

HOW LONG, UNTIL...?

HOW LONG WILL IT BE UNTIL ISRAEL SEES, HEARS...?

By Arlen L. Chitwood

“An he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate,

And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land,

But yet it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves, so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof [‘like the terebinth and like the oak, of which, when they are felled, only a root-stump remains: such a root-stump is a holy seed’ (Keil & Delitzsch; cf. ASV, NASB, NIV, NKJV)]” (Isa. 6:9-13).

Isaiah chapter six, written in the eighth century B.C., is one of the numerous Messianic chapters in this book. This chapter, like the opening two chapters of the book, deals with existing conditions among the Jewish people (the complete house of Is-

rael, both the northern ten tribes and the southern two tribes) at the time that the book was written. But, as also seen so many places throughout the book, this chapter doesn’t stop with conditions during those days. Rather, matters are carried down through centuries of time, ending with events surrounding Israel at the time of Christ’s return yet future, ushering in the Messianic Era.

(On the Messianic nature of Isaiah chapter six, refer to, “Blessings Awaiting Israel and the Nations,” Ch. V in the author’s book, “Israel — from Death to Life.”)

Isaiah 6:9, 10 refers to the condition of the Jewish people at the time of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities (722 and 605 B.C. respectively). *And these two verses were fulfilled during those days.*

These verses are referenced centuries later in all four gospel accounts relative to the continuing attitude of the Jewish people during the offer of the kingdom of the heavens at the time of Christ’s first coming (Matt. 13:14, 15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; John 12:39-41). *And these two verses were again fulfilled during those days.*

These verses are again referenced about three decades later at the end of the Book of Acts, by Paul in Rome at the time that the reoffer of the kingdom to Israel came to a close.

Paul, for the third and last time (cf. Acts 13:46; 18:6; 28:28), after calling attention to these verses in Isaiah chapter six, told Israel’s rejecting religious leaders that “the salvation of God [referring to salvation in relation to the kingdom being offered and rejected] is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it” (Acts 28:28; cf. vv. 17-29). *And these two verses were again fulfilled at this time.*

(As previous shown, the quotation from Acts 28:28 is the closing statement relative to Israel and the kingdom of the heavens as it pertains to that previously introduced in the Old Testament [e.g., Gen. 2, 24, 41; Ex. 2; Ruth 1-4] and then dealt with in Matthew chapters twelve, thirteen, sixteen, twenty-one, and Acts chapter two, among numerous other places in the N.T.)

But, though there has been a continued fulfillment of Isa. 6:9, 10 down through some twenty-seven centuries of time, which includes a continuing fulfillment among the Jewish people during the present day and time (cf. Hos. 11:1; Matt. 2:15), *the contextual complete and final fulfillment of these two verses will occur yet future, during the Tribulation.*

It will be during the coming Tribulation, particularly during the last three and one-half years of this time, that the Jewish people, scattered throughout the kingdom of the Beast, will reach not only an apex in but also an end to their blindness and deafness, as seen in these two verses.

And, *ONLY* by understanding that Isa. 6:9, 10 has had a continued fulfillment in the lives of the Jewish people since the day Isaiah penned these words, and *ONLY* by understanding that these two verses will continue to be fulfilled among the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob until a time yet future, can the remaining three verses in the chapter be properly understood.

How Long?

Isaiah 6:11 begins with a question — *HOW LONG?* — which, contextually, can only be about *one thing* — that seen in the previous two verses. That is to ask, *HOW LONG* will the Jewish people remain in the condition seen in these two verses?

They see, but they don’t see; they hear, but they don’t hear. *HOW LONG* will it be before the Jewish people’s eyes and ears are opened, before they understand with their heart, before they are converted, and before the nation is healed?

HOW LONG...? HOW LONG...? HOW LONG...?

The question is answered one way in Rom. 11:17-26 — “until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in,” which is an answer from one perspective, having to do with the Church and the purpose for the present dispensation.

The question is answered another way in Isa. 6:11-13 — “until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate...,” which is an answer from

another perspective, having to do with Israel and God's purpose for calling this nation into existence.

