

The Future Salvation & Restoration of the Jewish People

CFBC Men's Study | January 18, 2019

I am one of those who believe in Israel's restoration and conversion; who receive it as a future certainty, that ALL Israel shall be gathered, and that all Israel shall be saved. As I believe in Israel's present degradation, so do I believe in Israel's coming glory and preeminence. I believe that God's purpose regarding our world can only be understood by understanding God's purpose as to Israel...

I believe that the sons of Abraham are to re-inherit Palestine, and that the forfeited fertility will yet return to that land; and the wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad for them, and the desert will rejoice and blossom as the rose. I believe that, meanwhile, Israel shall not only be wanderers, but that everywhere as a remnant, a small remnant, shall be saved, and that it is for the gathering own of this remnant that our missionaries go forth!

... How Jewish history shall once more emerge into its old place of grandeur and miracle, and how it shall unwind from itself the bright future of all nations, I KNOW NOT! But so it is fore-written: "What shall be the reconciling of them be, but life from the dead?" (Rom 11.15) "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit" (Isa 27:6)

— **Horatius Bonar**

Is it that important? To ask it another way: Is God really true & faithful to His word?

Herman Ridderbos wrote: "The Church, then, as the people of the New Covenant has taken the place of Israel, and national Israel is nothing other than the empty shell from which the pearl has been removed and which has lost its function in the history of redemption" (Paul: An outline of his theology, 1975).

1. WHEN?

- Ezekiel 20:20ff - tells us that Israel will go through a time of great hardship before their salvation & restoration
 - Ezekiel 20:33-38, 39-49
 - Cf. Jeremiah 30:7-11, see salvation in v.18-24; cf. 31.1!
- **Romans 11** –outline of Romans 11
 - Israel NOT rejected by God (1-10)
 - Israel's temporary stumbling at Christ (11-24)
 - Israel's temporary hardening in unbelief (25-32)
 - the end of Jewish hardening (25)
 - the deliverer's future salvation of national Israel (26-27)
 - the salvation of all Israel (26)
 - the national covenant of cleansing (27) (Isa 59:20-21 and Jer 31:31-34)
 - the comprehensive salvation for Israel (28-32)
 - according to an irrevocable covenant (28-29)
 - according to divine mercy (30-32)
- Rom 11:25 - "ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED" – 3 main interpretations:
 - 1. Israel here refers to the redeemed of the NT era who constitute the church (whether Jews or Gentiles). Thus the Church is the "New Israel" that has replaced the former OT nation/ethnic people.
 - 2. "Israel" here refers to the accumulation over many centuries of the saved remnant of national Israel
 - 3. "Israel" here refers to a future national conversion of Israel, the larger unbelieving segment in particular, that results in Israel serving under Christ in the promised land with restored glory* **[the only correct view in context/Scripture]**

2. WHERE?

During the preaching of the 144,000 Jews (Rev 7:1-8) and other converts (Rev 7:9) and the 2 witnesses (Rev 11:3-13) and the angel flying in heaven (Rev 14:6), they will then comprise 'all Israel' at the end who will – in fulfillment of God's sovereign and irrevocable promise – will be completely a nation of believers who are ready and prepared for the kingdom of the Messiah Jesus (Mac, 128)

• Rom 11:25-26 - from Zion & Isa 59:20!

• Zechariah 12-13

- At Messiah's 2nd advent
- From Mt Zion/Jerusalem (12:10)
- In that day (the end-times climax of the seven-year Tribulation), the veil that has for centuries covered the eyes of Jewish people, with the exception of the believing remnant, will be lifted. Then, said the Lord, "They will look on Me whom they pierced" (v. 10). The word they refers to Jewish people upon whom the "Spirit of grace and supplication" is poured. The word Me refers to God, the One who is speaking. In context, this speaker is the divine Messiah.
- Zech 13.1 - great fountain & repentance: "This...because this lays out the way it does, starting in verse 12 down to verse down to verse 14, it's just repeated. You can start at the top with the house of David, the royal family. You can come down to the house of Nathan, a prophet; come down to the house of Levi, a priest; come down to the house of Shimei, another priest—priests, kings, everybody individually, independently, personally penitent, mourning over sin. Everybody individually, personally looking at the cross and realizing that they pierced God, they pierced the Messiah. This is that great repentance. This is that salvation." (John MacArthur)

