

9:26 concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Temple and of the nation of Israel. These were fulfilled in 70 AD, thirty-seven years after the Church Age had already begun.

We can see the fulfillment of prophecy for Israel unfold right before our very eyes! How can this not be significant? How can seeing God fulfill His promises not matter? What an encouragement this should be to every believer. It should inspire us to tell everyone what a mighty God we have, spur us on to reach spiritual maturity, and cause us to eagerly anticipate our Lord's return.

PHASE 2: COMPLETE END-TIME REGATHERING OF BELIEVING JEWS

Believing Jews are gathered together from all over the world into the Land of Israel by the Lord at the 2nd Advent. It will be the last regathering because the Jews will then be under the Lord's direct protection and will never be exiled or dispersed again. Some of the scriptures that predict this final regathering are **Isa. 11:11-12**, **Jer. 31:7-10**, **Ezek. 11:14-18**, **Zech. 10:8-13-12**, **Amos 9:14-15**, and **Matt. 24:30-31**. In the following verse, we will take a close look at Isaiah's prophecy about the Phase 2 "last days" return. This verse is located in a chapter where the context clearly identifies Jesus Christ, His 2nd Advent, and His Millennial Reign.

Isaiah 11:11-12 - ***11 Then it will happen on that day [2nd Advent] that the Lord will again recover the SECOND TIME with His hand the remnant of His people, who will remain, from Assyria [Greater Syria], Egypt, Pathros [Upper Egypt], Cush [Ethiopia], Elam [Iran], Shinar [Iraq], Hamath [Middle Syria], and from the islands of the sea [Mediterranean coastlines]. 12 And He will lift up a standard for the nations, and will assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.***

This regathering could not refer to any prior to 70 AD because regatherings prior to 70 AD do not satisfy the specific geographic and temporal conditions detailed in this prophecy. Let's take a brief look at the exiles and regatherings prophesied for Israel:

<u>EXILED OUT OF THE LAND</u>	<u>REGATHERED BACK TO THE LAND</u>	<u>DATE</u>
1914 BC by drought into Egypt	From Egypt into a nation	1445 BC
722 BC by Assyrian captivity (10 Northern tribes)	Were never regathered	-
586 BC by Babylonian captivity	From Babylon back to the Land	516 BC
70 AD by Rome, dispersed all over	PHASE 1) From the 4 corners of the earth	1948 AD
	PHASE 2) From the 4 corners of the earth	2 nd Advent

Notice that the first two regatherings were each from only one empire, Egypt and Babylon respectively, while the last one occurs in two phases from **"the four corners of the earth."** This means that any regatherings from more than one nation must refer to the last one. Furthermore, the regatherings from Egypt and Babylon had subsequent exiles and regatherings, but the last regathering doesn't.

LESSON #2 (9-3-06)

The **"SECOND TIME,"** mentioned in **Isaiah 11:11** refers to the Phase 2 recovery of Jews at the 2nd Advent. If there is a **"SECOND TIME"** recovery, then there must be a **"FIRST TIME"**. Since there are no numbers between one and two, there can be no exiles or regatherings between the first and second phases. They are uninterrupted.

Since there cannot be another exile or regathering between the Phase 1 and Phase 2 end-time regathering, what must we conclude? **The modern State of Israel will remain in possession of the Land [Phase 1] until the Jews who remain among the nations are regathered at the Second Advent [Phase 2].** With that in mind, and considering the geo-political condition of the world with the Arabs, the U.N., and many nations bent on the destruction of Israel, the countdown to the return of Christ seems even closer.

PHASE 1: PARTIAL END-TIME REGATHERING OF UNBELIEVING JEWS

From specific details given in Old Testament prophecies, one must conclude that there would be a partial regathering of unbelieving Jews back to their homeland prior to the Tribulation. We will identify it as Phase 1 of the end-time regathering when Israel was established as a nation. This occurred May 14, 1948.

Zephaniah 2:1 - ***Gather yourselves together, yes, gather, O nation without shame** [The nation of Israel has no shame about rejecting Jesus Christ their Messiah because they are in a state of unbelief.], **2 before the decree takes effect, The day passes like the chaff, before the burning anger of the LORD comes upon you** [the Tribulation], **before the day of the LORD's anger comes upon you.***

This verse emphasizes the fact that the Jews would be regathered as a nation in unbelief before **"the day of the Lord's anger"**, a technical reference to the Tribulation.

