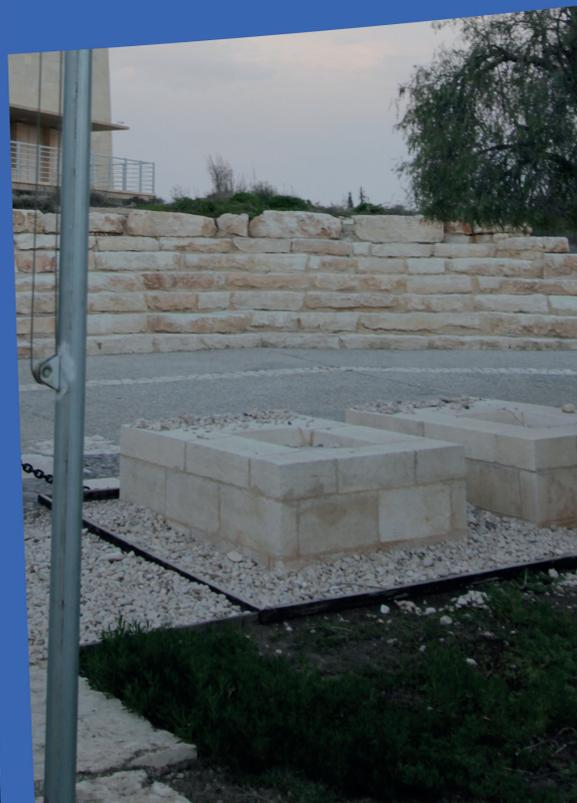




*The Mystery of Jesus,  
Israel and the Coming  
Kingdom*

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## THE MYSTERY OF JESUS, ISRAEL AND THE COMING KINGDOM

**Despite all the shakings going on today, in the financial capitals and the governments of the world - especially those that are seeking the destruction of Israel - we need to appreciate that God is at work and He has not lost control.**

There is a huge spiritual battle for truth going on today and it doesn't just involve Israel. It's the one that most of us face on a daily basis in the Nation, in the Church and especially in our own personal lives.

The issue of the legitimacy of Israel is a regular matter debated in the UN, the EU and even in our own media. But the battle didn't just start in 1948. It started in earnest 3500 years ago and has continued to the present day. But all true believers are involved in that battle. It's the battle between Satan and God over who is the true and living God. It's the same one that Elijah defined on Mt Carmel. *"How long will you falter between two opinions, if the Lord is God - Follow him!"*

But it's also about what scriptures do we trust. It's about who is Jesus and what has He said and done that is so unique. It's about the love and justice of a Holy God. Today, every aspect of truth is under severe examination. is insufficient on its own, just as trying to prove that Jesus is the only way truth and life to someone who refuses to believe it.

Why? Because it is a spiritual matter. 1 Cor 2:6-16 explains that some things

only come by revelation. There is a spiritual battle going on today. Just as Satan tried to kill Israel as they emerged from Egypt using Amalek, the descendant of Esau/Edom (Ex 17:8-14) and as the Idumean (Edom) King Herod tried to kill Jesus the Messiah on His arrival in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16) so he is trying to do the same again to prevent His second coming in order this time to establish His Messianic rule and reign over all the earth.

For a long time there has been a veil over the hearts of Israel - God's Chosen people. Today we see it lifting slowly. But as fast as that happens it seems to be descending upon so many in what one would have thought was the believing Church. This veil is covering their hearts and minds and blinding them to the truth. 2 Cor 4:3-4 How could this be happening? Israel seems to be a defining issue.

### THREE IMPORTANT MYSTERIES TODAY

1. Jesus Christ is a mystery to many. So says **1 Cor 2:7, Eph 3:3,4,9 5:32, 6:19, cOL 1:26-17, 2:2, 4:3**
2. The second coming of Jesus is also a mystery. **1 Cor 15:51**
3. Israel is also a mystery to so many **Romans 11:25** Why? Because there is an anti-Semitic spirit still at work, not just in the world but more worryingly it is still in the "Church".

### Prayer changes things

We pray that people can change, since this is our calling. So wherever you are, just as you pray for Light to shine

upon His people Israel, you can also pray for those around you who are still in confusion about God's purposes for Israel and the world. Isa 62:6 says "***I have set watchmen on your walls O Jerusalem...***" says As we rightly intercede for Israel we also have a responsibility to pray for our own nation. **1 Tim 2:2**

There may not be huge numbers praying but it's never the numbers that make the difference. Its "***...Not by might or power but by My spirit says the Lord***" Zech 4:6 We cannot change God's purposes set out by prophetic word but we can pray for people to receive a revelation from God that gives them an understanding heart. Scripture shows that through history God has found it difficult to find intercessors, especially at times of great apostasy (Ezekiel 22, Isaiah 59:16) We also need to be sensitive to the fact that sometimes even when there are those prepared to pray, over some matters, the Lord expressly commands His intercessors to stop praying Jeremiah 7:16.

