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God has Good Plans for Israel and Her Land



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #301

"O Lord, You showed favor to Your land; You restored the captivity of Jacob. You forgave the iniquity of Your people and covered all their sins" (Ps. 85:1-2). Israel – what a people, what a nation, what a land, what a history, and what a future! Around 2,050 BC God promised to Abram that he and his descendants would be a special people. They would inherit a choice piece of land (Gen. 12:1, Ez. 37:21), be ruled by the King of kings (2 Sam. 7:16, Ez. 37:22), be saved from their sins (Jer. 31:31-34, Ez. 37:23), and be greatly blessed. Gen. 12:2, Ez. 37:24-28

The Jewish people first entered their land about 1400 BC (Josh. 3-19).

Close to 800 years later, God made them leave because of their sins. Exactly 70 years later, in 538 BC, God mercifully began bringing them back (Jer. 29:10-14). It was about 4 BC when Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Savior of the world, came to Israel (Lk. 2:1-20). Most of the Jews rejected Jesus, and their leaders had Him crucified. But being killed and then resurrected was God's sovereign plans for Jesus, the only means by which He could save His people from sin and death. Forty days after Jesus was raised from the dead, He ascended into heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of His heavenly Father.

Before He left for heaven, Jesus told us some things we need to know about the future:
1. He said He would build the church, people who were called and saved by God to be members of His spiritual body. And from the day of Pentecost to the end of this age, Jesus has been building His church. Acts 2:1-21; Matt. 16:18, 28:19-20
2. He predicted that He would come back on the clouds just after the end of this age to gather all believers from heaven and earth so they would be with Him. Matt. 24:29-31
3. He told us that the Israelites would be punished and scattered all over the world which happened just like He said. Luke 19:41-44, 21:20-24
4. Jesus made it clear that the Israelites would return to their land (Lk. 13:34-35, 21:24). This has been miraculously occurring since the 1880's – and it had to happen for God to fulfill all His promises to the Jewish people. Ezekiel 37:21-28

That the Jews are back in their land is the #1 sign that we live in the end-times (Dan. 12:4). During these end-times, the final years of this age, God is renewing His work with the Jews and finishing building the church. Evidence for God's simultaneous working with Jews and Christians is seen in many New Testament prophecy passages. Matt. 24:*9-14*, **15-27**; Luke 21:*12-19*, **20-24**; 2 Thess. 2:*1-2*, **3-9**; Rev. 7***:2-8***, *9-14*; and Rev. 12**:1-16**, 12*:17*. (*Christians*, **Jews**). Knowing how God is

working with the Jews helps us to see the general time frame for Christ's return to rapture the church. Matt. 24:15-36

I must talk to you about what the New Testament says about God's end-times' work with the Jews. Before I do, I need to help you understand an important prophecy passage from the Old Testament – Daniel 9:24-27. Here are some key points from these verses:

* There are 70 weeks decreed for the Jewish people and Jerusalem. The context tells us that each week is 7 years long – therefore, this 70 weeks is referring to a 490-year period. During this time, the Jewish people are living in their land.
* The purpose of these 490 years is stated in Dan. 9:24: the sin of the Jews will come to an end; there will be atonement for their sins; a Jewish remnant will be saved; the Holy Place (millennial temple) will be anointed; and everlasting righteousness will begin.
* The first 69 weeks, lasting 483 years, began with a decision to rebuild Jerusalem (445 BC), and ended when the Messiah (the Christ), was cut off, was killed in 30 AD.

* There's a long gap of time between the end of the 69th week and the start of the 70th week. As things look now, I believe it will last at least 2,000 years. During this time, Jesus Christ is focused on building the church.
* Daniel's 70th week gives us a time frame, a divine time schedule that will help you see and understand the sequence of end-time events.
* The 70th week has not yet begun. We know that because events prophesied in Dan. 9:24-27, Matt. 24:15-26, 2 Thess. 2:3-8, and Rev. 13 haven't yet happened. And because we are in the end-times, we know it won't be long before the start of this 70th week.

