

Prophetic Fall Feasts of The LORD

August 14, 2019 Lesson #31 Israel's Regeneration

THE FOURTH STAGE: THE ARMIES OF THE ANTICHRIST AT BOZRAH

While Jerusalem falls in the third stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, the majority of the Jews are no longer in Jerusalem. In fact, they are no longer even in the Land of Israel. According to Matthew 24:15-22 and Revelation 12:6-17, the State of Israel as it now exists will collapse in the middle of the Tribulation and there will be another dispersion out of the Land. The majority of the one-third Remnant that survives makes its way into a special place.

The Scriptures provide several clues as to where this place is located. According to

Matthew 24:16 it is in the mountains

Revelation 12:6, 13-14 it is in the wilderness

Isaiah 33:12-16 it is in a very rocky place that is easily defended.

Micah 2:12 names a specific place: "I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, Like a flock in the midst of their pasture; They shall make a loud noise because of so many people.

The specific place where the Remnant of Israel is said to be hiding is a city known in Hebrew as Bozrah. That same city is better known today by its Greek name of Petra. It is called Petra by the Greeks because this entire city is composed of buildings which are carved out of cliff-rocks and the name Petra means "cliff-rock."

In Hebrew the city is called Bozrah which means "sheepfold" because this describes the shape of the city. An ancient sheepfold had a very narrow passageway going in so that the shepherd would be able to count his sheep as they entered the sheepfold to make sure none were lost. Once they were inside the sheepfold, it would open into a larger, circular area where the sheep would have more freedom of movement. That is exactly what Bozrah looks like. The only way into this city is by a very narrow passageway which extends for about 1 1/4 miles in length. Once you are through this narrow passageway, which can be defended by only two men against a whole army, you are inside a huge, circular area. It is a place that is "easily defended"; it is within the wilderness of the area of Jordan; it is also in the mountain ranges of Mount Seir. It is part of the ancient territory known as Edom or modern-day, southern Jordan.

Why here of all places? Besides the fact that it is easily defended, another reason is given in Daniel 11:36-45. Here he describes the conquest of the Antichrist in the middle of the Tribulation as the Antichrist begins his world political takeover. Verse 41 makes the following statement: He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon.

- While the Antichrist does gain world political control, Daniel says three nations will escape his domination: the ancient nations of Edom, Moab, and Ammon. Today, all three of these ancient nations comprise only one nation: Jordan. The city of Petra or Bozrah is within the territory of ancient Edom or modern, southern Jordan.
- This is a logical place for the Jews to flee to escape the domination of the Antichrist.

As always in Jewish history, whenever there has been persecution of the Jews in one part of the world, God always opened up a place- a city of refuge in another part of the world.

The crucial Jewish-history year of 1492, as the nations of Europe began expelling their Jews, was the same year that Columbus discovered the New World which has become one of the greatest havens for Jewish refugees fleeing persecution elsewhere.

In the Tribulation, when the whole world turns against the Jews under the Antichrist, even then God makes certain there is one place in the world outside the political domination of the Antichrist: the land of Edom or modern, southern Jordan. This is the only place the Jews will be able to flee to for refuge. The bulk of the Remnant will be hiding there at that time. It appears that God will provide a city of refuge outside the Antichrist's domain for the fleeing remnant. As the Jews flee and are living there, food and water will be miraculously provided to them.

Fulfills the requirement of Isa. 33:16 He will dwell on high;
His place of defense *will be* the fortress of rocks;
Bread will be given him, His water *will be* sure.

This fulfills the prophecy of Matt. 24:15-16 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."

This fulfills the requirement of Rev. 12:6, 13-14. Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God (specific location) that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman (Israel) who gave birth to the male *Child*.¹⁴ But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

Fourth Stage: The Armies Of The World Will Move Southward From Jerusalem To Bozrah.

THE FIFTH STAGE: THE NATIONAL REGENERATION OF ISRAEL

There are two preconditions that must be met for the Second Coming of Messiah.

1. There must be a national confession of Israel.

Lev. 26:39-42 Before Israel can enjoy the full benefits of the Abrahamic Covenant as it pertains to the borders of the Promised Land, they must first confess the iniquity of their fathers.

Jer. 3:12-18 teaches that before Israel can enjoy the full benefits of the Millennial or Messianic Kingdom they must also confess their iniquity.

Hosea 5:15 I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense.

Then they will seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me."

