

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH IN THE TOWN OF TONAWANDA, NY**The Rev. Fr. Arthur W. Ward Jr., Rector*****“Israel, Palestine, and the Coming of Christ”****(understanding our present and future in light of the past and the witness of God's Word)****“A Persecuted People and a Rebirth”*****I. Review – It's All About the Covenants!**

We have seen that God love and faithfulness is expressed through the covenants He makes with His people. Recall that a covenant is a binding commitment between two parties, in this case God and humanity. **A covenant usually consists of four elements – 1) promise 2) obligation 3) sign and 4) fulfillment.** Covenants are usually both **conditional and unconditional.**

The three covenants that stand out in the Old Testament as it pertains to the future of mankind and the coming of Christ (both His first and second comings) are **the Abrahamic, the Mosaic, and the Davidic.** All three deal with the elements of God's Kingdom – **1) an eternal ruler 2) a people 3) land and 4) law.** All three prepare our world for the coming of the One True King – Christ Jesus and His Kingdom.

The three covenants have conditions such as faith in the case of Abraham and His descendants, obedience to the law for Moses and the people of Israel, and faithfulness if David's heirs will continue on the throne. However, two of the three include unconditional promises that will be fulfilled regardless of the faith of those descendants of Abraham and David. Moreover, both are called eternal covenants. In the case of Abraham, all families and nations will be blessed through him and for David he will have a descendant that will be an eternal ruler. Both are fulfilled in the Person of Jesus Christ who is not only a descendant of Abraham and David but inaugurates a New Covenant and a New People of both Jew and Gentile through faith in Christ.

An important follow-up question is the promises made to the descendants of Abraham (i.e. the people of Israel) and David (i.e. the Jews). **Are they still the Chosen People?** God's Word and history both would suggest that they are! This again does not mean that they are more righteous or have a better standing with God. It does not mean that salvation is through the Jewish faith as it is understood today. However, what it does mean is that the descendants of the people of Israel (known as Jews today) still have a special place in God's heart as people of the covenants and will be used by God to usher in the return of Christ and the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth! Moreover, God wants every Jew to be complete in recognizing that His Son, Jesus is the Christ, and that believing in Him they might have eternal life.

II. The Consequences of Unfaithfulness

A. Warnings – God warns His people Israel through His prophets of the peril of turning their backs against the Lord God. As the Chosen People the blessing is great when they follow the Lord, but the judgment is equally great when turning away from the Lord.

1. from God through Moses (Dt. 4:23-31) - *“When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the Lord your God, so as to provoke him to anger, I call*

heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed. And the Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few among the nations where the Lord will drive you. And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.” (c.f. Dt. 28:49-57)

2. from the Lord to King Solomon (2 Chron. 7:16-22) - “For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that My name may be there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. 17“As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, even to do according to all that I have commanded you, and will keep My statutes and My ordinances, 18then I will establish your royal throne as I covenanted with your father David, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to be ruler in Israel.’

19“But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, 20then I will uproot you from My land which I have given you, and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples. 21“As for this house, which was exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?’ 22“And they will say, ‘Because they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers who brought them from the land of Egypt, and they adopted other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore He has brought all this adversity on them.’”

3. from the Prophets

a. **Hosea** – also lived during the 8th century BC. His entire book serves primarily as a warning to the Northern Kingdom of Israel to repent or face God’s judgment at the hands of the Assyrians. There is also a warning given to Judah to not follow the example of their sister tribes to the north. The prophet’s ministry (roughly 755 – 710 BC) took place during the reigns of the following kings: **Hosea 1:1: The word of the LORD which came to Hosea the son of Beeri, during the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.**

Why judgment? **Hosea 4:1-3** summarizes why: “Listen to the word of the LORD, O sons of Israel, for the LORD has a case against the inhabitants of the land, because there is no faithfulness or kindness or knowledge of God in the land. 2There is swearing, deception, murder, stealing and adultery. They employ violence, so that bloodshed follows bloodshed. 3Therefore the land mourns, and everyone who lives in it languishes...” Later on in **Hosea 11:5-7**, we read who it is that God will use to judge Israel: “They will not return to the land of Egypt; but Assyria—he will be their king; because they refused to return to Me. The sword will whirl against their cities, and will demolish their gate bar and consume them because of their counsels. So My people are bent on turning from Me. Though they call them to the One on high, none at all exalts Him.”

