

Eschatology - Part 1

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I. Introduction.

- A. Countdown for Christ's coming.
- B. Three main streams for prophetic truth: the Jews, the Gentiles and the Church. (I Corinthians 10:32)
- C. Certain things will happen among these before Christ comes.

II. The Jews.

A. General revelation concerning the Jews.

1. The history of the Jews is found allegorically in Jonah when you substitute the word Jonah for the Jews. They were supposed to evangelize the world but they fled from their mission.
2. The Jews are the descendents of Abraham who came from Isaac.
3. God's purposes for the Jews.
 - a. All people of the earth would be blessed through Abraham's singular seed - Jesus the Messiah. (Genesis 12:3; 22:18; Galatians 3:16)
 - b. All nations were to be blessed through their evangelization as testified to through Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, and Jeremiah. (Deuteronomy 22:5; I Samuel 17:46; I Kings 8:60; II Kings 19:19; Jeremiah 22:29)
4. God chose them not because of numbers, righteousness or obedience but because of the wickedness of the nations and for the performance of His promise to the patriarchs. (Deuteronomy 7:9; 9:6-7; 9:4-5)
 - a. We are not to trust in what we see or hear about God unless it is confirmed by the biblical testimony.
 - b. God's compassion and His faithfulness are outstanding characteristics of His character expressed through His dealings with the Jews. (Lamentations 3:22)
5. The Jews had an option to evangelize now or later. The first option brought blessing and the second brought curses. He would however return the Jews if they disobeyed at a later time. (Deuteronomy 28:1; 15; 23:9)

B. Specific revelation concerning the Jews.

1. A remnant will be gathered back in the homeland twice. Isaiah mentions the second and assumes that there would be one temporary time and the second would be permanent. (Isaiah 11:11)
2. The Jews were taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar. Under Nehemiah and Ezra the Jews returned in part. Daniel at the end of the captivity had in mind that it was the time for the Jews to evangelize the world. But Gabriel said that there were 490 years of further persecution and discipline to remain. (Daniel 9:24)
3. The 490 years were to be broken into parts.
 - a. The rebuilding of the Temple and Jerusalem.
 - b. 430 years to follow until the coming of the Messiah. Anna and Simeon anticipated this because of the calendar of events. From the time of the decree until Palm Sunday was exactly 430 years. In the same year Messiah would be cut off, or crucified.
 - c. God controls the stopwatch in events. When the Jews crucified the Messiah, the stopwatch was paused. We are in a parenthetical period between the 430 years and the 490 years. In 70 AD the Emperor Titus had Jerusalem destroyed and Jesus predicted this. (Matthew 24)
 - d. In 70 AD the prophecies ended and the stopwatch was to pause. It will start again when a ruler will make a covenant with the Jews allowing them to restore and revive temple worship. This is when the final seven-year period will begin. (Daniel 9:27)

C. Contemporary events.

1. In the first century the Jews lost their national home until 1948. The British were going to release the Palestinian land that they had control of in that year and most assumed that Jordan would take the land, but the Jews stepped in.
2. Many assumed that God had nothing to do with it. But what the Jews did was a military impossibility. They declared that what had been done was through the mighty hand of God. It took 32 minutes to declare the nation that had been in exile for 1800 years re-established.
3. The significance is that Isaiah 11:11 may be being fulfilled among the Jewish people today.

D. Future events.

1. One day the Jews will repent and will preach the gospel during the millennial reign.
2. The timing of their fulfillment.
 - a. The Jews must be re-established in their own land. This has happened.
 - b. What is lacking is a covenant between a world ruler and the Jews that will be broken half-way through the seven years. (Matthew 24:14-15)
 - c. The “abomination of desolations” will sit in the temple of God and claim deity for himself. (II Thessalonians 2:3-4)
 - d. This man will deceive a portion of the Jews into believing he is Messiah.
 - e. This event will mark some of the greatest violence ever seen. (Mark 13)
 - f. The Jews will recognize the real Messiah in the end. (Zechariah 13:5-6)

III. Discussion.

- A. Although there is strong evidence of 1948 being the fulfillment of Deuteronomy 31-33, one needs to be careful about being dogmatic about it.
- B. Numbers gives the exact boundaries by which the land was earmarked for the ancient Jews.
- C. The border may be the Nile in Egypt. (Deuteronomy 34:5)
- D. Most believe the first return was with Nehemiah, especially since it was not final.
- E. It seems that the Jews have purposed to rebuild the temple from early on in their occupation. Archaeological work is going on around the clock to find the original temple footings. Jewish politicians have passed laws to keep Jews from entering in case people walk over the Holy of Holies. Much is to be discovered at this point.
- F. The setting up of the kingdom seems to be clearly outlined in the Bible, but the Rapture is more controversial and deserves further study. There is very little evidence in Scripture concerning the timing of the Rapture.

Application questions.

1. Outline briefly the course of history that the Jews have taken and what the Bible tells us about future events concerning them.

2. Do you believe that the Jewish occupation of the land in 1948 was a fulfillment of Isaiah 11:11? Why or why not?

3. What questions do you have remaining about the end times concerning the Jews? Read Romans 9-11. What insights does this passage have to offer?