The concern today is that when people who have known the truth, actively turn away from it and become the enemy of God - praying for such becomes very difficult and one begins instead to fear greatly for the person. Our prayer at that time can only be "... in wrath Lord, remember mercy" Hab 3:2 If we see it happen, it's never something to feel good about - as if we have been vindicated. It's a huge sadness to the Lord but we can thank and rejoice in Him for the grace that He has shown toward us. We who deserve nothing have been so blessed.

## THE PURPOSE OF PROPHECY

One of the contentious matters of debate in theological circles today is the relevance of Biblical prophecy, especially in relation to Israel. Peter makes the case quite simply but profoundly in Acts.

*"But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began"* Acts 3:18-21

In these verses, Peter is assuring his hearers that when the Prophets predicted the person and ministry of Jesus, they expected that their words would be literally fulfilled. Using the same methodology, related to the matter of the restoration of Israel and the Kingdom of Messiah which was also firmly imprinted upon every Jewish heart. Acts 1:6 "Lord will at this time, restore the kingdom to Israel" reveals the Apostles great longing for the Kingdom to be restored to Israel. Nevertheless, the Risen Lord Jesus shifts their focus to more important matters for that time – the need to be witnesses to the Risen Messiah to all the world, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

There are significant numbers of prophecies that speak of the Messiah

– which have already been fulfilled. It is not inconsistent therefore to expect a similar outcome for prophecies relating to the restoration of Israel? Certainly Acts 3 shows that both expectations were held with equal anticipation. Today's Christian scholars and expositors however, don't seem to exercise the same consistency as in previous generations.

### **IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, WE HAVE PROPHECIES IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES**

- Immediate events relating to situations the prophet was involved in. Almost all of these are warnings of coming calamities as a result of disobedience (Jeremiah 25:1-14)
- Prophecies of Israel's dispersion and restoration. Some refer to the babylonian dispersion only, others to a worldwide dispersion and restoration. (Jeremiah 29, Ezekiel 36)
- Prophecies of the coming Messiah as a suffering servant - fulfilled by Jesus at His first coming. (Isaiah 53)
- Prophecies of world catastrophe. Plus conflict over Jerusalem that proceeds 'the day of the Lord' (Isaiah 24, Zechariah 12)
- Prophecies of world peace and blessing. This is following the day of the Lord and the coming of the Messiah as the reigning king. (Isaiah 2, Zechariah 14)

### **IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, WE HAVE SIMILAR CATEGORIES SHOWING FULFILLMENTS OF PROPHECY**

- The main prophecy of an immediate event is Jesus' words concerning the coming destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Romans (Luke 19:41-44)
- This leads into a prophecy of the dispersion of the Jewish people but includes indications of their return to Jerusalem at the end of his age (Luke 21:20-24)
- Since the main subject of the New Testament is Jesus the Messiah, it is clear that the Gospels themselves are the fulfillment of the third category of Old Testament prophecy of the coming Messiah.
- Both Jesus and His disciples gave numerous prophecies of the catastrophes that would come at the end of this age, which they identified as the last days before the return of Christ. (Matthew 24, 2 Thessalonians 2, Revelation 6-19)

There is only one passage which clearly relates to the Old Testament passages about the reign of the Messiah, but it is plain in its meaning; that following the return of Christ at the battle of Armageddon he will rule and reign on earth for 1000 years during which time Satan will be bound and unable to deceive the nations (Revelation 20)

## HOW DIFFERENT ARE NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECIES?

No warnings to nations in the New Testament. Prophecies were warnings to the nations in Old Testament times of judgement to come unless they repented. In the NT there is virtually no record of similar prophecies to the surrounding nations. The two in ACTS are both warnings of bad things about to happen in the world. Agabus warns of famine in Acts 11:28 and in Acts 21:11 warned Paul of his coming captivity.

- In 1 Corinthians 12:10 Prophecy is listed as a Gift of the Spirit but given for the Church. But the New Testament reminds us from whence it comes. "Prophecy did not come by the will of man but Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" 2 Peter 1:21. Holiness still needs to characterize those who bring a prophetic word.
- We need discernment to ensure it is from God. "Not all who say unto me Lord, Lord...but Lord have we not prophesied in your name" Matt 7:22 beware of many false prophets. 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1; Rev 19:20 OT had the same concerns. See Jeremiah 23
- All can prophecy but all will not fulfil the role of a prophet. "Your sons and daughters shall prophesy..." Acts 2:17 but "any woman who prophesies with her head uncovered.." 1 Corinthians 11:5 Philips daughters Acts 21:9

- Prophecy is not to be despised. "Desire earnestly to prophecy" 1 Corinthians 14:39
- Are prophets for today? YES. "We know in part and prophesy in part but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part will be done away" 1 Corinthians 13:9-10.

## JEWISH PEOPLE AND THE LAND.

Dozens of prophecies of the OT relate to Jesus and Over 150 times God says He would bring His people back to the Land. Is it spiritual? Did God mean the Church? If one spiritualises Israel then why not Jesus? History proves beyond doubt that in both cases these prophecies are historically true. How can anyone, knowing the history, the economy, and the politics of the region think that the Jews alone brought about their Nationhood? Everything that could be done to prevent the rebirth of the Nation was done and it wasn't enough because God had another plan. So how can anyone especially Christians, deny that Israel is a miracle state?

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