b. **Isaiah** – this prophet lived during the 8th century BC during the reigns of four kings of Judah. We read in **Is. 1:1**: “The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz concerning Judah and Jerusalem, which he saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.” While his primary ministry was to warn Judah and to prophesize concerning the coming of the Messiah, Isaiah also includes warnings against the northern kingdom of Israel

Is 9:8-14: “The Lord sends a message against Jacob, and it falls on Israel. *9And all the people know it, that is, Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, asserting in pride and in arrogance of heart: The bricks have fallen down, But we will rebuild with smooth stones; The sycamores have been cut down, But we will replace them with cedars.* *11Therefore the LORD raises superior adversaries against them from Rezin and provokes their enemies, 12The Arameans from the east and the Philistines from the west; and they devour Israel with gaping jaws. In spite of all this, His anger does not turn away, And His hand is still stretched out. 13Yet the people do not turn back to Him who struck them, nor do they seek the LORD of armies. 14So the LORD cuts off head and tail from Israel, both palm branch and bulrush in a single day.*

Is. 10:1-3; 5-7: “Woe to those who enact unjust statutes and to those who constantly record harmful decisions, *2So as to deprive the needy of justice and rob the poor among My people of their rights, so that widows may be their spoil and that they may plunder the orphans. 3Now what will you do in the day of punishment, and in the devastation which will come from afar?...5Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hands is My indignation, 6I send it against a godless nation and commission it against the people of My fury to capture spoils and to seize plunder, and to trample them down like mud in the streets. 7Yet it does not so intend, nor does it plan so in its heart, but rather it is its purpose to destroy and to eliminate many nations.*” In other words, while God is using Assyria to inflict His judgment upon His people, they are not doing it for righteousness sake, they are just as evil. As a result, they too will be judged and suffer God’s wrath. Hence, the Spirit of the Lord continues to speak through **Isaiah** in the rest of chapter 10 (vv.8-end), declaring, “For it (Assyria) says, “As my hand has reached to the kingdoms of the idols, whose carved images were greater than those of Jerusalem and Samaria, *11Shall I not do the same to Jerusalem and her images just as I have done to Samaria and her idols?*” So Assyria will soon threaten Judah but God will not have it! We read, *12So it will be that when the Lord has completed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, He will say, “I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and the arrogant pride of his eyes.” 13For he has said, “By the power of my hand and by my wisdom I did this, because I have understanding; and I removed the boundaries of the peoples and plundered their treasures, And like a powerful man I brought down their inhabitants... But now notice how the judgment of God is proclaimed: Is the axe to boast itself over the one who chops with it? Is the saw to exalt itself over the one who wields it? That would be like a club wielding those who lift it, or like a rod lifting the one who is not wood. 16Therefore the Lord, the GOD of armies, will send a wasting disease among his stout warriors; and under his glory a fire will be kindled like a burning flame. 17And the Light of Israel will become a fire and Israel’s Holy One a flame, and it will burn and devour his thorns and his briars in a single day. 18And He will destroy the glory of his forest and of his fruitful garden, both soul and body, and it will be as when a sick person wastes away.*” Not only will Assyria be judged by the God of all creation and history, but it will include the second greatest miracle of deliverance in the Old Testament after the Exodus – the destruction of Assyrian King Sennacherib’s army when it tried to conquer Jerusalem in 701 BC during the reign of King Hezekiah. That army was totally destroyed by a plague that came from the angel of the Lord. 185,000 soldiers died (**2 Kings 19:35**). Upon his return to Ninevah in defeat, Sennacherib’s own sons killed him and seized power. It was a miraculous deliverance of God’s people in Judah who still had time to repent and walk in the ways of the Lord before judgment at the hands of the Babylonians more than one hundred years later.

c. Jeremiah – lived in the 7th and 6th centuries BC and served to warn the kings and people of Judah to return to the Lord or face judgment at the hands of the Babylonians who had defeated the Assyrians a few decades earlier. His ministry spanned from about **627-585 BC**. He witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem and its defeat at the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar. Thought to be the author of the OT book, *Lamentations*, Jeremiah is called the “weeping prophet” as he witnesses the horrors of invasion and defeat. He was taken to Egypt by fleeing countrymen against his will after the fall of Jerusalem (Jer. 43:1-7) even though Jeremiah warned them not to do so and that the Babylonians would continue warfare even in Egypt.