Due to one, specific offence committed against Him, He went back to Heaven at the Ascension from the Mount of Olives. The verse points out that He will not return to this earth until that offence is confessed. The Jewish national offence committed against the person of Jesus lies in the rejection of His Messiahship.

With the armies of the Antichrist at Bozrah, the Jewish leaders issue a call exhorting the nation to repent and confess their national sin.

Hosea 6:1 Come and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.

Leaders of Israel will finally recognize the reason the Tribulation has fallen on them.

- Just as the Jewish leaders once led the nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, they will now lead the nation to the acceptance of His Messiahship by issuing the call to repent.

The national confession of Israel is given in Isaiah 53:1-9.

Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

- ❖ They admit the nation had looked upon Jesus as nothing more than another man, a criminal who had died for His own sins.
- ❖ Now they recognize that He was no ordinary man, but the perfect Lamb of God, the Messiah Himself.
- ❖ It was not for His own sins that He died, but for theirs, so that they need not be stricken for their sin.

2. There must be a pleading for Him to return.

Zechariah 12:10 states that before there can be a national cleansing of Israel's sins (Zech. 13) and before there can be a Second Coming and Kingdom (Zech. 14), Israel must first look unto the One . . . whom they have pierced, and they must mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son.

According to Matthew 23:37-39, before Jesus will come back, Israel must plead for Him to come back with the words: Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. The point is that just as the Jewish leaders once led the nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, the Jewish leaders must someday lead the nation to acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus.

They will plead for the Messiah to return and save them from their predicament of having the world armies intent on their destruction gathered outside Bozrah.

At the last minute, just before Israel is annihilated, God will supernaturally rout the enemy and deliver His people. God's mighty power to save is seen in the way He will deliver Israel physically from ALL her enemies in Zech. 12:2-9.

Zech. 12:9 the Lord says, "He will seek to destroy ALL the nations that come against Jerusalem."

Merrill Unger: "The Lord will manifest Himself in such deliverance as will honor faith, unite His people, and cause them mutually to make their boast WHOLLY in the Lord, instead of partially in themselves."

All the armies on earth can line up against God's people, but they will not thwart God's mighty purpose to save His people for His glory.

Truth: The safest place to be is in the center of God's will and purpose.

Consider: God's reason for delivering His chosen people physically in Zech. 12:2-9 is so He can later save them spiritually in Zech. 12:10-14. ALL of this will be for His glory.

- ❖ Many of God's people can testify that God saved their lives from physical death years before He later saved them from spiritual death.
- ❖ John Newton, the wicked slave trader, who was saved to become a pastor and hymn writer, more than once narrowly escaped death before his conversion. Once he fell overboard when he was drunk and was harpooned to get him back on deck, but he survived.

Consider: The great military victory that God will achieve for His helpless people illustrates the great spiritual salvation that He also brings. Both sections emphasize the truth that God is mighty to save His people according to His purpose.

Truth: God Is Mighty To Save His People Spiritually Zech. 12:10-13:9

Zech. 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

- ❖ There is no way to explain this remarkable prophecy apart from the incarnation, death and resurrection of one who is both God and man.
- ❖ The speaker in Zech. 12 has been God, who now says, "They will look on ME whom they have pierced."
- ❖ Pierce is consistently used of someone being run through by a sword or spear.
- ❖ No one can pierce God, unless God first takes on human flesh.
- ❖ The Jewish nation cannot someday look on this one whom they pierced unless He is then living, having been raised from the dead.
- ❖ When the soldier thrust his sword through Jesus' side as He hung on the cross, he inadvertently fulfilled this prophecy in remarkable detail.

John 19:36-37 For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

Isaiah 64:1-12 also describes the pleading for the Second Coming of the Messiah:

V.1-2 Pleading for the Lord to come down and let the nations realize His presence.

V.3-7 The Remnant of Israel will remember the mighty works of God in the past

V. 8 Seek those mighty works of God again

V. 9 They will ask for the forgiveness of their sins.

V. 9-10 Their disastrous plight is shown by the fact that Jerusalem had been made a desolation by the nations and

V. 11 the Temple was still defiled.

V. 12 Ends with a plea for God to intervene lest they, too, become ruined.

Several of the Psalms are merely poetic versions of the pleading of the remnant for God to come and save them from the invading armies. Psalm 79:1-13; Ps. 80:1-19.