EZEKIEL 37:1-14, THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES

This vision depicts a progression from the physical return to the spiritual return of Jews back to their land. The valley represents the earth and the dry bones represent Jews scattered throughout the earth. The bones come to life in stages: first sinews and flesh on the bones, representing the partial regathering of unbelieving Jews to the land [Phase 1, **vs. 8 & 13**] and later [Phase 2, **vs 10 & 14**], breath is added representing the spiritual life of the believing Jews who are regathered at the Second Advent.

Ezekiel 37:1 - *The hand of the LORD was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; and it was full of bones. 2) And He caused me to pass among them round about, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley; and lo, they were very dry. 3) And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord God, Thou knowest." 4) Again He said to me, "Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.' 5) "Thus says the Lord God to these bones, 'Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life. 6) 'And I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin, and put breath in you that you may come alive; and you will know that I am the LORD.'" 7) So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold, a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to its bone. 8) And I looked, and behold, sinews were on them, and flesh grew, and skin covered them; but there was no breath in them [Phase 1].*

9) *Then He said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord God, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they come to life.'"* 10) *So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they came to life, and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army [Phase 2].*

11) *Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off.' 12) "Therefore prophecy, and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God, "Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel. 13) "Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves and caused you to come up out of your graves, My people [bringing the Jews out of obscurity back into the land in Phase 1].*

14) *"And I will put My Spirit within you, and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land [Phase 2]. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done it," declares the LORD."*

LESSON #3 (9-10-06)

The following scriptures show how God regathered the Jews from all over the earth back to the land. He did this to humble them and judge them with the Tribulation in order to soften their hardened hearts to accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah and Savior.

Ezekiel 20:33-38 - ³³ *"As I live," declares the Lord God, "surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you. ³⁴ "And I shall bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out [Phase 1 End-Time regathering]; ³⁵ and I shall bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I shall enter into judgment with you face to face. ³⁶ "As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you," declares the Lord God. ³⁷ "And I shall make you pass under the rod, and I shall bring you into the bond of the covenant; ³⁸ and I shall purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me [unbelieving Jews]; I shall bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel [with the believing Jews at the Phase 2 end-time regathering]. *Thus you will know that I am the LORD.**

Verse 34 The words "peoples" and "lands" indicate a regathering from more than one nation and this dates it during the end-times. The phrases, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out refer to God's use of persecution to motivate the unbelieving Jews dispersed around the world to return back to the land of their forefathers and to establish a nation of their own. That nation is the modern state of Israel that currently refuses to acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Messiah and savior.

Verse 38 tells how Christ will deal with unbelieving Jews when He returns at the Second Advent. Even though about 5 million Jews have regathered to Israel, there still remain around 10 million living in other countries. All believing Jews of those 10 million will be regathered into Israel by Jesus Christ at the Second advent.

But the unbelieving Jews, the rebels, will be purged out of that number and will not enter the Land. God will purge them from the lands where they are dispersed, but He will not bring them into the land of Israel. So where do they go? As unbelievers, they will go into a compartment of Hades called Torments along with all of the other unbelievers of the earth. They will be held there until the end of the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ, then they will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment, **Rev. 20:11-15**.

Ezekiel 22:17-22 - *And the word of the LORD came to me saying, 18) "Son of man, the house of Israel has become dross to Me; all of them are bronze and tin and iron and lead in the furnace; they are the dross of silver. 19) "Therefore, thus says the Lord God, 'Because all of you have become dross, therefore, behold, I am going to gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. 20) 'As they gather silver and bronze and iron and lead and tin into the furnace to blow fire on it in order to melt it, so I shall gather you in My anger and in My wrath, and I shall lay you there and melt you. 21) 'And I shall gather you and blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and you will be melted in the midst of it. 22) 'As silver is melted in the furnace, so you will be melted in the midst of it; and you will know that I, the LORD, have poured out My wrath on you.'"*

Silver, bronze, iron, tin, and lead are meant to symbolize unbelieving Israel. Just as these metals are gathered and put into a furnace to purify them in order to remove the dross, so Jews would be gathered to Israel to be put in the furnace of the Tribulation in order to purify them and then remove the dross, the remaining unbelievers.