One of several examples in Jeremiah warning of God's judgment is from **Jeremiah 9:11-16** - **"I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals; and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant."** **12**Who is the wise man that may understand this? And who is he to whom the mouth of the LORD has spoken, that he may declare it? **Why is the land ruined, laid waste like a desert, so that no one passes through?** **13**The LORD said, **"Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice nor walked according to it, 14but have walked after the stubbornness of their heart and after the Baals, as their fathers taught them,"** **15**therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, **"behold, I will feed them, this people, with wormwood and give them poisoned water to drink. 16"I will scatter them among the nations, whom neither they nor their fathers have known; and I will send the sword after them until I have annihilated them."** (cf. Jer. 44:2-4; 15-17)

4. from Jesus

a. Lk. 19:41-44: **"When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, 42**saying, **"If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. 43"For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, 44and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."**

b. Lk. 21:20-24: **"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near. 21"**Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those who are in the midst of the city must leave, and those who are in the country must not enter the city; **22because these are days of vengeance, so that all things which are written will be fulfilled.** **23"**Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days; **for there will be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people;** **24**and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and **will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**

c. Lk. 23:27-30: Now following Him was a large crowd of the people, and of women who were mourning and grieving for Him. **28**But Jesus turned to them and said, **"Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29**For behold, **days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are those who cannot bear, and the wombs that have not given birth, and the breasts that have not nursed.'** **30**Then they will begin **TO SAY TO THE MOUNTAINS, 'FALL ON US,' AND TO THE HILLS, 'COVER US.'**

d. Mt. 24:16-22: **"Therefore, when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16**then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. **17"**Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. **18"**Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. **19"**But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! **20"**But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath. **21"**For then there will be **a great tribulation,** such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, **nor ever will.** **22"**Unless those days had been cut short, **no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short."**

B. Judgments of God upon the people of Israel in history

1. **Assyrians** invade and conquer the Northern Kingdom of Israel and its capital Samaria in 722 BC.

2. **The Babylonians** invade and conquer Jerusalem and the Southern Kingdom of Judah in 586 BC, and destroy Solomon's temple. They remove its religious vessels and artifacts and take thousands back to Babylon in exile. Notable examples of such exiles include the prophets Ezekiel and Daniel.

3. **The First Jewish Revolt** – the Romans responded to Jewish rebellion with the Emperor Nero sending additional troops under General Vespasian and his son Titus to the region in December of 66 AD. This was in response to a Jewish victory two months earlier led by men from both the Pharisees and Sadducees. The conflict lasted the next four years with over 60,000 Roman soldiers involved. The siege of Jerusalem was most violent. It began in the spring of 70 AD. Despite fierce resistance by the Jewish defenders, the Romans eventually breached the various walls of the city and destroyed it street by street. By cutting the city off from supplies, starvation and cannibalism among the inhabitants became common place. At one point, the Romans were crucifying 500 Jews per day. By the summer, they had reached the Temple gates and proceeded to burn and raze it to the ground. The rebels made a final stand in Herod's palace, but all were killed. Two years earlier in 68, Nero committed suicide. Vespasian was declared by the army to be the new Emperor, so his son Titus finished the campaign. Today one can still see *the Arch of Titus* that was constructed in commemoration of the Roman victory. There are even relief carvings showing Roman soldiers taking the Jewish holy vessels with them. Josephus, a Jewish commander who had surrendered early on and joined the Roman side went on to write a history of the Jewish people and their war with Rome. His books, *Wars of the Jews* and *Antiquities of the Jews*, are considered some of the most important historical accounts of Judaism in antiquity. Much of what Josephus writes helps clarify and confirm the biblical record. With the destruction of the Jewish Temple and the great loss of life, the Jewish faith would never be the same. It sadly fulfilled the words Jesus had shared on the Mount of Olives only a few decades earlier.