SCRIPTURES ON THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE / ISRAEL:

Psalms 110

Psalms 22:25-31

Isaiah 2

Isaiah 9:6-7

Isaiah 11-12

Isaiah 24 (Trib/judgment) and Isaiah 25 (praise/restoration/favor)

Isaiah 27.1 (judgment) and Isaiah 27.2-13 (restoration, regathering)

Isaiah 33:1-16 (judgment) and Isaiah 33:17-24 (restoration)

Isaiah 34 (wrath/vengeance) & Isaiah 35 (blessing/restoration)

Isaiah 54:7 (wrath) & Isaiah 54:8-17 (restoration/salvation)

Isaiah 59 (salvation from God!)

Jeremiah 30:1-17 (judgment) & 30:18-24 (restoration)

Jeremiah 31:1-2 (wrath) & 31:3-14 (restoration)

Jeremiah 31:23-34 (restoration)

Israel shall never pass away (Jeremiah 31:35-37)

Jeremiah 33:23-26 - Israel SHALL never pass away

Ezekiel 11:14-21 - Israel's restoration & REGENERATION! (new heart)

Ezekiel 20 - God's dealings with ISRAEL'S HISTORY rehearsed

Ezekiel 20:33-44 - Israel's salvation/restoration

Ezekiel 28:25-26 - Israel's regathering

Ezekiel 34:23-31 - Israel's peace and regathering

Ezekiel - mountains of Israel to be blessed new covenant/new heart -

REGENERATION (Ezekiel 36:24-28)

Ezekiel 37 - valley of dry bones (v.11-23) & then the kingdom (24-28)

Ezekiel 38-39 - battle of Gog and Magog restoration/regathering/salvation (Ezekiel 39:25-29)

Hosea 14

Joel 3

Amos 9

Obadiah 15-21

Micah 4

Zephaniah 3:12-20

Zechariah 8 - coming peace of Zion (vv. 20-23)

Zechariah 12:10-13 - great repentance

Zechariah 13:1 - a great fountain (v.9)

Zechariah 14 - Kingdom/regathering in Israel

3. WHY?

Because the Jews as a nation rejected their Messiah, God TEMPORARILY set them aside "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in" (Rom 11:25). At that time, with unailing certainty, "All Israel" will be saved (v.26). In addition to bringing his chosen people to salvation, God will fulfill His promises to restore her own kingdom in her own land, which will become a land of eternal blessing and peace.

• Why the future salvation & restoration?

- 1) the Bible teaches it
 - 2) the faithfulness of God demands it
 - 3) the calling & gifts of God are irrevocable (Rom 11.29)
 - 4) God cannot lie (Titus 1.2)
- Even the NT teaches this! Acts 1:6; Acts 3:19; Matt 19:28; Luke 1:33; Rom 9-11; cf. 10.1; Rom 15.8; Luke 1.16

• Note the **future salvation of Israel** & its connection to the divine doctrine of **sovereign election**:

- The doctrine of election is proof that God has a future for Israel. From the beginning of Israel's existence, God's choice of this nation was based on His unconditional electing purposes. It was not because of anything Israel had done that made her the chosen people of God (see Deut. 7:6-8). The New Testament reaffirms Israel's election as the reason God can never remove or replace Israel. In Romans 11:1-2a, Paul states, "I ask, then, has God rejected His people? Absolutely not! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew." In what J. Murray has called "the most emphatic negative available," Paul denies the possibility of Israel's being permanently rejected by God. (Michael Vlach)

