

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, July 22, 2018

“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.” (Luke 19:41-44)

This passage is hard on the heels of Luke’s description of the scene about which brother Sam provided us a two-part sermon on January 1 and 8, 2017, titled “Hosanna in the Highest”ⁱ. One thing that Luke’s account provides is a specific reference to the fact that Christ made his approach into Jerusalem and the temple by the ***“descent of the mount of Olives” (Luke 19:37)***. The mount of Olives is due east of mount Zion, which squares up with the type of Christ’s triumphant entry into the temple of Ezekiel’s vision, where it says about the east gate: ***“It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate”.*** (Ezekiel 44:3) I present that to you as an example of how this blessed Scripture maintains perfect symmetry between words prophesied and spoken hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of years apart by God’s servants. Perfect symmetry.

In any event, the passage in Luke 19 quoted above is a launching point for a work that must be done for the edification of this body of faithful saints regarding what is prophesied about that ignoble race of Jews. They are a loathsome patch of puff adders who despise our Christ and despise His servants. These have displayed their hatred in violently opposing our preaching for the times that our God has given us grant to preach His pure Word in our generation. No wonder, for they have killed their own brethren and have killed their own Messiah, so should they not also hate us?

Nevertheless, there is no avoiding the intimate relationship between our redemption and the drawing forth of redeemed Jews. Therefore, the better we understand what is written for those redeemed Jews in prophecy, the better prepared we will be – or perhaps simply make another generation of God’s elect prepared – to intelligently navigate that amazing work of God as it unfolds at the appointed hour. So, we will talk about the Jews. We will talk about them in all their rottenness and in all their redemptive sweetness. Their gross darkness mirrors our own pre-redeemed state, so we dare not presume upon any one of them. We must say what Scripture says – and say it boldly. We must not speak beyond what Scripture speaks, out of vainglory or wrath. In their current state, we know that they are called ***“very naughty figs” (Jeremiah 24:2)***, and a ***“valley ... full of bones”*** that are ***“very dry.” (Ezekiel 37:1-2)***

In a previous sermonⁱⁱ, I spent some time discussing in general terms the siege that has been prophesied to fall upon the Jewish population in the days of Antichrist – after Christ’s Second

Advent, but before Armageddon. Some good, though cursory, information is contained in that sermon, so you might find it of value to you as you continue to look with me at these amazing things.

Before I embark on the details of this subject, in all of its amazing sub-parts, I want to discuss my purpose here. Since we are positioned, by God's sovereign mercies, in the period approaching unto the last of all days, the responsibility (and ability) we have to be prepared for the coming of the Lord is increasedⁱⁱⁱ. I have delivered sermons on the scriptural bases to expect those times to be evidenced by a marked increase in mental illness, substance abuse^{iv}, and unrestrained pursuit of every expression of fornication^v. I've given some brief attention to the precipitous rise in conflict, violence, and even war breaking out at every level of society, as integral to the conditions under the proverbial riding of the red horse – though I've not done an exhaustive look at that particular condition to date. My intention is to continue to bring as many such analyses to this blessed flock as God provides me with light sufficient to do so, as part of the duty to press mightily into that coming kingdom (Luke 16:16).

So, my proposition for the next treatment of eschatology – through howsoever many sermons it may take to properly treat it – is this:

- Providence has been intricately woven to bring the inhabitants of the earth to the day when all Jews will be drawn out of every nation to which they were judicially scattered, and into the land of Israel. Not some of them ... not most of them ... all of them.
- Those same providential dealings will lead that nation of rebels to take possession of the top of Mt. Zion, and finally and fully destroy the whole of *Al-Haram Ash-Sharif*, or "The Noble Sanctuary" constructed presently on that mountaintop.
- Following that, the Jews will build a bastardized version of the original temple of Solomon, and perpetuate the filthy practices of modern Jewry even within what they will call God's "**house of prayer for all people**" (Isaiah 56:7), presuming that they have fulfilled the prophesy regarding the final temple.
- This abominable place will bring the armies of the nations surrounding Israel to a boil, with fits of attempts at peace and break-outs of vicious warfare, increasingly building into a siege that chokes the Jewish population down to the city of Jerusalem.
- The temple these rebel Jews build – together with the whole of the land around it – will be so fully destroyed, that it is utterly uninhabitable for human beings. The mountain of Zion unapproachable, and the armies of Antichrist surrounding the city, the whole of the population of Jewry is viciously slaughtered without a hint of mercy ... leaving only the redeemed of Israel protected by God in the wilderness conditions at the top of the mountain, dwelling in the tabernacle brought down by God.