C. Persecutions

1. **Haman's conspiracy to eliminate the Jews** during the reign (485-464 BC) of Persian King Ahasuerus or "Xerxes I (his better-known name in Greek). Recall that by the end of the 6th century (500) BC Persia had conquered much of the Middle and Near East supplanting Babylon as the superpower of that region. Jews were scattered throughout the entire area because of the invasions and conquest by Assyria and Babylon. Now the Persians were in charge. Haman, a high-ranking Persian official wanted to eliminate all the Jews throughout the empire. The plot was thwarted by Queen Esther who was Jewish and her guardian and fellow Jew, Mordecai. It is commemorated by Jews to this day with the Feast of Purim. This marks the first example of a conspiracy to eliminate the Jewish people simply because of their faith. The elimination of the Jewish people would have meant that God's saving work through Abraham's descendants would have come to an end. There would be no fulfillment in the coming of Christ, and therefore no gospel and no Church! It is the same reason why Satan continues to use the hatred of the Jews as a motivating factor in eliminating the Jewish people. Why now even after Christ has come and the Church of both Jew and Gentile has been born? Jesus is coming back to His Chosen People the Jews in Israel! We will see how this is clearly taught by Jesus and God's Word below.

2. **The second Jewish Revolt** is often forgotten by Christians in light of the emphasis in the Bible placed on the first. However, the second had long lasting ramifications still felt to this day. It occurred in 132 AD in response to the Emperor Hadrian's ban on circumcision as well as his plan to build a new pagan city, *Aelia Capitolina*, on Jerusalem's ruins. Led by Simon bar-Kokhba, whom a leading rabbi, Akiva ben Joseph, believed to be the Messiah, this revolt resulted in greater disaster for the Jewish people. Although the

rebels were victorious early on, capturing and controlling Jerusalem for two years and even minting coins bearing the inscriptions “liberation of Israel” and liberation of Jerusalem,” eventually they were annihilated with their leader bar-Kokhba in 135 AD. Rabbi Akiva was flayed alive. According to Roman historian Cassio Dio, over 580, 000 men lost their lives. Jewish slaves flooded the marketplace, and their price was less than a horse. To add insult to injury, a new Roman city was built over Jerusalem and Jews were banned from living there on penalty of death. On the Temple Mount, a sanctuary was built to the Roman god, Jupiter Capitolinus, and an image of a pig was placed on the southern gate of the city (facing Bethlehem). **It was at this time that the Roman province of Judea was renamed Syria-Palestina.** The Romans chose this name to insult the Jewish people since the name “*Palestina*” was a derivative of the word for Philistine, the people that Israel fought with extensively 1000 years earlier – recall Goliath was a Philistine. The English equivalent of this word is *Palestine*. Thus, **both the name change of the holy land from *Judea* (derived from the Latin for “Jewish”) to *Palestina*, the Latin derivative of Philistine, and the eradication and replacement of the Jewish Temple with a pagan one, were meant to remove the Jews from any connection to the land God had originally promised to Abraham and his descendants. This lie has been perpetuated to this day by those who insist that the land should be called Palestine and that the Jews do not have a right to be there.** Of course, the strongest proponents of this view today are Muslims who believe the land now belongs to Allah and his followers.

3. From Pagan to Christian Rome – after Hadrian’s death subsequent emperors took a less hostile approach to Jews, the high point occurring during the reign of Septimus Severus (193-211 AD) who was of Semitic origin himself and spoke Aramaic. Jews were even allowed to return to Jerusalem but only would eventually make up about ten percent of the population. The center of greatest Jewish influence became the region of the Galilee where the idea of the synagogue replacing the Temple as the center of worship took root.

