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RESTORATION OF ISRAEL TO THE LAND PT. I

March 19, 2017

Daniel E. Woodhead

Ezekiel 36:1-15

And thou, son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of Jehovah. ²Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha! and, The ancient high places are ours in possession; ³therefore prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because, even because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the nations, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and the evil report of the people; ⁴therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord Jehovah: Thus saith the Lord Jehovah to the mountains and to the hills, to the watercourses and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes and to the cities that are forsaken, which are become a prey and derision to the residue of the nations that are round about; ⁵therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the nations, and against all Edom, that have appointed my land unto themselves for a possession with the joy of all their heart, with despite of soul, to cast it out for a prey. ⁶Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains and to the hills, to the watercourses and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my wrath, because ye have borne the shame of the nations: ⁷therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I have sworn, saying, Surely the nations that are round about you, they shall bear their shame.

⁸But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel; for they are at hand to come. ⁹For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown; ¹⁰and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded; ¹¹and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited after your former estate, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. ¹²Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of children. ¹³Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because they say unto you, Thou land art a devourer of men, and hast been a bereaver of thy nation; ¹⁴therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nation any more, saith the Lord Jehovah; ¹⁵neither will I let thee hear any more the shame of the nations, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the peoples any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nation to stumble any more, saith the Lord Jehovah (ASV, 1901).

GOD PROMISES TO PUNISH ISRAEL'S ENEMIES

Ezekiel 36:1-2

¹And thou, son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of Jehovah, ²Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha! and, The ancient high places are ours in possession; (ASV, 1901).

While the Lord has finished the prophecy to Israel's nearest enemy Edom, He now begins a lengthy contrast to Edom regarding the blessings He will bring upon the nation Israel. He begins by commanding Ezekiel to , *prophesy unto the mountains of Israel*. Just as He prophesied doom and judgment to Edom and represented them as Mount Seir so too does He prophecy to Israel in synecdoche fashion using the mountains to refer to the whole of the land and its people. Synecdoche is a figure of association where the whole can refer to the part or the part to the whole. However, to Israel in contrast to Edom, He brings a promise of spiritual and temporal blessings to them. In typical colorful poetical language the Lord is telling Ezekiel that he must say, "*Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of Jehovah.*" This mountain reference is known as a metonymy in which the name of one object or concept is used for that of another to which it is related. This is a figure of association. So in understanding the Lord's declaration it is certainly not to inanimate mountains but the people of Israel which in metonymy as being called mountains. He is letting them know exactly who it is that is speaking words of assurance. It is Jehovah God the Father speaking about future blessings that will come upon Israel. God first gives His reason for the prophecies of blessing that He will now bring in this chapter. He says that Israel's enemies who hate them have said at least two things of offense to God:

1. The said aha! Which is an expression of scornfulness or rejoicing over Israel's suffering and their thoughts of dominance over them.
2. They own the ancient mountains. They boasted that they were in full control of the land of promise.

GOD PROMISES A FUTURE TO ISRAEL

Ezekiel 36:3-4

³Therefore prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because, even because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the nations, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and the evil report of the people; ⁴therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord Jehovah: Thus saith the Lord Jehovah to the mountains and to the hills, to the watercourses and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes and to the cities that are forsaken, which are become a prey and derision to the residue of the nations that are round about (ASV, 1901).

Interestingly because the Lord has many reasons to bring judgment on Edom and other nations such as Moab and Ammon he begins each judgment repeating the word "therefore" five times (verses 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7). All these sins which the nations have committed against Israel were actually against Him hence the personal affront to what they have done. Yes

Israel had sinned and turned away from God but, the nations were gleeful at the Lord's rebuke of Israel and took to boasting of the fact that they made the land of Israel desolate. In fact the Lord said the same thing through the prophet Zechariah (1:15). Here God says, "For I was but a little displeased," He says, "and they helped forward the affliction" or, "they helped for evil". They intended to swallow up the people of God so that they would not be a people any more going way beyond the level of discipline that God intended to bring on Israel for her sins. God is assuring Israel that this will never happen again.

Further, the enemies continued to talk about the Jews in a slanderous and malicious manner. God in His assurance to Israel that He will be their advocate stresses the entirety of the people of Israel when incorporating the land in the same metonymy of the land for the people. Except here He included all the aspects of the land (*to the mountains and to the hills, to the watercourses and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes and to the cities*) to comfort Israel that He will not omit any in the offer of His blessing. The Lord is jealous and will vindicate His holiness and truth through the zeal of His wrath. The Lord again makes reference to the attitude of the enemies as rejoicing at the desolation of Judah. When the times of the Gentiles come to a close nations will once more attempt to take possession of Israel's land and make an invasion against Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:3). He says that these nations will become the genuine prey and a derision. Because Edom rejoices that the Holy Land, which has been laid waste, has fallen to it for a possession, therefore shall the devastated land be cultivated and sown again, and be inhabited by Israel as in the former time. This has been taking place since the last 1800's. But when the Jews return for the final time before the Messianic Kingdom starts the heathen nations round about shall, bear their disgrace.

SHAME WILL COME UPON THE HEATHEN NATIONS

Ezekiel 36:5-7

⁵ Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the nations, and against all Edom, that have appointed my land unto themselves for a possession with the joy of all their heart, with despite of soul, to cast it out for a prey. ⁶ Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains and to the hills, to the watercourses and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my wrath, because ye have borne the shame of the nations: ⁷ therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I have sworn, saying, Surely the nations that are round about you, they shall bear their shame (ASV, 1901).