To be clear, I'm talking about events that will lead to the Day of the Lord, and then will seamlessly weave into that seven-year dispensation that closes the current time and brings to pass the millennial reign of Christ as King of the Earth. Reading the prophets and apostles, even the words

of Christ, these events are critically relevant to the redemption of the Gentile saints. The race of Jews, with the **“oracles of God”** granted them peculiarly (Romans 3:2), are a perpetual example of God’s calling out of His elect and mysteriously sustaining them against the hatred and violence of the earth’s population for millennia.

They are not a special breed of creature, like they imagine themselves to be. They are filthy, vile, full of gross and dark sin – just like every human. But God chose that race to be a peculiar stain on the planet – even while they are left desolate in the spiritual wilderness of sin and darkness. They still stand – curiously like no other race. They wield tremendous temporal influence, though they are only 15-million or so in number. Even while they are hated by billions, they continue to thrive and move the leaders of world powers to act in their interests. All – my friends – by the merciful hand of God, so that they might be a type that sustains our understanding of how God alone controls the hearts and minds of men and does so for His glory alone.

So, when I utilize passages of scripture that speak of the nation of the Jews in kind and loving terms, expressing promises of peace and deliverance and comfort and joy, etc. ... you should understand that by speaking that way toward *national* Jews and providing what appear to be temporal benefits to *national* Jews, God is using the treatment of those *national* Jews as symbolic of the way he will *spiritually* deal with His *spiritual* Jews – i.e., His elect (Romans 2:28-29). Now, among those *national* Jews are a small seed of *spiritual* Jews. We’ve talked many times of the 144,000 who will be sealed, and we will talk much of them in this analysis we are going to embark upon. Frequently, the prophecies articulate a providential event that serves the temporal interests of *national* and *spiritual* Jews, so that the eternal interests of the *spiritual* Jews will be met – and all for God’s glory! Let us begin our labor in this complex subject with a specific example of this glorious phenomenon:

“But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.” (Isaiah 43:1-7)

This passage is an articulation of the providential culling from all the earth’s inhabitants the Jewish population. There are many other passages – some of which we will examine – that describe this same process. Pulling them collectively together, it becomes clear that both *national* and *spiritual* Jews are intended. It will not only be the 144,000 righteous Jews who are brought forth out of the

world's population and pulled into Israel, and eventually Jerusalem. It is all of the Jews. Consider this passage from the prophecy of Amos.

“For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.” (Amos 9:9)

The language here is describing the whole of the existing descendants of Israel. And, if you doubt that it intends all of them, you must then explain why the very next verse articulates a violent distinguishing of the *national* and *spiritual* among them:

“All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.” (Amos 9:10)

That is to say, ***“all the sinners of my people [who were just sifted out of nations in the previous verse] shall die by the sword”***. The description of the sifting among all nations must transfer over to an understanding of who is meant by ***“my people”*** in the next verse. That requires the conclusion that all the *national* house of Israel is sifted out of the nations. Having an understanding, however, that the Jews will be sifted out of the nations to which God in judgment scattered them is low hanging fruit. What I want to try to help this congregation to understand better is how that looks in application, being guided by what the Bible tells us. There are more details, if we examine the passages with a more critical eye than to just consider that each passage is a generic reference to a single event at a single point in time. A better sense of the nuances will help us to have a better sense of when and how these things come to pass.

“Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and all the house of Israel wholly, are they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get you far from the LORD: unto us is this land given in possession.” (Ezekiel 11:14-15)

These are the first two verses of an oracle from Ezekiel. He has just been taken, in the spirit, from the place of captivity in Babylon back to the east gate of the temple in Jerusalem, where he was given a horrifying vision of destruction^{vi}. In distress, he cries out: ***“Ah Lord God! Wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?” (Ezekiel 11:13)*** In answer, the word of the LORD comes again to begin a merciful prophecy. It begins with an identification of those to whom the vision will apply. Interestingly, part of the description of the Jews is that their enemies – the Gentiles, then in the form of the Babylonians, who have executed the diaspora () – declare arrogantly that the land of promise has been given to the Gentiles to possess! That is, itself, an incredibly interesting and relevant piece of information to help us to understand some of the context of the prophecy that follows.

Before I continue with the oracle out of Ezekiel, let's pause to examine this language about the Gentiles in some relevant context. Between 1896 and 1948, as anti-Semitism was rising in Europe – which was home to about 90% of all the Jews in the earth at the time – hundreds of thousands of Jews resettled from Europe into a territory known as British-controlled Palestine. This, of course, included Jews fleeing from the threat of slaughter under the influence of Nazi-controlled Germany during World War II. Zionism was a big thing in those decades. Throughout the European countries – including over into Russia – Jews were preaching to their congregations that it is time for Jews to return to Palestine and re-establish the nation of Israel.

It bears questioning – and I think, demanding more than a simplistic response to the question – Why? Why in the late 19th Century AD and into the 20th Century AD were the hearts of the Jewish people moved to push to Palestine? The prophecies had been in place for millennia; but providence wound about, and the time came for God to put it into their hearts to do more than talk about returning to that place. The work began, even in the dark and hateful hearts of the apostate Jewish people.

When the Palestinian people observed this mass migration of the Jews, predictably fights broke out. The reason then for the conflict between Palestine and Israel – and the exacerbated reason that there is perpetual warfare to this very day – is found in this passage out of Ezekiel: ***“Get you far from the LORD: unto us [i.e., Gentiles] is this land given in possession” (Ezekiel 11:16)***. As the intensity of the Israeli-Palestinian fighting threatened to overwhelm Britain, a partitioning of the territory was established between the two sides in 1948. That prompted a war, drawing Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria into the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The result was the 1949 Armistice Agreement, that ended up giving about 77% of the disputed territory to Israel and the remainder to Palestinians.

This armistice agreement, monitored by the United Nations to minimize military conflict, is technically still in effect. However, another war that lasted only six days, broke out in 1969. In that war, Israel beat the pants off of all the other participants and moved their territorial lines beyond those drawn by the 1949 Armistice Agreement. All of that additional territory is considered disputed territory that is declared by the international community as “occupied” by Israeli forces.

Embedded in this world's view and understanding of the Jewish people and nation, is the understanding that God Almighty took that land from them. Mahmoud Abbas, the current leader of the Palestinian people, declares that Israel is a colonial project that has no real connection to Judaism. Indeed! Jews of this generation have no affection for God or appreciation for any of His mercies. They ignored His commandment – ***“Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out.” (Leviticus 20:22)*** – and by His faithful promise, they were spewed out. It is fitting, therefore, that Ezekiel would articulate that as the baseline for this instructive prophecy. Now let us return to it.

“Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.” (Ezekiel 11:16-17)

This specific articulation of the subject matter has two uniquely instructive components that I have underlined in the text and want to flesh out with some guiding input. First, this reference to God being unto the Jews ***“as a little sanctuary”***. I don’t take this language to intimate that any of these Jews who were dispersed will have a proper frame of heart to search out how properly to serve God – whether in the generations just following the diaspora or during the Gentile church dispensation. Expositors focus on the period of 70 years as being what this passage references.

In light of the tremendous prophecies that precede (Ezekiel 9 and 10) and follow the one we now consider, that is far too simplistic a view. This return of ***“the house of Israel wholly”*** was not accomplished by the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple under the reign of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes of the Medo-Persian Empire. That only involved the southern two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which is not ***“wholly”*** the ***“house of Israel”***. While it is historically true that synagogues began among these who were put into Babylonian captivity, it is **not true** that God authorized that practice as an alternative to serving Him properly in the temple.