When Constantine came to power in 312 AD and made the Christian faith the premier faith of the Empire there became a great interest in discovering and naming the sacred sites in the Holy Land. Jews were forbidden from proselytizing and were strongly encouraged and even commanded to become Christians. Jewish communities throughout the empire soon found themselves the targets of persecution in the ensuing decades partly do to the hateful teachings of some Church leaders including Jerome who wrote that despite most Jews having left the holy land, they continue to “*grow like worms.*” In 387 AD, early Church Father John Chrysostom, considered a saint today in the Roman, Orthodox, and Anglican Churches, and who became known as the “*bishop with the golden tongue*” said some very hateful things about Jews in a series of homilies he gave to counter the influence of Christians who were turning to Judaism. While the purpose of his homilies was to prevent Christians from participating in Jewish customs, and thus prevent the perceived erosion of Chrysostom's flock, they became a catalyst for Jewish persecution. We can see why! This is what he said, “*The Jews are the most worthless of all men. They are lecherous, greedy and rapacious. They are perfidious murderers of Christ. They worshiped the devil; their religion is a sickness. The Jews are the odious assassins of Christ, and for killing God there is no expiation possible, no indulgence or pardon. Christians may never cease vengeance, and the Jews must live in servitude forever. God always hated the Jews. It is incumbent upon all Christians to hate the Jews.*” Despite the efforts of some Emperors and leaders in the Church to be more tolerant of Jews, the ongoing persecution eventually caused many Jews to withdraw from public life in the Empire or move elsewhere. This caused Jews to move further North into Eastern Europe and Russia and further East into India. Another notable example of intolerance happened in 692, the Byzantine (Eastern half of the old Roman Empire) Emperor Justinian II banned Christians and Jews from bathing together.

4. Expulsions, massacres, and ghettos - time does not allow us to go into much detail other than to note that the Crusades and Inquisition by the Roman Catholic Church only added to Jewish misery. Convert or be killed could sum up the philosophy espoused by those two hideous events. During the Reformation (1500s), Martin Luther and his followers in Germany did not help either with his anti-Jewish

writings. In addition, during this same time (1516) Jews in Italy (the Venetian Republic) were forced into a neighborhood called “La Gheta” or the Foundry. The “ghetto” had been born. This trend then became the norm throughout cities in Italy and Western Europe. Jews who had not been expelled were forced to live in neighborhoods or “ghettos.” This was for their own protection from the mob and to keep them out of sight. In some Protestant cities such as Cologne and Amsterdam churches could be found and some Christians lived in the ghettos. As long as Jews were out of sight and using their money to “bless” the Church and greater community they were usually left alone. In Spain, Eastern Europe, the Cossacks in Poland and Ukraine (100,000 killed in 1648), and Russia one could add hundreds of examples of massacres, expulsions, and outbreaks of persecution from the 1500s to the 20th century.

5. The Holocaust – the spirit of all of the above culminated in the Holocaust orchestrated by Adolph Hitler and the Nazi party. Sadly, in some respects Hitler and the Nazis were enabled by the world and the Church. A passive approach to evil never works! And yet, as we will see below, God never forgot His people Israel!

III. Promises of Rebirth and Restoration

A. Moses - *“But from there you will seek the Lord your God and you will find him if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the Lord your God and obey his voice. For the Lord your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that He swore to them.”*

B. The Major Prophets

1. Isaiah

a. Is. 43:1-2; 5-7: *“But now, **this is what the LORD says, He who is your Creator, Jacob, and He who formed you, Israel:** “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine...Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and gather you from the west. 6“I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ And to the south, ‘Do not hold them back.’ Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth, 7Everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created for My glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made.”*

b. Is. 66:6-11: *“A sound of uproar from the city, a voice from the temple, **the voice of the LORD who is dealing retribution to His enemies.** 7“Before she was in labor, she delivered; before her pain came, she gave birth to a boy. 8“Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? **Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be given birth all at once?** As soon as Zion was in labor, she also delivered her sons. 9“Shall I bring to the point of birth but not give delivery?” says the LORD. “Or shall I who gives delivery shut the womb?” says your God. 10“Be joyful with Jerusalem and rejoice for her, all you who love her; Be exceedingly glad with her, all you who mourn over her...””*

