

# PRISONERS of Hope

Long ago in ancient times, the ancestors of 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel did something that is worth more than all the gold and silver on earth; **they—ALL 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL, entered into a blood covenant with Almighty God.**

“Then he [Moses] took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, ‘We will do everything the LORD has said; **we will obey.**’ Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, ‘**This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD** has made with you in accordance with all these words’” (Exodus 24:7-8).

What luck these people have to lock the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—that is, the Creator of all, the All Powerful, the Supreme King, the Ancient of Days, the One and only One-Most-Powerful-Eternal One into a blood covenant that He will not break for He is God and He will not break his promise. Wow! What a deal!

“**God is not a man**, that He should **lie**, or a son of man, that He should **change His mind**. Does He speak and not act? Does He promise and not fulfill?” (Numbers 23:19)

This Great God will keep His promise because He is “The Almighty—we cannot find him; he is **great in power; justice and abundant righteousness HE WILL NOT VIOLATE**” (John 37:23).

God has given immortality to his creation in heaven, but He can mortalize and destroy them should they turn to wickedness. “**He alone is immortal** and dwells in unapproachable light. No one has ever seen Him, nor can anyone see Him. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen” (I Timothy 6:16).

This unique blood covenant the ancient Israelites made with the Great God is precious, made only with them and full of power. Yet, they defiled it. They broke their promise: “We will do everything the LORD has said; we will obey” (Exodus 24:7). They disobeyed.

Why? How could they do that? To have the Almighty God on your side, who could be against you? Why? That is the eternal question that goes unanswered, or does it?

It would appear from scripture the question is answered in Ezekiel 20:32. They “wanted to be like the nations, like the peoples of the world, who serve wood and stone.” This scripture does not indicate that they wanted to incorporate idol worship into their life-style, but that **they wanted to be like the nations around them who are self-determined, self-reliant and self-glorifying**. That is the way of the nations, taught to them by their leaders who are imaged, though poorly, in the wooden and stone idols. By following the ways of the nations, they are in fact worshiping their gods. The Israelites craved to relish in self-achievements, build powerful cities, acquire an extensive military, and strive for superpower status. This craving consumed all of the nations of the world

then and today. The 21<sup>st</sup> century nations of Israel have not yet fully returned to their God and the promise made in ancient times, **"We will do everything the LORD has said; we will obey."**

God's plan for the kingdom of Israel was never to be a superpower with superior military force and economic control over the nations, rather "you will be **my kingdom of priests, my holy nation.**" This is the message you must give to the people of Israel" (Exodus 19:6) and as the Apostle Peter reminded Judo-Christians, "you are a **chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession,** to proclaim the virtues of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (I Peter 2:9).

The ancient Israelites did not like the idea of being a kingdom of priests: lowly and selfless servants, humble peace-makers that fear and glorify God. 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel still want all that ancient Israel wanted and more: their private jets or first-class international flights, cameras and interviews, royal palaces and multi-million-dollar homes around the world decked fully with servants.

God said to Israel then and today, "Go and serve your idols, every one of you! But afterward you will surely listen to me and no longer profane my holy name with your gifts and idols" (Ezekiel 20:39). Their opposition cannot frustrate God's plan of salvation.

The story of Israel has an electrifying chapter during the last days of this evil age. God has given each tribe power and status throughout time, leaving the superpower status of the house of Joseph for the end of this age.

All won't go well for Jacob, for a time of trouble lies on our near horizon. "At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And **there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time**" (Daniel 12:1).

The world will be shocked! A power will rise that will take rulership over all of the nations except for **21<sup>st</sup> century Israel. All 12 tribes of 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel will be attacked, leaving a remnant of survivors who will go into captivity.** The nations of the world will be under the rulership of the beast and they will say, "Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?" (Revelation 20:13:4b).

Superpower status will be snuffed out in the blink of an eye. Jacob's trouble will cause their allies to tremble. Their power and prestige will be replaced by mocking and ridicule by the nations who will serve the world-ruling power. "For then there will **be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again**" (Matthew 24:21).

All of the nations of 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel will drop to their knees during their captivity and call out for help to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Moses wrote, "When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, **in the latter days you will return to the Lord your God and listen to His voice**" (Deuteronomy 4:30).

This time those held captive will repent sincerely and eternally—both houses: Judah and Israel. “In those days, at that time, **the people of Israel and the people of Judah TOGETHER** will go in tears to seek the Yahuah, their God. They will ask the way of Zion and turn their faces toward it. **They will come and bind themselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten**” (Jeremiah 50:4-5).

