**Israel — What Does the Future Hold?**

By Arlen L. Chitwood

**Chapter Nine**

**Israel’s Future Restoration**

**A Restored Nation, a Healed Land**

“*Behold, the days are coming*,” says the LORD, “*When the plowman shall overtake the reaper*, *and the treader of grapes him who sows seed*; *the mountains shall drip with sweet wine*, *and all the hills shall flow with it*.

*I will bring back the captives of My people Israel*; *they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them*; *they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them*; *they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them*.

*I will plant them in their land*, *and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them*,” *says the LORD your God*. (**Amos 9:13-15**)

A major issue and problem among many Bible teachers and students of the Word today concerns *how one is to look upon and treat the present existence of an Israeli nation in the Middle East*.

This nation, some 6,000,000 strong, in one respect, *CAN*’*T* be there, though it is; but in another respect, this nation *MUST* be there, which it is.

This nation *CAN*’*T* be there in fulfillment of God’s numerous promises throughout the Old Testament to one day restore His dispersed people back to their land; but this nation *MUST* be there to bring about the fulfillment of the final seven years of Daniel’s Seventy-Week prophecy.

And this is where numerous Bible students, not properly understanding the whole overall issue — particularly as the issue, dealt with throughout the numerous types, beginning in **Genesis**, is understood in the light of the **Prophets** — get completely off track and commit mayhem in biblical interpretation.

In many instances, the present existence of an Israeli nation in the Middle East has been made to be *something that it isn*’*t at all*. This present existing nation has been erroneously associated with a fulfillment of or a beginning fulfillment of God’s promises in the Old Testament concerning a regathering of the Jewish people from among all the Gentile nations where He has scattered them.

Sections of Scripture such as **Deuteronomy 30:3-5**; **Jeremiah 30:3**, **18**; **Ezekiel 34:11ff**; **36:24ff**; **37:1ff**; **39:25ff**; **Amos 9:14** are cited, and it is stated that God is presently regathering His people and restoring their land to a fruitful condition in accordance with His promises (e.g., **Deuteronomy 30:9**; **Ezekiel 36:29**, **30**; **Amos 9:13**).

However, *this is not what Scripture teaches at all.*  The present nation of Israel *cannot possibly exist as some type of fulfillment or a beginning fulfillment of God*’*s promises to restore His people*; nor can the present productivity of parts of the land of Israel *have anything to do with God*’*s corresponding promise to restore the land as well*.

After Two Days, on the Third Day

The Jewish people, in time past, *because of disobedience*, were removed from their land, with the land left desolate; and these same people, over time, were subsequently scattered among the Gentile nations of the earth.

Israeli *disobedience*, covering centuries of time, was climaxed almost two millennia ago by the ancestors of remnants that had been allowed to return to the land over five centuries earlier — *the Jewish people slaying their Messiah*.

Israel is *the Slayer* (**Acts 2:23**, **36**; **5:28-30**; **7:52**), removed from her land and scattered among the nations. And, because Israel is the Slayer, *Israel CANNOT return to her land until two points in time*:

1. *UNTIL after two days* (*2000 years*), *on the third day* (*the third 1*,*000-year period* [**Numbers 19:11ff**]).
2. *UNTIL after the death of the High Priest* (which can only refer to the termination of Christ’s present high priestly ministry in the antitype [**Numbers 35:15-28**]).

There can be no healing for either the people or the land *UNTIL this future time*.

(For information on the preceding, refer to Appendixes 1, 2, “The Intractable Middle East Problem” and “The Death of the High Priest” in the author’s book, The Time of the End; also see the author’s books, Israel – From Death to Life and Middle East Peace – How ? When?)

Following Repentance

Further, *Israel* *CANNOT be restored to the land UNTIL* *the nation has been brought to the place of repentance*. Israel must *first be dealt with concerning that which resulted in the nation*’*s dispersion among the Gentile nations*. This fact is plainly set forth in connection with prophecies pertaining to the Lord regathering and restoring His people (e.g., **Deuteronomy 30:1**, **2**; **Isaiah 1:16-20**; cf. **Isaiah 1:2ff**).

Further, *Israel being brought to the place of repentance*, *according to Scripture*, *will not occur* *UNTIL the latter part of the coming Tribulation*, *during the latter part of Daniel*’*s Seventieth Week*. This time of trouble that will befall the Jewish people — “*the time of Jacob*’*s trouble*” (**Jeremiah 30:7**) — results from Israel’s disobedience and the necessity of bringing the Jewish people to the place of repentance.

This will be a time of unparalleled trouble, designed by God to bring the Jewish people to the end of themselves. During this time they will be brought into such *dire straits* that they will have no place to turn other than to the Lord (**Exodus 3:1-10**).

*ONLY THEN will the nation repent*; *and ONLY FOLLOWING REPENTANCE can the nation be restored*, *with the land being healed*.

Messiah’s Return, Jewish Festivals, Old Testament Saints

Further, *Israel CANNOT return until the nation*’*s Messiah returns at the end of the Tribulation*. According to the sequence set forth in the seven Jewish festivals in **Leviticus** chapter **twenty-three**, the Jewish people must look upon their Messiah (with the nation being saved, fulfilling the Passover, the first festival) *BEFORE the nation can be regathered* (fulfilling the feast of Trumpets, the fifth festival).