4. HISTORICAL SUPPORT?

- This is nothing new. The early church believed this and many thru church history have clung to this future salvation of the Jews:
 1. Justin Martyr (c. 100–165) held that the tribes of Israel would be gathered and restored in accord with what the prophet Zechariah predicted: And what the people of the Jews shall say and do, when they see Him coming in glory, has been thus predicted by Zechariah the prophet: "I will command the four winds to gather the scattered children; I will command the north wind to bring them, and the south wind, that it keep not back. And then in Jerusalem there shall be great lamentation, not the lamentation of mouths or of lips, but the lamentation of the heart; and they shall rend not their garments, but their hearts. Tribe by tribe they shall mourn, and then they shall look on Him whom they have pierced; and they shall say, Why, O Lord, hast Thou made us to err from Thy way? The glory which our fathers blessed, has for us been turned into shame."
 2. Tertullian (c. 155–230) urged Christians to eagerly anticipate and rejoice over the coming restoration of Israel: "It will be fitting for the Christian to rejoice, and not to grieve, at the restoration of Israel, if it be true, (as it is), that the whole of our hope is intimately united with the remaining expectation of Israel."
 3. Origen (185–254) believed in "two callings of Israel." The first calling of Israel refers to Israel's calling before Christ that eventually led to their stumbling and falling. The second calling of Israel, however, is future and will take place after the period of the fullness of the Gentiles. In Origen's words: "But when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, then will all Israel, having been called again, be saved."
 4. John Chrysostom (349–407) said this in regards to [Romans 11:26](#): [Regarding the fact] that they [the Jews] shall believe and be saved, he [Paul] brings Isaiah to witness, who cries aloud and says, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." ([Isaiah 59:20](#).) ... If then this has been promised, but has never yet happened in their case, nor have they ever enjoyed the remission of sins by baptism, certainly it will come to pass.
 5. In his homilies on Matthew, Chrysostom also noted: To show therefore that [Elijah] the Tishbite comes before that other [second] advent ... He said this. ... And what is this reason? That when He is come, He may persuade the Jews to believe in Christ, and that they may not all utterly perish at His coming. Wherefore He too, guiding them on to that remembrance, saith, "And he shall restore all things;" that is, shall correct the unbelief of the Jews that are then in being.
 6. Cyril of Alexandria (378–444): Although it was rejected, Israel will also be saved eventually, a hope which Paul confirms. ... For indeed, Israel will be saved in its own time and will be called at the end, after the calling of the Gentiles."
 7. Theodoret of Cyrus (393–457): And he [Paul] urges them not to despair of the salvation of the other Jews; for when the Gentiles have received the message, even they, the Jews, will believe, when the excellent Elijah comes, bringing to them the doctrine of faith. For even the Lord said this in the sacred gospels: 'Elijah is coming, and he will restore all things.'