What we can properly learn, from this clause within our subject passage, is that God has provided them with the ability to maintain themselves as a unique people in the earth, collected miraculously around the shell of their Master’s blessed Word – even while the zeal they have is ***“not according to knowledge”*** (Romans 10:2), as Paul bears them record in his writings.

The second instructive clause that needs some additional examination is His promise: ***“I will give you the land of Israel”***. First, this language helps to understand that the prophecy is not just an articulation of the return of the captivity of Judah and Benjamin to build Jerusalem and the Temple to its previous condition. The promise in this gathering is that the whole land of Israel will be restored – a condition that was not even temporally realized for a significant portion of *national* Jews in the earth before the Armistice Agreement of 1949 AD. Second, we are required by this language to conclude that – at least initially – the returning *national* Jews will inhabit what was understood by the prophet Ezekiel to be ***“the land of Israel”***. What happens with those returning *national* Jews is articulated in the remainder of the oracle, verses 18-21:

“And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their

detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD.” (Ezekiel 11:18-21)

There is a tremendous amount of preaching in this passage – all of its nuanced treatments of the subject matter about which I am engaged. I will, Lord willing, dive into all of them at some point in this journey. However, for now I want to do a 30,000-foot view of it to make a couple of points that are more specifically relevant to the present subject.

First, this language ***“and they shall come thither”***, can be seen two distinct ways and we should be tuned to the significance of both for purposes of having a scriptural understanding of what we should be watching for in our age, as signs of the approaching Day of the Lord. If we append it to the previous verse, then we must conclude that the ***“they”*** is referencing all the *national* Jews. We must also conclude that ***“thither”*** is referencing ***“the land of Israel”***. The problem with this treatment of the passage is in both the pronoun shift and the descriptors of conduct that follow. Let’s look more carefully.

When Ezekiel is first being brought to this vision, the gathering is connected to the descriptor ***“thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and all the house of Israel wholly” (v. 15)***. That is clearly intending all of the *national* Jews who are in existence when this event takes place. The LORD then tells Ezekiel ***“I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries” (v. 17)***, which promise is directed at *national* Jews and concludes with where they will be gathered ... the ***“land of Israel”***.

Then, after that has happened, another thing is going to happen. It is this additional thing that is being discussed at the opening of verse 18. It is an additional thing that is being done by a subset of the group of people who have been called out of the nations and brought into Israel. This subset will force a decision and distinction between themselves and the larger group. This subset, my friends, are the *spiritual* Jews who are among the *national* Jews that have been drawn forth out of the countries of the earth. These *spiritual* Jews are the ***“they”*** to whom the LORD refers in showing Ezekiel what is to come.

Remember, please, that this same Ezekiel has prophesied about this same distinction two short chapters previous, to wit:

“And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer’s inkhorn by his side; And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.” (Ezekiel 9:3-4)

My friends, I'm expressing for you that there is a time after the *national* Jews are brought into **"the land of Israel"** that the *spiritual* Jews are called forth. This sealing – or marking – is evidenced by the infusing of a different spirit in those Jews. They **"sigh and ... cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst [of Jerusalem]"**. These are they to whom the LORD promises, in this chapter 11 prophesy, to give **"one heart"**, and within whom He promises to **"put a new spirit"** and **"will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give [] an heart of flesh"**.

Because of this new *spiritual* condition, Ezekiel is told, **"they shall take away"** the offensive things embedded into the false and fraudulent traditions of these apostate and wicked *national* Jews. Instead, these *spiritual* Jews will walk faithfully in the LORD's statutes, keep His ordinances, and consequently will be His people and He shall be their God. **"But as for them"**, we're told of those *national* Jews who have come forth into **"the land of Israel"**, they will cling to their abominations and consequently have their dark ways recompensed **"upon their own heads"**. The pronouns shift, requiring the conclusion that there are two sets of Jews examined in this prophetic passage. We must do the work to separate them, the *national* and the *spiritual* Jews.