* Here are some key events occurring during this 70th week: at the beginning of the week, the Jews make a 7-year covenant with the

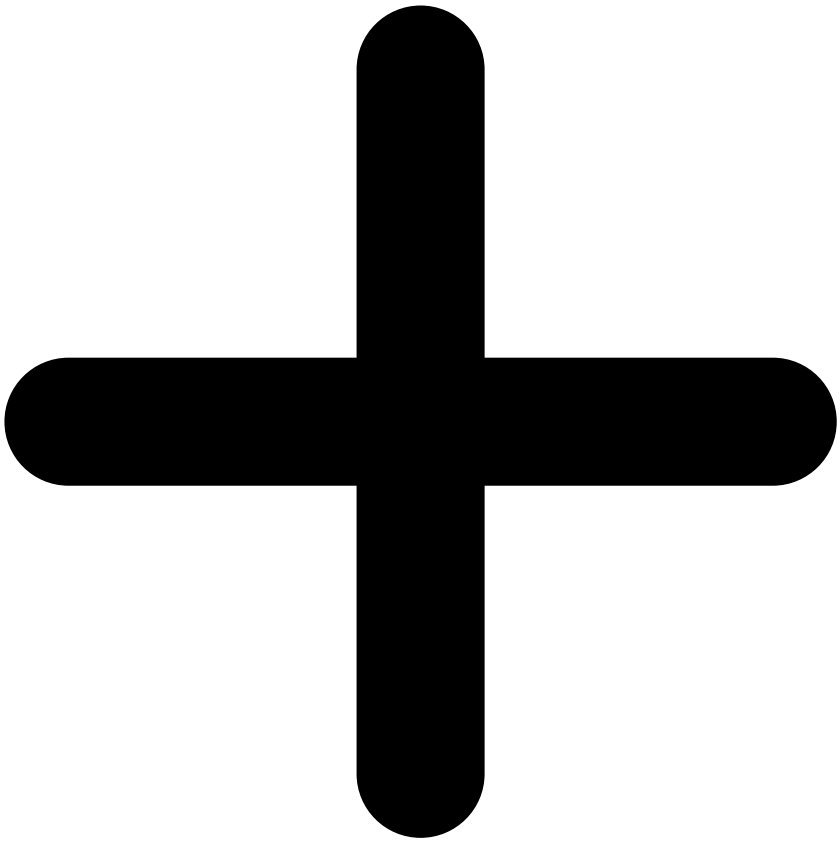
Antichrist (Dan. 9:27); during the first half of the week a Jewish temple is built (2 Thess. 2:3-5); at the 3½ year mark the Antichrist breaks his treaty with the Jews and desecrates the temple (Matt. 24:15); sometime during the 2nd half of the week the church is raptured (Matt. 24:30-36); at the end of the 70th week a Jewish remnant is saved. Rom. 11:25-27
* Jesus Himself speaks of Daniel's 70th week in Matt. 24:15. Note that the verse says, *"Let the reader understand."* God is impressing upon us the importance of this 70th week – and He wants us to know that it is relevant not just to Jews, but also to Christians.

Many non-Christians, along with some Christians, do not believe that the land we know as Israel is for the Jews. Debates and disputes about this are happening in our country at the present time. And many do not believe that God has a future for the Jewish people, one that was extensively prophesied about in the Old Testament. Many believe that God rejected the Jews because of their sin and their past rejection of Christ, and that many of the promises He gave to the Jews are now for the church. But this is just not true!

God keeps His Word! In the next blog post we will examine several passages in the New Testament that are specifically about the Jews and how God is working with them and fulfilling His promises. It's imperative that you understand and are encouraged by God's working with the Jewish people. *"Surely His salvation is near those who fear Him, that His glory may dwell in our land... The Lord will indeed give what is good, and our land will yield its harvest."* Psalm 85:9, 12

P.S. God raised up the nation of Israel and gave her some land, and He won't take it away frim her. The post today talks about this, with a focus on Daniel's 70th week, a key 7-year prophetic period. I encourage you to read the two other posts I have written on this most critical week – *"The Divine Timetable, Daniel's 70 Weeks"*, and *"Daniel's 70th Week,*

One of the Keys to Unlocking the End Times.”



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