Ah! The nations of Israel will now listen to their God just as He foretold those many years ago. Nobody can thwart the plans of the Great Creator. God will hear them and rescue Israel a second time from captivity. “Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you, I will give men in exchange for you, and people in exchange for your life... **I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back’**” (Isaiah 43:4-6).

**“The people of Israel are oppressed, and the people of Judah as well. All their captors hold them fast, refusing to let them go. Yet the Redeemer is strong; Yahuah Almighty is his name. He will vigorously defend their cause** so that he may bring rest to their land, but unrest to those who live in Babylon” (Jeremiah 50:33-34).

Upon their release, God will say, **“Return to your fortress, O prisoners of hope”** (Zechariah 9:12) for there remains one final battle. This time, God Almighty will lead 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel into battle against the raging nations whose leader “speaks against the Most High and oppresses his saints” (Daniel 7:25). In God’s hand, he will grip Judah as his bow and fill it with the arrows of Ephraim. “I will rouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and I will make you like a warrior’s sword” (Zechariah 9:13b). God will make His people into a hero’s sword. He will appear over them as a mighty warrior. He will sound the trumpet and the battle will begin. He will shield his people as they march into the most violent battle to ever rage on earth” (Zechariah 9:14). God’s arrows will flash like lightning into the enemy with devastating destruction. 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel will be supernaturally protected, as they devour the enemy like ravenous lions. “They drink and roar as with wine; they will be full like a bowl used for sprinkling the corners of the altar” (Zechariah 9:15).

God has some unfinished ancient business with the rogue heavenly king over Greece. Daniel described a shaggy goat, “I saw him attack the ram furiously, striking the ram and shattering his two horns. The ram was powerless to stand against him; the goat knocked him to the ground and trampled on him, and none could rescue the ram from his power... **In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a stern-faced king, a master of intrigue, will arise. He will become very strong, but not by his own power. HE WILL CAUSE ASTOUNDING DEVASTATION AND WILL SUCCEED IN WHATEVER HE DOES. He will destroy the mighty men and the holy people.** He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, **he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes [Christ]. Yet HE WILL BE DESTROYED, BUT NOT BY HUMAN POWER** (Daniel 8:5,7,23-25). The shaggy goat “is the king of Greece” (Daniel 8:21).

The final great battle on earth will be won by the coalition: God Almighty, Jesus Christ, the heavenly great army, the saints and the truly repentant people of 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel, both houses together: Judah and Israel. It will be a time like no other on earth, nor will ever be again (Matthew 24:21).

When the battle is over, God will abolish the military of 21st century Israel. He will “take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken” (Zechariah 9:10) and they will bend their knee before Almighty God and their King and Lord: Jesus Christ.

“Therefore, God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name above all names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth” (Philippines 2:9-10).

Through Christ, God’s glory will radiate out. “I did not see a temple in the city [the New Jerusalem], because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp” (Revelation 21:22-23).

Christ will come in outward humility and “he will proclaim peace to the nations” (Zechariah 9:9-10). Keil and Delitzsch add, “he will not conquer the world by the force of arms, and so raise His people to political supremacy, but that He would found His kingdom by suffering and dying—a kingdom which, though not of this world, would nevertheless overcome the world.”

<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/kdo/zechariah-9.html>

21st century Israel will then, under the direct rule of Jesus Christ become a holy kingdom of royal priests. No longer will they desire superpower status, self-direction, self-reliance, or self-glory for they will be humbled having learned the importance of trusting in God, beseeching Him for solutions and leaning not on their own understanding.

Throughout their history, these people broke the blood covenant with God Almighty. They will abhor themselves in the near future. They will become **prisoners** of the nations and in deep repentance and with a **renewed hope**, they will cry out to their God for their rescue. The nations, deceived by the wicked heavenly rulers during the last great battle, will mock and ridicule the survivors of 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel. They will not know the power of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God will hear his people and in compassion, He will choose them—**AGAIN**. Together, they will fight God’s enemies: the rogue rulers, powers and authorities in the heavens (Ephesians 6:12) who will be thrown down to earth in the last days and rebellious mankind.

**“Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?” the nations will say** (Revelation 13:4b). Oh, ye of little faith, God’s new coalition: Jesus Christ, the vast heavenly armies, the saints, and the survivors of 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel—the **released prisoners of hope** will make war against he beast and **WIN!**

*Compiled by Janette Andrejowich. Thank you to Keil and Delitzsch who have provided exceptional insight into the scriptures.*