The Lord continues to bring the promise of His wrath against all the heathen nation and is singling out Edom for the evil they did to Israel with great joy. He continues to speak to all the people of Israel and in His *jealousy and in my wrath* will bring shame on all the nations that have come against the Jews. This is a reaffirmation of part of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Genesis 12:2-3

² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: ³ and I will bless them that bless thee, and

him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed (ASV, 1901).

God is saying that the nation who have persecuted the Jews will experience shame for shame and reproach for reproach. Benjamin Disraeli, Great Britain's only Jewish Prime Minister in an address to parliament in 1854 said,

“There is no country in which the Hebrew race has been persecuted which has not suffered, whose energies have not withered, whose political power has not decayed, and where there has not been evident proofs that the Divine favour has been withdrawn from the land. The instances of Spain, and Portugal, and Italy are obvious.”¹

One more recent example is Germany after the Nazi party killed approximately six million Jews in the Holocaust from 1933-1945. They have never recovered to the level of prosperity, artistic and engineering prowess they enjoyed before the Holocaust. Today they are being invaded by the Muslims who are bringing massive criminal activities to Germany. Physical assaults and rapes are reported daily in all the world's media. Such is the case when as the Lord says, “*Surely the nations that are round about you, they shall bear their shame.*”

BUT ISRAEL SHALL PROSPER

Ezekiel 36: 8-11

⁸But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel; for they are at hand to come. ⁹For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown; ¹⁰and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded; ¹¹and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited after your former estate, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah (ASV, 1901).

In stark contrast God says that with the judgment that was, is and will be inflicted on the pagan anti-Semitic nations Israel can look forward to the restoration and an unprecedented blessing. Continuing the contrast He says, “*O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel.*” God will provide for His people after the national regeneration of the nation Israel at the end of the Great Tribulation. He will multiply the population of Israel and the nation that had been decimated will be replenished. Israel's latter state in the Messianic Kingdom will be far superior to what it ever had been even during the halcyon reign of Solomon. That was their single greatest level of prosperity and political supremacy as noted by the queen of Sheba.

¹ Makovsky, Michael *Churchill's Promised Land-Zionism and Statecraft*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007. 42

I Kings 10:1-7

And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of Jehovah, she came to prove him with hard questions. ²And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones; and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. ³And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not anything hid from the king which he told her not. ⁴And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built, ⁵and the food of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of Jehovah; there was no more spirit in her. ⁶And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom. ⁷Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me; thy wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame which I heard (ASV, 1901).

Even today some statistics of Jewish achievement are a precursor to what they will have in the Messianic Kingdom in comparison to the Arabs who are the progeny of condemned Esau/Edom. The number of Jews who have won Nobel Prizes in all areas of endeavor is one hundred eighty. Arabs, unfortunately, have not been recipients of many Nobel prizes. The number of Arabs who have won a Nobel Prize is eight. One other economic indication, which demonstrates the superiority of the Jews, is in the number of U.S. Patents. God chose them and it is to Him one can attribute the cause of Jewish achievement. ² For example, between 1980 and 2000, Egyptians registered 77 patents in the U.S. Saudis registered 171. Israelis registered 7,652.³

THE JEWS WILL NO LONGER BE DEPRIVED OF THEIR LAND

Ezekiel 36:12-15

¹²Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of children. ¹³Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because they say unto you, Thou land art a devourer of men, and hast been a bereaver of thy nation; ¹⁴therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nation any more, saith the Lord Jehovah; ¹⁵neither will I let thee hear any more the shame of the nations, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the peoples any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nation to stumble any more, saith the Lord Jehovah (ASV, 1901).

Both houses of Israel will return and multiply in the land and their return to the land will be permanent. God's people will never again be ridiculed and scorned. He will increase

² Pease, Steven, L. *The Golden Age of Jewish Achievement*. Soma, CA: Deucalion Publishers, 2009. 396

³ Brooks, David *The Tel Aviv Cluster*; New York; The New York Times January 11, 2010. Internet. Accessed February 27, 2010 <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/12/opinion/12brooks.html>

the population to levels that have never been enjoyed in Israel before. God has repeated this through many prophets. For example in the following passage from Jeremiah the Lord says that the magnitude of the population increase through the final regathering will dwarf the one in the Exodus which was in excess of one million people.

Jeremiah 16:14-15

¹⁴Therefore, behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that it shall no more be said, As Jehovah liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; ¹⁵but, As Jehovah liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the countries whither he had driven them. And I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers (ASV, 1901).

Interestingly, the Exodus is frequently cited as the high point of population immigration to Israel. After the final regathering this will change. Because in the future the Messianic Kingdom regathering of the Jews will become the high point of Jewish immigration to Israel assisted by the angelic realm from both Heaven and the entire earth (Isaiah 27:12-13; Matthew 24:31; Mark 13:27).

The Lord declares that the land had been “*a devourer of men, and hast been a bereaver of thy nation.*” He is referring to the fact that many nations during the times of the Gentiles have trodden down the Jews. This will no longer be the case as He restores them to the Land permanently with previously unknown plenty.

Finally, the mockery and humiliation, taunts, and scorn Israel had been forced to endure will cease. She will once again be restored to a position of widespread respect, admiration, prominence, and influence in the world as God’s Chosen People (Deuteronomy 28:13; Zechariah 8:13, 20–23).

NEXT MESSAGE: GOD’S PROMISE TO RETURN ISRAEL TO THE LAND PT. II

Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments

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