LESSON #4 (9-17-06)

Ezekiel 36:22-24 - *22) Therefore, say to the house of Israel, "Thus says the Lord God, It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. 23) And I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD," declares the Lord God, "when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. 24) For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land."*

The plural use of the word "nations" and the phrase "all the lands" in verse 24 indicate that this is an end-time regathering. God did not regather the Jews back to their homeland because they deserved it but in order to vindicate His name [His reputation]. God has made unconditional promises to Israel that have not yet come to pass. They must be regathered back to the land before He can fulfill those promises. People should recognize that God is showing His veracity and faithfulness to keep His promises to His people by regathering them from the nations back to their own land.

PROPHECIES FOR PRESENT DAY ISRAEL

ISRAEL BUYS BACK THE LAND

Jeremiah 32:15 - *'For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.'"*

Jeremiah 32:37 - *"Behold, I will gather them out of all the lands to which I have driven them in My anger, in My wrath, and in great indignation; and I will bring them back to this place and make them dwell in safety."*

Jeremiah 32:44 - *'Men will buy fields for money, sign and seal deeds, and call in witnesses in the land of Benjamin, in the environs of Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah, in the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the lowland and in the cities of the Negev; for I will restore their fortunes,' declares the Lord."*

God commanded Jeremiah to buy a piece of land that had already been taken over by the invading Babylonians. Jeremiah thought that this was crazy. Why would God want him to do this? To prove a point. It was a guarantee to all Jews and the whole world that neither Babylon nor any other Gentile nation would own the promised land forever. There would come a time when Jews would get their land back from the Gentiles in the same way that Jeremiah acquired it, by buying it. Jews started purchasing land in Israel at the turn of the century and slowly started rebuilding on it. Sometimes they had to pay both Arabs and the Ottoman Turks exorbitant sums of money for the same properties. But the Jews refused to live on the land or to farm it until it had been legally purchased.

The verses above could not possibly refer to the time when the Jews returned from their Babylonian captivity because Cyrus gave the land and Jerusalem back to them, so without a doubt, purchasing back the land as prophesied by Jeremiah must refer to our time!

LESSON #5 (9-24-06)

THE NATION ISRAEL REBORN IN A DAY (May 14, 1948)

Isaiah 66:6-9 - *"A voice of uproar from the city, a voice from the temple, The voice of the LORD who is rendering recompense to His enemies. ⁷ "Before she travailed, she brought forth; Before her pain came, she gave birth to a boy. ⁸ "Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once? As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons. ⁹ "Shall I bring to the point of birth, and not give delivery?" says the LORD. "Or shall I who gives delivery shut the womb?" says your God."*

The headline in the May 14, 1948 Palestine Post newspaper said, "STATE OF ISRAEL IS BORN." The first independent Jewish state in nineteen centuries was born in Tel Aviv as the British Mandate over Palestine came to an end at midnight on Friday, and it was immediately subjected to the test of fire by being invaded by its Arab neighbors. But God would not "**bring to the point of birth, and not give delivery**". In other words, God would not regather the Jews back to their homeland and then allow them to be wiped out as soon as their nation was reborn.

ISRAEL TO BE A NATION BEFORE THE TRIBULATION

Daniel 9:27 - And he [antichrist] shall confirm the covenant with many [leaders of Israel] for one week [7 years]: and in the midst of the week [the middle of the Tribulation] he [antichrist] shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease . . .

Israel will make a covenant / treaty with the antichrist that will allow the Jews to implement the Mosaic Law that will include making sacrifices and offerings to God. This will trigger the beginning of the seven year Tribulation, but for this to happen, the Jews must be recognized as a national entity. They will have possession of the Land including the city of Jerusalem and exercise national authority when this seventieth week of Daniel begins.

LESSON #6 (10-1-06)

UN-WALLED CITIES

Ezekiel 38-39 includes a prophecy that uniquely details an invasion of Israel by a huge alliance of foreign nations, **Ezek. 38:3-13**. Interestingly, this prophecy provides details about the time of this invasion of how the people would be living **“securely, all of them”** in a **“land of un-walled villages,” Ezek. 38:8, 11**. Ancient cities were typically surrounded by defensive walls, but modern cities have no walls around them because they would be useless against the modern weaponry of artillery, missiles, and warplanes.