2. Jeremiah

Jer. 31:2-12: *This is what the LORD says: “The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness—Israel, when it went to find its rest.” 3The LORD appeared to him long ago, saying, “I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore, I have drawn you out with kindness. 4 “I will build*

*you again and you **will be rebuilt, Virgin of Israel!** You will take up your tambourines again, and go out to the dances of the revelers. 5“Again you will **plant vineyards** on the **hills of Samaria**; the planters will plant and will enjoy the fruit. 6“For there will be a day when watchmen on **the hills of Ephraim** call out, ‘Arise, and let’s go up to Zion, to the LORD our God.’” For this is what the LORD says: “**Sing aloud with joy for Jacob**, and be joyful with the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘LORD, save Your people, The remnant of Israel!’ 8“Behold, **I am bringing them from the north country**, and **I will gather them from the remote parts of the earth**, among them those who are blind and those who limp, the pregnant woman and she who is in labor, together; **they will return here as a great assembly**. 9“**They will come with weeping, and by pleading I will bring them**; I will lead them by streams of waters, on a straight path on which they will not stumble; **For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is My firstborn**.” 10Hear the word of the LORD, you nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away, and say, “**He who scattered Israel will gather him, and He will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock**.” 11**For the LORD has ransomed Jacob and redeemed him from the hand of him who was stronger than he**. 12“**They will come and shout for joy on the height of Zion...**”*

3. Ezekiel – was both a priest and prophet who ministered to the Jewish exile community in Babylon from 593-573 BC. He was taken into exile during the first Babylonian captivity in 597 BC. He wrote to encourage the Jewish exiles and remind them that even though they were experiencing God’s judgment, the Lord would vindicate His people and restore them to faithfulness through a return to their promised land and the coming of a new king and shepherd who with a new covenant would rule forever.

a. Ez. 11:17-19: *Therefore say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD says: “**Though I had removed them far away among the nations, and though I had scattered them among the countries, yet I was a sanctuary for them for a little while in the countries where they had gone**.”’ 17Therefore say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD says: “**I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you from the countries among which you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel**.”’*

b. Ez. 34:11-13: *“For the Lord GOD says this: “**Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and look after them**. 12As a shepherd cares for his flock on a day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and **will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered** on a cloudy and gloomy day. 13**I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land**; and I will feed them **on the mountains of Israel**, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land.”*

c. Ez. 37:1-28: This famous chapter describes the vision that Ezekiel sees of a valley of dry bones. The bones are supernaturally put back together, and the skeletons become composed of flesh and are resurrected. While this vision points us to the reality of the resurrection of new life we have in Christ, it originally referred to the nations of Israel (Northern Kingdom) and Judah being resurrected as the original one true Israel! Highlights from the chapter bear this out. **Ez. 37:** *Then He said to me, “**Son of man, these bones are the entire house of Israel**; behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up and **our hope has perished**. We are completely cut off.’ 12Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD says: “**Behold, I am going to open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel**. 13**Then you will know that I am the LORD**...The word of the LORD came again to me, saying, 16“Now you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, ‘**For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions**’; then take another stick and write on it, ‘**For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions**.’ 17**Then put them together** for yourself one to another into one stick, so that they may **become one in your hand**. 18And when the sons of your people speak to you, saying, ‘Will you not declare to us what you mean by these?’ 19say to them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD says: “**Behold, I am going to take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand**.”’”*

20The sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes. 21And say to them, 'This is what the Lord GOD says: "Behold, **I am going to take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land**; 22and I will make them **one nation in the land**, on the mountains of Israel; and **one king will be king for all of them**; and they will no longer be two nations, and no longer be divided into two kingdoms. 23They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their offenses; but I will rescue them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And **they will be My people, and I will be their God**. And **My servant David** will **be king over them**, and they will **all have one shepherd**; and they will walk in My ordinances, and keep My statutes and follow them. 25And they will live on the land that I gave to **My servant Jacob**, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and **My servant David will be their leader forever**. 26And I will **make a covenant of peace with them**; it will be **an everlasting covenant with them**. And I will place them and multiply them, and set **My sanctuary in their midst forever**. 27My dwelling place also will be among them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people. 28And **the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forever**.'""