

THE MYSTERY OF ISRAEL – COREY STARK

I. INTRODUCTION: JESUS OF NAZARETH – THE KING OF THE JEWS

A. The conflict surrounding Israel is one of the most significant battlefronts in the spirit today that will only increase in scope, intensity and consequence as we approach the return of the LORD. There is no subject *more significant* in its' implications and consequences (Rom. 11:22), *more pervasive* in Scripture, *more controversial*, *catalytic* or *impacting* in the nations (Gen. 12:3), *more relevant* to humanity, *more central* to God's eternal purpose or *more personal* to the LORD Himself than the subject of Israel. *Jesus is Jewish!* In fact, the LORD will ensure that *everyone* feels the impact of what is happening in Jerusalem (Zech. 12:3).

Zech. 12:3 In that day... I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone [burden] for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.

B. As *King of the Jews* (Jn. 19:19), Jesus is Jewish and you can't exaggerate His great zeal for *His land* and *His people* (Ps. 87:2; Zech. 8), which are both primary factors in determining judgment at His return (Isa. 60:12; Joel 3:2; Zech. 12:3; Mt. 25:31-46). When Jesus returns there will be no border negotiations!

Zech. 8:2 "I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; with great fervor I am zealous for her.' 3 I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem... the City of Truth... the Holy Mountain." (Ps. 132:13-14)

Joel 3:2 I will gather all nations... And I will enter into judgment with them on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land.

C. Jesus has *chosen* Jerusalem as His *eternal dwelling* from which He will reign over the entire created order forever (Ps. 132:13-14; Jer. 3:17; Ezek. 43:7; Zech. 8:2)! It is the city of the great King (Ps. 48:2; Mt. 5:35).

Ps. 132:13 For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: 14 "This is My resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it.

D. The "mystery of Israel" is at the heart of *everything* God is saying and doing on the earth today (Isa. 62:1). God's desire for the people of Israel is seen in John's deep dedication and consecrated lifestyle (Jn. 5:35).

Isa. 62:1 For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace [speaking], and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest [acting], until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns.

Jn. 5:35 [John] was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.

E. This isn't *just* about Israel. The LORD chose Israel to *be blessed* to *be a blessing* to the whole earth. This is the Gospel given to Abram (Gen. 12:1-3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; Ps. 72:17; Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:8). God chose a man, to bear a people, to bless all the Gentiles, to provoke Israel, to bless the entire earth (Rom. 11).

Gen. 12:1 The Lord said to Abram... "2 I will make you a great nation [Israel]; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing... 3 in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

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F. To be *pro-Israel* doesn't mean that we blindly agree with everything that political Israel does. Rather our desire to *understand* and *serve* God's purpose for Israel must be founded upon our *sincere love* and *allegiance to Jesus*. Our love for Him causes us to stand with His *heart* and His *greater purpose* for Israel as a nation. We love Him therefore we want to *love what He loves* and be with Him where He is *doing what He's doing!*

II. FOUR ESSENTIAL PARTS IN GOD'S MYSTERIOUS PLAN OF WORLD REDEMPTION

A. In Romans chapter 11 Paul gives insight into the *timing* and *means* that God will use in releasing His program of world redemption. We *must* understand this plan in order to cooperate with it. Paul was *urgently warning* the Gentile believers in his day not to be "ignorant" or *unfamiliar* with God's plan, but rather understand His mystery of bringing salvation to all the nations. Why? Lest they become *wise* or "haughty" (v. 20) in their own estimation, thus producing wrong conclusions about God's plan for Israel that are *unscriptural* (i.e. replacement theology) or even worse *adversarial* (i.e. agreeing with Israel's persecutors).

Rom. 11:11 Have they stumbled [in unbelief] that they should fall [permanently lose primary leadership role in bringing God's salvation]? Certainly not! But through their fall [stumbling in unbelief], to provoke them to jealousy, salvation [leadership in the gospel] has come to the Gentiles. 12 Now if their fall [stumbling in unbelief] is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! 15 If their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

B. Paul's urgency is noteworthy, as he had never visited them before, yet was seriously concerned for their spiritual safety, warning that *ignorance* (v. 25), often progresses to *arrogance* (v. 20), which promotes *passive indifference* (being silent in refusing to help Israel) that can escalate to *active resistance* (helping Israel's persecutors), which can lead to being *cut off by God* (v. 22). Why? Those blinded by arrogance will be unable to endure the pressure of standing with Israel in their persecution. Some may deny their faith (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Thes. 2:3), while others may join Israel's persecutors, imagining that they're doing service for God (Jn. 16:2)!