JERUSALEM, A CUP OF TREMBLING

Zechariah 12:1-3 - The burden of the word of the LORD concerning Israel. Thus declares the LORD who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him, ² "Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah. ³ "And it will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

This clearly describes Israel today which has about 1% of the land in the Middle East and about 1% of its population. Yet this little country dominates headlines and news broadcasts around the world. Anyone who stands against her is severely injured.

ISRAEL'S VICTORIES OVER HER ENEMIES

Israel is a very small nation surrounded by many large nations whose number one goal is to wipe Israel clean off the map and to annihilate every Jew. There has been ongoing attacks on Israel from her neighbors and three major wars have happened since it became a nation. Her enemies have had overwhelming advantages in every area, yet they have been soundly defeated every time they invaded Israel. See **ISRAELI-ARAB WARS** for details.

ISRAEL'S GOVERNORS, NOT KINGS

Zechariah 12:6 - In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.

This has got to be talking about modern day Israel! Notice that **“governors,”** in some translations, **“clans”**, are referred to rather than kings. So this verse must speak of a period when governors, not kings, would be in control. That would be today. Furthermore, the specifics of this verse perfectly describe Israel's victories over her neighbors on her right hand and on her left ever since she declared her independence on May 14, 1948.

FROM DESOLATION TO PROSPERITY

Isaiah 27:6 - In the days to come Jacob will take root, Israel will blossom and sprout; And they will fill the whole world with fruit.

Isaiah 62:4 - It will no longer be said to you, "Forsaken," Nor to your land will it any longer be said, "Desolate"; But you will be called, "My delight is in her," And your land, "Married"; For the LORD delights in you, And to Him your land will be married.

Isaiah 35:1 - The wilderness and the desert will be glad, And the Arabah [desert plain] will rejoice and blossom; Like the crocus

Mark Twain visited Palestine in 1869 and describes it in his book, *Innocents Abroad*, as **“...dismal scenery. The hills are barren, they are dull of color, unpicturesque in shape. The valleys are unsightly deserts fringed with a feeble vegetation that has an expression about it being sorrowful and despondent...the eye rests upon no pleasant tint, no striking object, no soft picture...It is a hopeless, dreary, heartbroken land.”**

Several nations conquered Israel and every one of them took from the land and did nothing to improve it. At the turn of the century, Great Britain severely limited the number of Jews that could enter the land of Palestine because they did not think that the land would support them. But since the Jews have returned to the land, it has been transformed from a devastated desolate place into a vibrant prosperous country that astounds the entire world. When the Jews are in the land, it flourishes.

By 1997, over 700 agricultural villages had been established. Israel produced food not only for itself, but for Europe and several countries other than Europe. Each year, \$75 million worth of citrus was exported. Also 83,000 tons of grapes, 126,000 tons of wheat, 256,000 tons of sugar beets, and over a million eggs.

TREES COVER ISRAEL AGAIN

Isaiah 41:8-9 - 8) *"But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My friend, 9) You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, And called from its remotest parts, And said to you, 'You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you.*

Isaiah 41:19-20 19 - *"I will put the cedar in the wilderness, The acacia, and the myrtle, and the olive tree; I will place the juniper in the desert, Together with the box tree and the cypress, 20 That they may see and recognize, And consider and gain insight as well, That the hand of the LORD has done this, And the Holy One of Israel has created it*

In 70 AD, the Romans besieged Jerusalem, cut trees down for crosses and for war machines such as catapults and battering rams, the Muslims cut trees down to build their mosques, the Crusaders cut trees down for firewood and to build their castles, and the Turks cut them down for railroad ties and firewood to stoke in their train engines. When the Jews returned, the land had very few trees and was barren. Now Israel is covered with trees; many millions of them have been planted since 1948. Israel had 14,000 acres of forested area in 1948 and had over 250,000 acres of forested acres by 1997.

