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A Jewish Reading Lesson



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #22 ~

It was about seven years ago, that by God's grace, I finally figured out how to read the Old Testament. I was so excited! For the first time in my life, I could see the whole big scheme of things, how everything in the Bible fits in with God's future plans. My prayer and desire is to help you know how to read the Old Testament, so you can more clearly understand God's plans for the Jews, the church, and the ages to come.

First, here are some basic, Biblical ground rules that you need to know:
1. The Old Testament is true, and it needs to be taken literally. For example, Israel means Israel; Jerusalem means Jerusalem; and forever means forever.
2. God's promises to the Jews regarding their land, salvation and King have not been changed or nullified. They are still true, and God will most definitely carry them out.
3. Israel has not been replaced by the church with regard to God's plans. Promises made to Israel are not figuratively being fulfilled by the

church, but will literally be fulfilled by the Jews.
4. You can't understand the future of the church if you don't understand the future of the Jews, for God's work with the Jews in the end times is in conjunction with His work for the church. Daniel's 70th week is a key time frame for both Jews and Christians.
5. Old Testament prophecies can usually be placed in one of four time periods: (1) The prophecy relates to the writer's time period, and shortly thereafter. (2) The prophecy relates to Christ's 1st coming. (3) The prophecy relates to Christ's 2nd coming. (4) The prophecy relates to Christ's kingdom age. (A prophecy may have both a near and far fulfillment.)

Here are some examples of how Old Testament prophecies fit in one of these four time periods – (1), (2), (3) or (4). **Psalm 22:1-21** speaks about Christ's suffering on the cross, and this refers to Christ's 1st coming (2). Then Psalm 22:28 says, *"The kingdom is the Lord's and He rules over the nations"* and this refers to Christ's coming kingdom age (4).

Psalm 37:29 says, *"The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever."* This Psalm tells us about the fulfillment of God's promise to the Jews that they will inherit some land, and this too is speaking about the coming kingdom age (4).

Psalm 98:2-3 tells us, *"The Lord has made known His salvation… He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel."* This verse is talking about the house of Israel, and so this is not referring to the salvation of people during the church age, but to the salvation of the Jews at the 2nd coming of Christ (3).

Isaiah 9:6 is a classic, for the first part of the verse, *"A child will be born to us, a son will be given us"* is referring to Christ's 1st coming (2), and the very next part of the verse, *"and the government will rest on His shoulders"* talks about the kingdom age (4).

Ezekiel 37:21-23 is one of my favorite prophetic passages, for right here in these three verses we read about the fulfillment of God's promises to the Jews with regard to their land (verse 21), their King (verse 22), and their salvation (verse 23). These prophecies are clearly referring to Christ's 2nd coming (3), and His kingdom age (4).

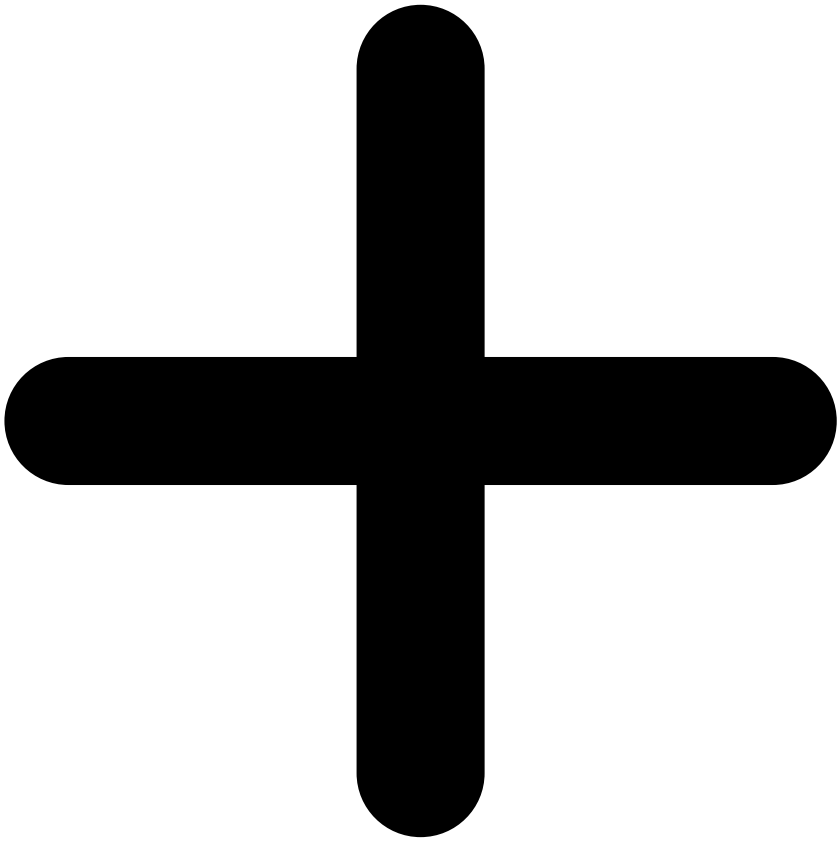
Micah 5:2-5 tells us two different things, that the coming Messiah will be born in Bethlehem which takes place at Christ's 1st coming (2), and that *"He will be great to the ends of the earth",* and this no doubt is speaking about the kingdom age (4).

Christians living in the end times of this church age have a distinct advantage. We can look at a particular prophecy, and then look back in history, and see if it has taken place or not, if it is a past or future event. We can see where everything fits, in time periods (1), (2), (3) or (4). It's essential to learn how to rightly read the Old Testament, to properly interpret God's prophetic word, and then you can understand His future plans for both the Jews and the church. I believe you'll be thrilled as God gives you understanding, and then enables you to Biblically visualize the future God has for you, and for all His people on this earth.

There are 100's and 100's of verses in the Old Testament that predict God's plans for the Jews. Here are some others I'd encourage you to check out in your spare time: Psalm 47, Psalm 67, Psalm 102:12-28, Psalm 105:5-8, Psalm 130, Isaiah 2:1-5, Isaiah 60, Isaiah 61:1-2, Jeremiah 32:6-44, Ezekiel 37:24-28, Daniel 12:1-13, Hosea 1:10-11 (the triple play), Joel 2:27-32 (Jews and church), Haggai 2:4-9, Zechariah 2:10-12, and Zechariah 14:9.

P.S. I encourage you to look at the charts (links) which we have in the above post, for they will help you to understand this lesson.

P.P.S. We have also just published a new article that I believe will help you understand our heavenly Father’s great love for us: The Father’s Love for His Children.





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