Whether referencing the present nation in the Middle East or Jews presently scattered among the nations, *the words of Isa. 6:9, 10 can only resound equally loud and clear for ALL. ALL are equally, inseparably described by that stated in these two verses.*

Revelation in this respect though, dealing with the time in which we live and the days immediately ahead, *begins with and centers on those Jews who have returned back to the land, those who have entered into an "empty, swept, and garnished" house, BEFORE THE TIME (Matt. 12:43-45; cf. Dan. 9:26, 27; 11:21ff; Matt. 24:15ff; Luke 21:20ff).*

And there is a dual reason why Scripture does this:

1) Part of world Jewry has left their place among the nations where God had driven them and *returned to their land at a time preceding repentance, leaving them in extremely dire straits (cf. Num. 35:26-28; Matt. 12:43-45).*

2) The Beast, correspondingly, is seen beginning his efforts to destroy and completely do away with the Jewish people *by attacking those dwelling in the land first, beginning at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (Matt. 24:15ff).*

And God will use this man's efforts in a dual respect as well:

1) God will, first of all, use this man to uproot His people from their land and drive them back out among the nations, *where He will then deal with all of world Jewry together, relative to repentance.*

2) God will then use this man, through his efforts to destroy the Jewish people — *anti-Semitic efforts far exceeding those of any other man in Jewish history — to, instead, bring the Jewish people to the place of repentance.*

And once the latter has been accomplished, though God will have used this man to accomplish His purpose regarding Israel, He will then judge

this man for his anti-Semitic actions.

Then, with the preceding in view, the question about *time remaining concerning Israel's blindness* becomes a simple matter to understand.

As well, because of that occurring in the middle of the Tribulation concerning the actions of the Beast, *the desolation mentioned in Isa. 6:11, 12, also becomes a simple matter to understand.*

Scripture clearly reveals that *this man's actions will begin in Jerusalem when he turns against the Jewish people and seeks to eradicate them from the face of the earth (Ps. 83:4 Dan. 9:26, 27; 11:28-32).*

And Scripture, as well, clearly relates that *Jerusalem itself will be destroyed at this time (Dan. 9:26; Luke 21:21-24).*

(Matthew's account of the Olivet Discourse, at the time that the Beast breaks his covenant with Israel, *begins with his actions at the rebuilt Temple on the Temple Mount, continuing with information concerning this man's corresponding actions relative to the people and the land.*

Luke's account of the Olivet Discourse, covering the same time, *deals with the destruction of Jerusalem itself, continuing with information not found in Matthew's account concerning this man's corresponding actions relative to the people and the land.*)

Then, Isa. 6:11, 12 deals with not only Jerusalem but other cities in the land as well — Tel Aviv, Haifa, Bethlehem, *et al. Jews in all Israeli cities are going to be uprooted, driven back out among the nations, and their cities correspondingly destroyed (cf. Lev. 26:31).*

This man will seek to eliminate any vestige of the Jew or anything having to do with the Jewish people from the face of the earth — *a complete destruction of the people, their cities, their land, and even anything having to do with any possible remembrance of them.*

Satan knows that if he can do this, he can make null and void God's plans and purposes for mankind, which God has been working out and will one day complete *through the presence of a cleansed Jewish nation.* And Satan also knows what awaits him (and all collaborating with him) should he fail — *dethronement and ultimately the lake of fire.*

A Tenth

The Jewish people today, with their numerous Holocaust museums, echo the cry, "NEVER AGAIN!" But, IT WILL HAPPEN AGAIN! The Prophets have spoken!

The mere fact that Israel still exists in the state described in Isa. 6:9, 10 *guarantees that it will happen again.* And that which the nation has done by entering into an "empty, swept, and garnished" house in this condition, before the time, *guarantees that the next time it happens matters will be seven times worse (cf. Lev. 26:18-31; Dan. 3:19-25; Matt. 12:43-45).*

Under this man's reign, during the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation, *two-thirds of the world's Jewish population will die (Zech. 13:8, 9 [some 9,000,000 by today's count]). A third will die from "pestilence" and "famine"; and another third will die by "the sword [be slain]" (Ezek. 5:12).*

Then Isa. 6:13 deals with *the slaying of a tenth of those who have returned to the land (some 600,000 by today's count), with the remainder (over five million) either being taken captive and sold as slaves throughout the Gentile world or escaping into surrounding Gentile nations, then out into other nations (Joel 3:6; Luke 21:24).*

At that time, God will have *the whole house of Israel out among the nations where He can deal with all of the Jewish people together, relative to repentance.* And, as seen during the WWII years in Europe, *God is going to allow Gentile persecution to take its course, allowing this persecution to go to whatever extremes it will take to effect Jewish repentance.*

But this time — with the condition of Israel seen as far worse than before and during the WWII years (Matt. 12:43-45) — *the furnace will be heated seven times hotter than normal (Lev. 26:18-31; Dan. 3:19-25).*

And Israel, through Gentile persecution of a nature not heretofore experienced by the Jewish people, will ultimately be brought to the place of repentance.

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