VULTURES RETURN TO ISRAEL

Ezekiel 39:17-18 - *"And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord God, 'Speak to every kind of bird and to every beast of the field, "Assemble and come, gather from every side to My sacrifice which I am going to sacrifice for you, as a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, that you may eat flesh and drink blood. 18 "You shall eat the flesh of mighty men, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, as though they were rams, lambs, goats, and bulls, all of them fatlings of Bashan.*

Revelation 19:17 - *And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God;*

Revelation 19:21 - *And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.*

When the Jews first started coming back to the land, there were hardly any animals because the land was so desolate. But they immediately began improving the land, growing plants and trees, and the animals returned. When the animals multiplied, the vultures came back. Today, there are areas over Israel that their air force has to avoid because of the enormous number of vultures and other birds of prey. So when the call goes out for the birds to assemble for the great feast on the aftermath of the Battle of Armageddon, there will be plenty to answer the call.

THE SHEKEL IN USE AGAIN IN ISRAEL

Ezekiel 45:12-13 – 12) *And the shekel shall be . . . 13) the offering that you shall offer . . .*

Ezekiel 45:16 – *All the people of the land shall give this offering for the prince of Israel.*

These prophecies demonstrate that when Jesus Christ returns at the Second Advent, offerings and oblations must be made in shekels. In 198, the Israeli government went back to the shekel, Israel's coin that had not been used since the return from Babylonian captivity. They had been using the British-Palestinian pound.

CITIES OF ANCIENT ISRAEL / CITIES OF MODERN ISRAEL

Ezekiel 36:10-11 - 10) *'And I will multiply men on you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities will be inhabited, and the waste places will be rebuilt. 11) 'And I will multiply on you man and beast; and they will increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited as you were formerly and will treat you better than at the first. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.*

Ezekiel 36:24 - *"For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land.*

Isaiah 44:26 *Confirming the word of His servant, And performing the purpose of His messengers. It is I who says of Jerusalem, 'She shall be inhabited!' And of the cities of Judah, 'They shall be built.' And I will raise up her ruins again.*

After 70 AD, the Romans were in control of the cities, and many were given Roman names; the Moslems came in and renamed some of the cities with Moslem or Arab names; then the Crusaders were in the land for two hundred years; and then the Byzantines and Turks. During the Byzantine period, cities were given names like Reshat, Gahma, Amud, etc. But a promise was made to Israel that when the Lord again gathered them back to the land, the cities would be named and settled according to their old biblical names and exist in the same locations.

Isaiah 44:26 - ²⁶ Confirming the word of His servant, And performing the purpose of His messengers. It is I who says of Jerusalem, 'She shall be inhabited!' And of the cities of Judah, 'They shall be built.' And I will raise up her ruins again.

When traveling through Israel today, the tourist will find that Nazareth is Nazareth, Cana is Cana, Elath is Elath, Jerusalem is Jerusalem, etc. Almost without exception, cities have been renamed their biblical names and are located in the same places.

MANY THEOLOGIANS RECOGNIZE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL TODAY

There are many doctrinally sound pastor-teachers, college professors, and theologians who recognize the historical and prophetic significance of the nation of Israel as it exists today.

Dr. Walvoord, a close associate of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chaffer and the second president of Dallas Theological Seminary says: *"The present Jewish State is the beginning of this final regathering, for it seems highly probable that the regathering of Israel, which has so significantly begun in the twentieth century, will have its consummation and completion after Christ comes back and all Israel is assembled in the Holy Land."* *"Israelology: The Missing Link In Systematic Theology"* by Dr. Arnold Gruchtenbaum, Ariel Ministries, page 498

Dr. Walvoord and most Dispensationalists think it *"a proper conclusion that Israel back in the land is preparation for the end of the age."* *Ibid* page 499

Walvoord concludes that of *"the many signs indicating the end of the age, few are more dramatic and have a larger Scriptural foundation than the revival of Israel as a token of the end of the age."* *Ibid* page 499.

Dave Hunt, *"God promises to bring His chosen people back from all the countries where He has scattered them and to bring about a special 'rebirth' of Israel as a nation. We have certainly witnessed the fulfillment of that promise by Israel's rebirth in 1948 and the subsequent immigration of millions of Jews to Israel from more than 100 countries – something unprecedented in the entire history of the world."* *"The Berean Call"* Vol. xxi No. 8 August 2006 p. 5

Dr. Randy Price, *"Therefore, just as the dispersion of the Jewish people among the nation from the Land of Israel (the Diaspora) was deemed prophetically significant (of God's judgment), so the return of Jewish People from the Diaspora to the Land of Israel must also be considered prophetically significant (of God's restoration). For this reason, the creation of the modern Jewish State in 1948 has the prophetic significance of beginning the process of regathering from the nations (in unbelief) that will be followed by a further regathering (in belief) in preparation for the time of Israel's restoration in the Millennial Kingdom."* *"Is the Modern State of Israel Prophetically Significant?"* 04 Pre-Trib Conference