The remaining matter to examine, in this opening sermon regarding the profound subject of Jews in eschatology, is the reference about these *spiritual* Jews as verse 18 opens: **"they shall come thither"**. Where is **"thither"**? We've examined why **"the land of Israel"** is not a proper reference point – for that is what has been used to describe the broader group of *national* Jews. Verse 18 closes with the reference point **"thence"**, from whence these *spiritual* Jews take the **"detestable things"** and **"abominations"**. That suggests that the **"thither"** is the same place referenced as **"thence"**. So, we need to inquire as to how we might know the location to where both these pronouns refer.

To do that, I submit, we have to go back to the opening of the vision and see where Ezekiel was. It seems that the LORD was telling Ezekiel that this group of *spiritual* Jews are coming to where Ezekiel "is" and addressing the problems found in the spiritually darkened and apostate place. What does that opening scene show us?

"Moreover the spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto the east gate of the LORD'S house, which looketh eastward: and behold at the door of the gate five and twenty men; among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people. Then said he unto me, Son of man, these are the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city: Which say, It is not near; let us build houses: this city is the caldron, and we be the flesh."

(Ezekiel 11:1-3)

Ezekiel, in the spirit, is brought to Jerusalem where those who have the gravest duty to be giving proper light and spiritual guidance to the people of the Jews are in fact devising mischief and giving wicked counsel. The location is Jerusalem. To address this mischief – that has gone on unabated to this very day and hour, and indeed the people of that place declare themselves champions of the

sodomites of the whole world – God is going to seal the *spiritual* Jews in that place at the most precipitous and significant hour of conflict and decision for the Jewish people.

I've only begun to open this subject. I could simply pour into this document cite after cite after cite, and the effect would be a numbing of the mind and hearts here. This is a work that will take care and time. When I next have opportunity to speak with you, I will continue the close and detailed analysis of the first part of my proposition; the calling forth of the *national* Jews from all the corners of the earth. I thank each of you for your patient continuance in this faith, and your love for the King of the place.

I love you.

Amen

ⁱ See Sam's sermon series "Hosanna in the Highest", delivered on January 1, 2017 tinyurl.com/HosannaPDF, and January 8, 2017 tinyurl.com/HosannaPt2PDF. His sermons focus on the Matthew 21:1-17 story of Christ riding into Jerusalem, whereas Luke's version is in chapter 19:35-40, making only passing reference to the same event.

ⁱⁱ See Tim's sermon on February 21, 2016 regarding the relationship between the siege of Jerusalem and the battle of Armageddon <http://bit.ly/SiegeOfJerusalem>.

ⁱⁱⁱ See Tim's sermon on October 8, 2017 regarding the unique character of the saints in their capacity and duty to watch for the Day of the Lord tinyurl.com/WatchPDF.

^{iv} See Tim's sermon on June 4, 2017 regarding the judicial imposition of severe substance abuse and mental illness in the Day of the Lord tinyurl.com/MentIllnessPDF.

^v See second half of Tim's sermon on May 20, 2018 regarding the societal rotteness brought on by the most severe forms of fornication being expressed in human sex trafficking <https://tinyurl.com/WBC20180520PDF>.

^{vi} Here is the full oracle preceding the passage we're directly considering out of Ezekiel 11:

"1 ¶ Moreover the spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto the east gate of the LORD'S house, which looketh eastward: and behold at the door of the gate five and twenty men; among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people.

2 Then said he unto me, Son of man, these are the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city:

3 Which say, It is not near; let us build houses: this city is the caldron, and we be the flesh.

4 Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man.

5 And the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the LORD; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them.

6 Ye have multiplied your slain in this city, and ye have filled the streets thereof with the slain.

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Your slain whom ye have laid in the midst of it, they are the flesh, and this city is the caldron: but I will bring you forth out of the midst of it.

8 Ye have feared the sword; and I will bring a sword upon you, saith the Lord GOD.

9 And I will bring you out of the midst thereof, and deliver you into the hands of strangers, and will execute judgments among you.

10 Ye shall fall by the sword; I will judge you in the border of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

11 This city shall not be your caldron, neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst thereof; but I will judge you in the border of Israel:

12 And ye shall know that I am the LORD: for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have done after the manners of the heathen that are round about you.

13 And it came to pass, when I prophesied, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then fell I down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?

14 ¶ Again the word of" (Ezekiel 11:1-13)