(Note that Israel has slain the Lamb, but has yet to apply the blood. The Lamb was slain at Christ’s first coming; Israel though will not apply the blood until Christ’s second coming.

*ONLY THEN* will the first festival in **Leviticus** chapter **twenty-three** be completely fulfilled. And these seven festivals [*Jewish festivals*, *having to do first and foremost with Israel*] must be fulfilled in a sequential order.)

Further, Old Testament saints are to be raised from the dead and be restored to the land along with the living at this time. *Both the dead* (*resurrected*) *and those living at that time will return to the land together* (**Exodus 13:19**). The resurrection of Old Testament saints is set forth in the third of the seven festivals in **Leviticus** chapter **twenty-three** — the feast of First Fruits. And this will be fulfilled following the fulfillment of the Passover but prior to the fulfillment of the feast of Trumpets.

Israel possesses a promise that God gave to Solomon almost three thousand years ago concerning repentance, the nation’s healing, and the land being healed:

*If My people* [the Jewish people] *who are called by My name will humble themselves*, and *pray and seek My face*, *and turn from their wicked ways*, ***then*** *I will hear from heaven*, *and will forgive their sin and heal their land*. (**2 Chronicles 7:14**)

And exactly the same thing is seen in a promise given through Moses almost five hundred years preceding the promise given through Solomon:

*But if they* [the Jewish people] *confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers*, *with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me*, *and that they also have walked contrary to Me*,

*and that I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies*; *if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled*, *and they accept their guilt*-

***then*** *I will remember My covenant with Jacob*, *and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember; I will remember the land.* (**Leviticus 26:40-42**)

Israel can return to the land, with both the nation and the land being healed, *ONLY following the nation*’*s repentance*. And the nation’s repentance is placed in Scripture at a time near the end of the Tribulation, in connection with Christ’s return.

Those comprising the present existing nation in the Middle East are there *in unrepentance and unbelief*, *BEFORE the time*. And the remaining unrepentant Jewish people (most of the Jews alive today) are still scattered among the Gentile nations, with the Old Testament saints still in their graves.

In this respect, it is simply not possible that the present remnant returning to the land and forming the existing nation in the Middle East *can have anything to do with the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies pertaining to Israel*’*s restoration*; nor can a reclamation of parts of the land *have anything to do with Old Testament prophecies pertaining to the land being healed*.

If either had anything to do with the fulfillment of God’s promises to restore His people to a healed land, *God would be acting contrary to His revealed Word* — *an impossibility*.

The remnant of Jews presently in the land is *a remnant from the Slayer*, which has gone back *BEFORE the time*. And not only are the Jewish people *still unclean* through contact with the dead body of their Messiah (the two days are not yet complete), but a remnant from this unclean nation has gone back *prior to the time* Christ completes His high priestly ministry. And, according to the type in **Numbers** chapter **thirty-five**, *the Slayer CANNOT return in this manner prior to the time Christ completes His present ministry in the heavenly sanctuary* (**Numbers 35:28**).

The present remnant in the land — *a part of the Slayer*, *returning before it is time to return* — leaves this remnant open *to* *great danger*. In actuality, it leaves the Jewish people forming this remnant open *to experiencing exactly the same thing of which the entire nation is guilty*. It leaves them, *as the slayer*, *open to being slain themselves* (**Numbers 35:26**, **27**).

And this is *exactly* what is about to happen to the present existing nation of Israel in the Middle East.

The Antichrist is about to appear and make a seven-year covenant “*with many*” in Israel. And after three and one-half years, he will break his covenant, come against Jerusalem with his armies, and seek to wipe this nation off the face of the earth.

The rebuilt temple will be desecrated and destroyed, Jerusalem will be destroyed, and the Jews who are either not killed or do not escape into surrounding Gentile nations will either be slain or sold as slaves throughout the Gentile world. The present existing nation in the Middle East will be completely destroyed, *slain* *as it were* (cf. **Daniel 9:26**, **27**; **Joel 3:1-8**; **Matthew 24:15-22**; **Luke 21:20-24**; **2 Thessalonians 2:3**, **4**; **Revelation 12:5ff**).

During the latter half of the Tribulation, an Israeli nation, as we know it today, will not exist in the Middle East. Conditions will not only have become similar to those seen in Europe during World War II (Jewish persecution under the Third Reich, prior to the existence of the nation in the Middle East), but they will have become far, far worse.

It will be during this time — days that, unless shortened, no flesh would be saved (**Matthew 24:22**) — that the Jewish people will be brought to the end of themselves, to a place where they will have no recourse other than to call upon the God of their fathers. *ONLY THEN* will God hear, remember “*His covenant with Abraham*, *with Isaac*, *and with Jacob*“ and send His Son back to deliver His people (**Exodus 2:23-3:10**).

*ONLY THEN — NOT BEFORE — will events pertaining to the restoration of Israel and the healing of the land occur*.