8. Cassiodorus (c. 485–585) [commenting on [Psalm 103:9](#)]: This verse can be applied also to the Jewish people, who we know are to be converted at the world's end. On this Paul says: Blindness in part has happened in Israel, that the fullness of the Gentiles should come in, and so all Israel should be saved.
9. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274): It is possible to designate a terminus, because it seems that the blindness of the Jews will endure until all the pagans chosen for salvation have accepted the faith. And this is in accord with what Paul says below about the salvation of the Jews, namely, that after the conversion of the pagans, all Israel will be saved.
10. Matthew Henry (1662–1714): Another thing that qualifies this doctrine of the Jews rejection is that though for the present they are cast off, yet the rejection is NOT final; but, when the fullness of time is come, they will be taken in again. They are not cast off for ever, but mercy is remembered in the midst of wrath. ... The Jews shall continue in blindness, till God hath performed his whole work among the Gentiles, and then their turn will come next to be remembered. This was the purpose and ordination of God, for wise and holy ends; things should not be ripe for the Jews' conversion till the church was replenished with the Gentiles, that it might appear that God's taking them again was not because he had need of them, but of his own free grace.
11. Cotton Mather (1663–1728): This day, from the Dust, where I lay prostrate before the Lord, I lifted up my Cries ... for the conversion of the Jewish nation, and for my own having the Happiness, at some time or other, to Baptize a Jew that should by my ministry be brought home unto the Lord.
12. Thomas Boston (1676–1732): There is a day coming when there shall be a national conversion of the Jews or Israelites. The now blinded and rejected Jews shall at length be converted into the faith of Christ.
13. Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758): The Jews in all their dispersions shall cast away their old infidelity, and shall have their hearts wonderfully changed, and abhor themselves for their past unbelief and obstinacy. They shall flow together to the blessed Jesus, penitently, humbly, and joyfully owning him as their glorious King and only Savior, and shall with all their hearts, as one heart and voice, declare his praises unto other nations. ... **Nothing is more certainly foretold than this national conversion of the Jews in Romans 11.**
14. Robert Murray M'Cheyne (1813–1843): Converted Israel ... will give life to the dead world. ... just as we have found, among the parched hills of Judah, that the evening dew, coming silently down, gave life to every plant, making the grass to spring and the flowers to put forth their sweetest fragrance, so shall converted Israel be when they come as dew upon a dead, dry world. The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.
15. J. C. Ryle (1816–1900): It always seemed to me that as we take literally the texts foretelling that the walls of Babylon shall be cast down, so we ought to take literally the texts foretelling that the walls of Zion shall be built up—that as according to prophecy the Jews were literally scattered, so according to prophecy the Jews will be literally gathered—and that as the least and minutest predictions were made good on the subject of our Lord's coming to suffer, so the minutest predictions shall be made good which describe our Lord's coming to reign. And I have long felt it is one of the greatest shortcomings of the Church of Christ that we ministers do not preach enough about this advent of Christ, and that private believers do not think enough about it.
16. Charles Spurgeon (1834–1892): I think we do not attach sufficient importance to the restoration of the Jews. We do not think enough of it. But certainly, if there is anything promised in the Bible it is this.
 - a. (Spurgeon again): The day shall yet come when the Jews, who were the first Apostles to the Gentiles, the first missionaries to us, who were far off, shall be gathered in again. Until that shall be, the fullness of the Churches' glory can never come. Matchless benefits to the world are bound up with the restoration of Israel; their gathering in shall be as life from the dead.

5. SO WHAT?

- To prove that Rom 8:35-39 is really true: nothing can separate you from God's love, **Rom 9-11** is the lengthy proof of God's truthfulness!
- Your salvation is in fact secure because the same God who is faithful to you is faithful to his covenantal promises to the Jewish people!

It is ONLY where the church persists in refusing to learn this message (of Rom 9-11) where it secretly — perhaps unconsciously — believes that its own existence is based on human achievement, and so fails to understand God's mercy to itself, that it is unable to believe in God's mercy for still unbelieving Israel, and so entertains the ugly and unscriptural notion that God has cast off His people Israel and simply replaced it by the Christian Church. These three chapters (Rom 9-11) emphatically forbid us to speak of the Church as having once and for all taken the place of the Jewish people (Barry Horner, *Future Israel*, xxi)

A Case For The Restoration Of National Israel

By Michael J. Vlach

There are ample scriptural reasons to believe in a future salvation and restoration of the nation Israel. The positive case for a restoration of Israel can be categorized in seven positive declarations:

1. The Bible explicitly teaches the restoration of the nation Israel. The Bible on many occasions teaches that Israel will be restored to its land. For example, Deuteronomy 30:1-6 is a strategic passage regarding God's plans for Israel: "When all these things happen to you – the blessings and curses I have set before you – and you come to your senses [while you are] in all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, and you and your children return to the Lord your God and obey Him with all your heart and all your soul by doing everything I am giving you today, then He will restore your fortunes, have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. Even if your exiles are at the ends of the earth, He will gather you and bring you back from there. The Lord your God will bring you into the land your fathers possessed, and you will take possession of it. He will cause you to prosper and multiply you more than [He did] your fathers. The Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the hearts of your descendants, and you will love Him with all your heart and all your soul so that you will live."

