

# Gospel Gleanings, "...especially the parchments"

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## Does Scripture Prophecy a Future Jewish Kingdom?

*And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. (Daniel 11:32-33)*

Elder Mike Rodgers has written the last two chapters of Gospel Gleanings. When this week's writing didn't arrive yesterday, I contacted him and learned that he has been ill this week and was not able to write it. Please keep him in your prayers. Lord willing he will continue his very informative and beneficial thoughts next week.

As a brief commentary on the general theme of this particular prophecy, and of Biblical prophecy in general, I offer this week's study with the question that appears in the title. **Does Scripture prophecy a future Jewish kingdom?**

First let's consider the basic character of Biblical prophecy. We saw clearly throughout the seventy week prophecy in the ninth chapter of Daniel that God precisely set forth not only the six primary future accomplishments that God intended to bring to pass within that time frame, but we also observed that God included a number of other events that related to the Jewish people, their conduct, and God's judgments related to the time of Jesus' coming and their rejection of Him. All of these prophecies are set forth as if they were yesterday's news, indisputable facts.

This same prophetic character appears in God's prophecy of Jesus' sufferings (closing verses of Isaiah 52 and the whole of Isaiah 53). Jesus' many sufferings are described in disturbing clarity and detail.

In the tenth and eleventh chapters of Daniel we have seen similar details and specificity as Daniel enlarged his description of the three national empires that would rule the Mediterranean world from his time till Jesus came in fulfillment of Daniel's seventy week prophecy. In these chapters, written late in Daniel's life and late in the seventy years of Judah's Babylonian captivity we do not read of Babylon because the Medes and Persians had already conquered Babylon and were ruling Babylon. The first verse of Daniel's eleventh chapter mentions Darius "the Mede."

My second point has to do with God's "conditional" promises or prophecies that appear

throughout Scripture. Fatalists do not like this word "conditional." However, of the some fifteen hundred times that we see the simple two letter word "If" in Scripture most of them directly address conditional events or outcomes. Whether folks who embrace errant interpretations of the Bible like a Bible concept or not, their flawed beliefs do not alter God's revelation of His truth in His Book. After all, it is His revelation, and it is His Book. We either agree with God, or we are wrong. God never in Scripture tells us that He alters His truth or purpose to accommodate man's errant ideas. In fact Scripture reveals the mirror opposite, "...Let God be true, but every man a liar...." (Romans 3:4) Every idea or belief that fails to harmonize with God is wrong; in Luther's famous poetic words, "God's truth abideth still!"

What does Scripture say about a possible Jewish restoration to the kingdom of God in the future, as most folks who embrace this idea believe, near or just prior to the final end time? Does Scripture tell us about such an event in the clear and indisputable words of prophecy, say in a manner similar to Daniel's seventy week prophecy or Isaiah's Messianic prophecy in the fifty second and fifty third chapters of His writings? Although I have known and respected men who embrace this notion, I have never found such a clear prophetic revelation.

I rather find the potential for a Jewish return to their Messiah and to God's temporal blessings in the gospel always presented in Biblical conditionality. In other words it appears, but always with specific and uncompromising divine conditions. Let's look at three such passages, all quite specifically dealing with this very question.

*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he*

*that cometh in the name of the Lord. (Matthew 23:37-39)*

Jesus' words here affirm God's rejection of the Jewish people because they rejected Him. It also adds in the last sentence the specific divine conditions that any Jewish person must meet before enjoying the temporal blessings of God's grace in the gospel. "*Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*" **This is a conditional promise.** No regenerate Jew of any generation, including the last generation before the Second Coming, will see Jesus' face and enjoy the divine blessings of God, compared as a hen clucking over, loving, feeding, and sheltering her young chicks, apart from an attitude that embraces Jesus as God's Son, and blesses Him alone.

*And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? (Romans 11:23-24)*

Paul devoted a lengthy chapter (Romans 11) to this question and gives us his inspired conclusion in this passage. The prospect of a future Jewish restoration to gospel blessings is not a matter of divine decree and purpose or promise. It is rather a matter of divine conditions; "**IF** they abide not still in unbelief...."

*Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. (2 Corinthians 3:16)*

The "it" of this verse refers to Jewish hearts, now covered with a veil of unbelief because they rejected Jesus as their Messiah and as God's Son, God Incarnate. Paul affirms Jesus' words above from the Olivet Discourse. Their rejection of Jesus and their abiding unbelief some thirty years later when Paul wrote to the Corinthians evoked God's forsaking judgment against them. Their restitution to a place of blessings in the future, any future era, is not contingent on a divine decree, but on the condition of their turning to the Lord and embracing Him in precisely the same faith-perspective as Gentile believers have worshipped Him for now almost two thousand years.

The church that I serve as pastor includes two men in its membership whose parents were Jews, so they are Jews. We did not receive them

into our membership because of their culture or because of their family tree. They did not ask our church for membership based on either of these facts. They confessed to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their one and only Savior and as God's one and only Son, God Incarnate; confessed Him alone as their Savior. Upon that confession, our church joyfully received them, and they were baptized into our number. Neither of these men would remotely consider claiming a single New Testament gospel blessing on any other basis than the finished work of Christ and on their faith in Him alone as God's Son and as their Savior. These two men fulfilled the Biblical conditions that Jesus and Paul outlined above, and they today enjoy the blessings of the gospel just as these passages promise.

If at some future time, be it the final generation prior to the Second Coming or not, any number of Jewish people heard and believed the gospel as set forth in these New Testament "conditional" promises, I doubt that anyone in any New Testament Church would be troubled in the least by their confession of Jesus or by their admission into the blessings of the gospel. As our church rejoiced upon the confession of the two men mentioned above, so any other church would likewise rejoice.

However, I cannot find compelling or convincing evidence in Biblical prophecy that at any future time the predominant constituency of the New Testament Church shall shift from Gentile to Jewish. Jew or Gentile, red, yellow, black, or white; Scripture presents the blessings of the gospel as available to every regenerate (born of God) person on exactly the same basis, faith in Christ as God's one and only Son (having the same nature and glory as God, making Him God, God Incarnate), their one and only Savior, followed by repentance and a lifestyle that mirrors that faith.

Since the suffering Jewish people of the world gained a piece of geography in the eastern Mediterranean in 1947, folks who embrace these errant ideas have offered one empty prediction after another, and, as time has proved their false predictions wrong, they have revised their predictions, something that God's true prophets never needed to do because God always gave them a true prophecy from the beginning.

Pray for Brother Mike's recovery and writing next week.

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Worship service each Sunday  
Joseph R. Holder

10:30 A. M.  
Pastor