C. This *mystery* highlights *four essential parts* of God's redemptive plan to bring the gospel to the nations.

1. The Jewish people have a temporary and partial *spiritual blindness* at this time (v. 25).
2. The *fullness of the Gentiles* (v. 25) will provoke Israel to seek Jesus for salvation (v. 11).
3. At Jesus' return, *all Israel will be saved* (v. 26) and restored to their rightful position (v. 12).
4. The *fullness of Israel* (v. 12) will lead to God's glory filling the millennial earth (v. 15).

D. This "mystery" isn't *just* about Israel. God *blessed* Israel to *be a blessing* to the whole earth (Gen. 12:1-3). Gentiles are grafted into a Jewish covenant (Rom. 9:4). We shouldn't blindly agree with all political Israel does, but our desire to *understand* and *serve* Israel is founded upon our *sincere love* and *allegiance* to Jesus.

III. PART ONE: THE JEWISH PEOPLE HAVE A TEMPORARY SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS

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A. The Jewish people currently have a *temporary* and *partial* spiritual blindness (v. 25), due to stumbling in sin and unbelief. Their blindness is *partial* in that most (not all) are unable to see Jesus as their Messiah, as well as, their unique hostility against Him. Israel's blindness is *temporary* assuring us that she has not permanently fallen from her original national calling and future role in the Millennial Kingdom (Isa. 2:2-4).

Zech. 8:23 “Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.””

B. If the Church is ignorant of the temporary blindness of Israel, then we will wrongly conclude that God is finished with them instead of laboring for their *current salvation* and *full future destiny* in God. Israel's rejection of Jesus is *not total* (Rom. 11:1-10) and it is *not final* (Rom. 11:11-32). The gifts and sovereign calling of God upon Israel is irrevocable and still available to them (Rom. 11:29).

IV. PART TWO: THE FULLNESS OF THE GENTILES WILL PROVOKE ISRAEL TO JEALOUSY

Rom. 11:11 Through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.

A. The *fullness of the Gentiles* (v. 25) will *provoke Israel* to seek Jesus for salvation (v. 11). B. The *fullness of the Gentiles* includes the *full number* saved (Rev. 6:10-11), who walk in *fullness of divine wisdom* (Jer. 23:20; 30:24; Dan. 11:32-33; 12:10), *godly character* (Eph. 3:19; 4:13; 5:27; Rev. 19:7) and *supernatural power* (Dan. 11:32-33; Mt. 16:18-19; Jn. 14:12) thus, fulfilling the *fullness* of God's purpose.

B. The coming revival will bring an innumerable multitude of Gentiles from every nation (Rev. 7:9) that are used by God in Israel's salvation (v. 25-26), as *intercessors* (Ps. 122:6; Isa. 62:6-7; Joel 2:15-17), operating in the *power* of the Spirit (Mal. 4:5-6) and working *miracles* (Dan. 11:32-33; Jn. 14:12), with *anointed singing* (Jer. 31:7; Am. 9:11-12; Acts 15:16-17) and *prophetic declaration* (Isa. 40:1-2, 9-11; 62:11-12; Jer. 31:10).

Jer. 31:7 Thus says the Lord: “Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘O Lord save Your people, the remnant of Israel!’... ¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him [direct, protect, provide] as a shepherd does his flock.’”

C. The Gentile Church will stand with God's purpose for Israel in the following ways:

1. *Providing refuge* for Jewish people in flight, due to global persecution (Jer. 16:16; Rev. 12:6, 14).
2. *Sharing resources* with them (Rev. 12:6, 14).
3. *Performing miracles* in the spirit of Elijah: multiplying food, healing, prophecy (Mal. 4:5-6; Jn. 14:12).
4. *Godly character* by resisting sin in a world filled with deep darkness (Isa. 61:1; Rev. 9:21).
5. *Transcendent lifestyle* of walking fearlessly in the face of death, due to our hope in the resurrection.
6. *Anointed Intercession* for the Jewish people, nation of Israel and Jerusalem (Isa. 62:6-7; Ps. 122:6).
7. *Prophetic singing* and declaration (Jer. 31:7-10), releasing celebration and comfort (Isa. 40:1-2).