This passage details a big-picture prophecy concerning Israel's future. God had dramatically delivered Israel from Egypt. He also gave Israel the Law. God described in Deuteronomy 28 – 29 the blessings that would come upon Israel if the nation obeyed Him, and He discussed the curses that would come because of disobedience. God then discusses what the distant future will hold for Israel. After proclaiming blessings and curses, God would banish Israel to all the nations. But a time would come when Israel would "return" to God and God would "restore" Israel. This includes a spiritual salvation ("your God will circumcise your heart") and a restoration "into the land your fathers possessed." In sum, God promised Israel that after a period of banishment the nation would be saved and restored to its promised land. Many other passages reaffirm this expectation. See, for example, Isaiah 66:22; Ezekiel 36:22-30; 37:21-29; Joel 3:20; and Zephaniah 3:20. When examining these and other restoration texts in the Bible, certain truths emerge:

1. The restoration of Israel involves both spiritual and physical blessings, including possession of the land of promise.
2. The promise of restoration is based not on Israel's greatness but on God's choice and God's character.
3. The promise for restoration takes place after the period of Israel's disobedience.

As the passages above and many others indicate, the restoration of Israel is a major theme of the Old Testament. It is an explicit doctrine. As such, we should be skeptical of any perspective that says Israel will not be restored as a nation, especially when no New Testament text explicitly revokes or transfers the Old Testament expectation.

The future of national Israel is not just an Old Testament matter. The statement in Romans 11:26 – "And in this way Israel shall be saved" – is consistent with the view that Israel will experience a national salvation and restoration at some point in the future. The other 10 references to "Israel" in Romans chapters 9 through 11 refer to ethnic Israel, so the Israel who "shall be saved" in 11:26 must also refer to ethnic Israel. Thus, Romans 11 is evidence for a special future for Israel.

As Blaising notes: "Are there theological reasons for believing that Israel has a future? Yes, because God is faithful to His word. Yes, because, 'For I, the Lord do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed' (Mal. 3:6). Yes, because, 'The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable' (Rom. 11:29)."

2. The Bible explicitly promises the perpetuity of the nation Israel. Another proof for the coming restoration of Israel is that the Bible teaches the perpetuity of the nation Israel. Israel will always be a nation before God. Jeremiah 31:35-37 states, "This is what the Lord says: The One who gives the sun for light by day, the fixed order of moon and stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea and makes its waves roar – the Lord of Hosts is His name: If this fixed order departs from My presence – [this is] the Lord's declaration – then also Israel's descendants will cease to be a nation before Me forever. This is what the Lord says: If the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth below explored, I will reject all of Israel's descendants because of all they have done – [this is] the Lord's declaration."

Notice that Israel's everlasting existence as a "nation" is linked to the continued existence of the sun, moon, and stars. One who looks into the sky and sees these cosmic bodies can have assurance that Israel's existence as a nation before God is assured. Claims that this passage has been reinterpreted so that the church is the true Israel that fulfills this passage are not satisfactory. The nation Israel is promised a perpetual place in the plan of God, and the nation will always endure as a special object of God's love.

3. The New Testament reaffirms a future restoration for the nation Israel. The fact that God does reaffirm a salvation and restoration of Israel in the New Testament gives even more reason to believe in a future for Israel. For example, Jesus' words in Matthew 19:28 are explicit evidence that Jesus expected a restoration of national Israel. Matthew states, "Jesus said to them, 'I assure you: In the [regeneration], when the Son of Man sits on His glorious throne, you who have followed Me will also sit on 12 thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel.'"

Jesus is speaking about what will take place in the future. In the day when the earth experiences regeneration and the kingdom is established, the apostles will sit on 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel. Almost certainly the apostles understood Jesus' words to refer to a restored national Israel. Even after 40 days of kingdom instruction, the apostles were still thinking of a restoration of Israel (see Acts 1:3, 6).