Dr. Tommy Ice and Dr. Timothy Demy, *"One major indicator that we are likely near the beginning of the tribulation is the clear fact that national Israel has been reconstituted after almost 2,000 years"* *"The Signs of the Times"* Harvest House Publishers p. 10

"It is not inconsistent that prophetic preparations relating to Israel are already underway with the reestablishment of Israel as a nation in 1948, even though we still are living in the church age." *"The Signs of the Times"* Harvest House Publishers p. 15

Dr. Mark Hitchcock, *"The stage is being a set. The events of Ezekiel 38-39 are more imminent than ever before. The consummation of History could begin at any time. All that remains is for the curtain to be raised!"* *After the Empire: Biblical Prophecy in Light of the Fall of the Soviet Union* (Tyndale House Publisher, 1994) p. 156

Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *"It should again be noted that Dispensationalism has no problem fitting modern Israel into its theological and prophetic scheme. . ."* *Israelology: The Missing Link In Systematic Theology* Ariel Ministries 2001 p. 499

Dr. Louis Barbieri, professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, *"Truly Israel's return to the land is a modern-day miracle, one the prophet Ezekiel more than five hundred years before the time of Christ apparently predicted would occur. As recorded in Ezekiel 37, . . . The condition of modern-day Israel seems to be precisely what Ezekiel saw in this vision. Israel, dead for almost two thousand years, has returned from the grave"* *Pentecost Essays, "The Future for Israel in God's Plan"* by Louis A. Barbieri, Jr. (Tousaint and Dyer) pp. 163-164

Dr. Noah Hutchings, *"The compilers of the Psalms, every major prophet, and a majority of the minor prophets foretold the return of the Jews from all nations as a prelude to the messianic age."* *"25 Messianic Signs In Israel Today"* Hearthstone Publishing, 1999 p. 25

CONCLUSION

God's plan for this world is moving forward. We know from scripture that Israel has to become a nation again before the Tribulation clock starts to countdown to the Second Advent. It is totally unprecedented and seemingly impossible for any nation to be reborn after disappearing from history for over 1,900 years. But Israel has been!

The fact that God has regathered the Jews back to their homeland, established, protected, and prospered them as a nation, is not only a demonstration that He is faithful to His Word, but is also a significant prelude to Christ's return in order to begin His millennial reign. As we see things falling into place for the return of our Lord at the Second Advent, we can tell that the time of the Gentiles is rapidly coming to a close.

A sense of urgency develops in those who understand this. They don't waste time and they are not easily distracted from what is really important which is their spiritual life. They notice that the prophecies for Israel and the front page headlines about Israel today match. This is no mere coincidence. They enthusiastically tell others about what God is accomplishing now and what He has promised to do in the future. The return of the Lord Jesus Christ is real to them. Is it that real to you? It is one thing to hold this doctrine; it is another thing for this doctrine to get a hold of you.

No nation on earth has ever been reborn after disappearing for over 1,900 years! The fact that God Jews back to their homeland, established, protected, and prospered them as a nation, demonstrates that His Word is true and that He will fulfill all His promises to Israel and to us as well.

John 14:1-3 "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

We all experience personal trials and we live in very troubling times. We can take great comfort in knowing that our Lord will return for us and that we will be with Him in a place that He has provided. We are all the more reassured of our Lord's imminent return as we see God fulfilling prophecies for Israel in our day.

Those who eagerly await our Lord's return have within them a blessed hope which has a purifying effect on their lives.

1 John 3:2-3 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

They enthusiastically tell others about what God is accomplishing now and what He has promised to do in the future. They recognize that the prophecies concerning Israel and what is transpiring there now are more than coincidences. The return of the Lord Jesus Christ is real to them. It is one thing for us to hold the right doctrine about Christ's coming. It is another thing for the doctrine to hold us.

God's plan for this world is moving forward and the time of the Gentiles is rapidly coming to an end. We don't know the day or hour that Jesus Christ will return to get His future bride [Church Age believers] but we can know that it is drawing near by recognizing