Isa. 62:6 I have set watchmen [intercessors] on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention [Lit. call upon, remember] of the Lord, do not keep silent,

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7 And give Him no rest till He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth [at His return].

V. PART THREE: ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED

Rom. 11:26 So all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer [Jesus] will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; 27 For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.”

A. This happens in context to Jesus’ glorious return and the Millennium. All Israel being saved *literally means 100%* of the Jewish people who survive the Great Tribulation judgments (1/3) will eventually be “born again” and believe in Jesus as their Messiah (Jer. 31:1-14, 33; 32:38; Ezek. 11:20; 36:28; 37:23, 27; Zech. 13:9).

Jer. 31:1 “At the same time... I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people.”

B. Jesus delivers the remnant in Israel in *one day* (Isa. 66:8; Rom. 11:26-27), bringing a *1/3 of the land* (Zech. 13:8-9) and *1/2 of the city* (Zech. 14:2) through the purifying fire of the Tribulation (Mal. 3:2-3).

Isa. 66:8 Shall a nation be born at once?... 9 Shall I bring to the time of birth, and not cause delivery?

VI. JESUS’ TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO THE CITY OF JERUSALEM AND ISRAEL’S DELIVERANCE

A. Revelation 19:11-21 describes Jesus’ great victory at the battle of Jerusalem, ending the Armageddon campaign with the 7th bowl (Rev. 19:17-21). All the kings of the earth gather to *make war* against Jesus (Rev. 17:14; 19:19), whom they believe is a *false Messiah*, functioning as an “angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14).

Rev. 19:11 Behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. 12 His eyes were like a flame of fire and on His head were many crowns...

B. After crying out for Messiah (Isa. 63:15-19; 64:1-5), Jesus arrives at the Mount of Olives. Like Moses splitting the Red Sea, Jesus splits the Mount to deliver the people from the end-time Pharaoh (Antichrist).

Isa. 64:1 Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down!

Zech. 14:1 The day of the LORD is coming... 2 Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the LORD will go forth and fight... as He fights in the day of battle. 4 In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives... and the Mount... shall be split in two... 5 you shall flee through My mountain valley... Thus the LORD will come, and all the saints...

C. Stunned by sudden victory, after all hope was lost, the people of Israel begin singing, “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Zech. 9:9; Mt. 21:9; Mk. 11:9-10; Jn. 12:13). However, not yet knowing the true identity of their Deliverer, they begin to ask, “Who is this King of Glory?” (Ps. 24:7-10).

Ps. 24:7 Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. 8 Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

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D. Jesus prophesied to the leaders of His generation saying, “*you shall see me no more until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD’*” (Mt. 23:39). Honoring His word, the Holy Spirit will begin to open their eyes, as they sing and ask the questions, “*Who is this King of Glory?*” (Ps. 24:7-8) and “*What are these wounds in Your hands?*” (Zech. 13:6). Then as Jesus replies, “*Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends*” (Zech. 13:6), Israel will once again “*Look upon the One whom they pierced*” (Zech. 12:10-14) and recognize that it is in fact Jesus of Nazareth, their own brother whom their fathers murdered! They will then “*mourn for Him, as for an only son*” and in receiving Jesus as Messiah, “*all Israel will be saved*” (Zech. 13:1, 8-9; Rom. 11:26-27). That is, the remnant who escaped the tribulation judgments.

Zech. 12:10 I will pour... the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as... a firstborn.

Zech. 13:6 And one will say to Him, ‘What are these wounds between Your hands?’ Then He will answer, ‘Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends.’

VII. PART FOUR: THE FULLNESS OF ISRAEL LEADS TO GOD’S GLORY FILLING THE EARTH

A. The *fullness of Israel* (v. 12, 15) will lead to God’s glory filling the millennial earth (Hab. 2:14).

Rom. 11:12 If their fall is riches for the world... how much more their fullness... 15 For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?