Another passage that supports the idea of a restoration of national Israel is Acts 1:6-7 – "So when they had come together, they asked Him, 'Lord, at this time are You restoring the kingdom to Israel?' He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or periods that the Father has set by His own authority.'"

This text, which describes Jesus' final interchange with His apostles before His ascension, affirms the idea of a restoration of the nation Israel. First, it shows that at this late date in the earthly ministry of Jesus the apostles fully expected a restoration of the nation Israel. Second, Jesus' response includes no rebuke or correction for this belief, thus affirming the correct nature of their understanding.

The fact that these disciples had immediately experienced 40 days of kingdom instruction from the risen Jesus (see Acts 1:3) makes it unlikely they could be so wrong about the nature of the kingdom and national Israel's relationship to it. Also, Jesus' answer, although not an explicit affirmation of their hope, appears to assume the correctness of their expectation.

Additional texts that support and reaffirm the restoration of Israel include Matthew 23:37-39; Luke 13:35; 21:24; and Romans 11.

4. The New Testament reaffirms that the Old Testament promises and covenants to Israel are still the possession of Israel. If the nation Israel has been permanently superseded by the church, one would not expect a statement in the New Testament declaring that the covenants and promises of the Old Testament are still the possession of the nation Israel. But this is what is found in Romans 9:3b-4 when Paul refers to "my countrymen by physical descent. They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the temple service, and the promises."

According to Paul, the "covenants" and "promises" and even "temple service" are still seen as being the possession of Israel even with the church existing and even during a time in which Israel's disobedience is evident.

5. New Testament prophecy affirms a future for Israel. Evidence for a future salvation and restoration of Israel is found in New Testament prophetic passages. Put simply, the fact that New Testament prophecy mentions Israel, Jerusalem, and the temple as having continuing relevance is supplemental proof that national Israel still has a role to play in God's plan.

Luke 21 also discusses important eschatological events. Verse 24 is evidence for a restoration of Israel. Jesus states, "They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive into all the nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled." Jesus predicts that Jerusalem will be under Gentile control for a period known as "the times of the Gentiles." But is there any indication of a restoration of Israel in this verse? The answer is yes. The word "until" signifies a limit to the judgment on Israel discussed in 21:24.

6. The New Testament maintains a distinction between Israel and the church. The New Testament distinguishes Israel and the church in such a way that rules out the idea that the church is now identified as Israel or that the church entirely inherits Israel's promises and covenants to the exclusion of Israel. "The New Testament evidence reveals that outside of a few disputed references...the name Israel is related to the 'national' covenant people of the Old Testament." (R.L. Saucy)

The New Testament still consistently refers to the nation Israel as "Israel" even after the establishment of the church. Israel is addressed as a nation in contrast to Gentiles after the church was established at Pentecost (Acts 3:12; 4:8, 10; 5:21, 31, 35; 21:28). As C.C. Ryrie points out, "In Paul's prayer for natural Israel (Rom. 10:1) there is a clear reference to Israel as a national people distinct from and outside the church."

7. The doctrine of election is proof that God has a future for Israel. From the beginning of Israel's existence, God's choice of this nation was based on His unconditional electing purposes. It was not because of anything Israel had done that made her the chosen people of God (see Deut. 7:6-8). The New Testament reaffirms Israel's election as the reason God can never remove or replace Israel. In Romans 11:1-2a, Paul states, "I ask, then, has God rejected His people? Absolutely not! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew." In what J. Murray has called "the most emphatic negative available," Paul denies the possibility of Israel's being permanently rejected by God.

This issue of Israel's election is significant. In Scripture, God's election is based on His sovereign choice and is not revoked by the disobedient actions of those with whom He has elected. This appears to be a problem for those who take a punitive supersessionist approach or assert that Israel is no longer the people of God because of their disobedience. If Israel's restoration is linked to God's election, which Romans 11 indicates, then Israel's restoration is surely based on the character of God. Thus, Israel's restoration is sure because God is faithful and He keeps His promises.

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