup>14</sup>

**Isa 43:5** Fear not: for I am with thee: **I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;**

**6 I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;**

**7 Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.**

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<sup>12</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, pp. 412-414.

<sup>13</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 414.

<sup>14</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 415.

R1 Additional notes for Lesson 05.

Jeremiah 16 says that God will bring them **again** into their Land (see also: Jer 23:3, 4, 7, 8).

**Jer 16:14** 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;

**15** 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.**

Israel will be regenerated then will return with weeping and supplications:<sup>15</sup>

**Jer 31:7** For thus saith the Lord; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, **O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.**

**8** Behold, **I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth**, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither.

**9** **They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them:** I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

**10** Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, **He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.**

The final regathering is expressed this way by Jesus as an event following the Second Coming:<sup>16</sup>

**Matt 24:31** And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and **they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**

A passage in Mark indicates that this final regathering will include living Israel and resurrected Israel.

**Mark 13:27** And then shall he send his angels, and **shall gather together his elect** from the four winds, **from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.**

## **The Possession of the Land**

The basis of the possession of the land is the Abrahamic Covenant. In Genesis, God told Abraham that the land was to be his **and** his seed. However, Abraham died without

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<sup>15</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 417.

<sup>16</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 419.

ever possessing the full extent of the land that God had promised. The only land that Abraham possessed was a few wells and a burial cave that he purchased. The only way that Abraham can obtain what God promised is that he is to be resurrected at the final regathering as we have seen in Mark 13:27.<sup>17</sup>

**Gen 13:14** And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, **Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:**

**15** For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

**16** 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.

**17** Arise, **walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.**

The exact boundaries of this possession, from the Euphrates River in the north to the River of Egypt in the south, are given in Genesis 15, and have never yet been achieved, pointing to a future fulfillment:<sup>18</sup>

**Gen 15:12** And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

**13** And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

**14** And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

**15** And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

**16** But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

**17** And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

**18** In the same day **the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:**

**19** The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,

**20** And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,

**21** And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

The River of Egypt refers to a finger of the Nile along the line of the present day Suez Canal. Some have mistakenly thought it refers to the Nile itself, but if that is so then Israel entered the Promised Land before they left Egypt at the time of the Exodus.

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<sup>17</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 421.

<sup>18</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, pp. 421, 422.

R1 Additional notes for Lesson 05.

Others believe it refers to the Brook of Egypt in the central Sinai, but the Brook is not a river, but a dry river bed known as a wadi (Wadi-el-Arish). Some prophetic passages refer to the Brook, but the difference is between “extent of possession and control as over against the extent of actual settlement.” The Jews will settle as far as the Brook of Egypt, but will have control to the River of Egypt (Suez Canal). The east-west borders will be from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea (Eze 47:15-20)<sup>19</sup>  
It is only in the Millennial Kingdom that Israel will possess the land in accordance with the Abrahamic and Palestinian Covenants.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, pp. 422, 423, 466.

<sup>20</sup> Fruchtenbaum, THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MESSIAH, p. 428.