Zech. 13:7-9 The Remnant comes to a saving knowledge of Jesus the Messiah by way of the fires of the Tribulation. Verse 7 gives the basic reason why the events of the Tribulation will fall on Israel. God's shepherd, the Messiah, was smitten and so His sheep, Israel, were scattered throughout the world. Toward the latter end of the dispersion will come the Great Tribulation, through which two-thirds of the Jewish population will be killed (v. 8). But the remaining third will be refined. By means of the national confession of their sin, they will be purified (v. 9). God will then answer their pleading for Him to come and save them. They will once again be His people, and He will be their God.

Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit. The nation of Israel will be regenerated because of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them. This will create some dramatic manifestations.

Joel 2:28-29 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

²⁹ And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. This is accompanied by wonders in the heavens.

Joel 2:30-31 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. ³¹ The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come.

The Jews of Jerusalem and the remnant at Bozrah will escape and be delivered.

Joel. 2:32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Rom. 11:1-2a I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.

Question: If God has cast away His people, how do you explain the conversion of Paul?

- His conversion is presented 3x in Acts!

Consider: Luke wrote this to show Paul's conversion as an illustration of the future conversion of Israel.

- Paul called himself, "one born out of due time." [I Cor. 15:8]

I Tim. 1:16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

- Paul's conversion tells very little that parallels our salvation experience today.
- None of us have seen Christ in glory or actually heard Him speak from heaven.
- We were not blinded by the light of heaven nor thrown to the ground.

Question: In what way is Paul's conversion a pattern?

- It is a picture of how the nation of Israel will be saved when Jesus Christ returns to establish His kingdom on earth.
- Details of Israel's future restoration and salvation are in Zech. 12:10-13:1]
- The nation will see Him as He returns. [Zech. 14:4; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7]
- They will recognize Him as their Messiah, repent and receive Him.
- It will be an experience similar to that of Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus Road.

Key Application Points:

1. God often prepares us for salvation through trials.
 - ❖ Before God saves the Jews spiritually, He will take them through the awful events of the Tribulation which culminate in the horrifying campaign of Armageddon.

Zech. 14:2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle...

- ❖ Those nations will be accountable for their hatred against the Jews, but behind all events is God, "who works all things after the counsel of His will." [Eph. 1:11]

Question: When you encounter trials, are you prone to doubt either God's love or His sovereign power? "If there is a loving, all-powerful God, why are these terrible things happening to me?"

Consider: It is CLEAR that God is by far stronger than the most powerful armies in the world. He cares for His people whom He will save.

Consider: Some Christians say that anything bad that happens to them is from the devil and that is was not God's will ---imagine! Therefore, the implication is that Satan got one over on God!

- ❖ The Bible is clear that God sometimes uses Satan to carry out His will, but Satan can go no farther than God permits. [Job. 1-2]
- ❖ It brings comfort to know that even severe trials are under God's sovereign will, than to think they are not.

Consider: In the lab, every substance has its melting point.

- ❖ The same is true of the hard human heart. God graciously brings trials into our lives to soften us and prepare us to receive His grace.
- ❖ Before our trials, we didn't know we needed God and thought we were in control.
- ❖ God can yank the rug out from under us, bring all the armies of the world against us which will cause us to cry out to Him for His intervention.

2. God brings us to salvation through the Holy Spirit.

God promises to pour out on the Jews "the Spirit of grace and supplication."

- ❖ Reference to the Holy Spirit: Isa. 44:3; Ezek. 39:29; Joel 2:23-29
- ❖ All three person of the Trinity are mentioned in Zech. 12:10.
- ❖ Jesus told Nicodemus the new birth is effected by the Spirit. [John 3:5-8]
- ❖ John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life.
- ❖ John 16:8 Unless the Spirit of God convicts us of sin, righteousness and judgment and imparts new life to us, we remain dead in our transgressions and sins.
- ❖ II Cor. 4:4, 6 Salvation, like the original creation, requires the sovereign power of God.
- ❖ He is called "the Spirit of grace and of supplication." This is God's undeserved favor.
- ❖ If you recognize that you are a sinner in God's sight and have cried out to Him to save you, it is because He has poured out His Spirit of grace and supplication on you.
- ❖ If you know Christ as Savior, but you lament the hardness of your heart, you cry out, "God, soften my heart towards You," it is because His Spirit of grace and supplication is working in you.

3. God's Salvation Brings Us To See The Savior Accurately

Israel will "look on Me whom they have pierced."

- ❖ You cannot understand the Gospel unless God opens your eyes to see that Jesus is fully God and fully man.
- ❖ He had to be God to be sinless, so that His sacrifice would be acceptable to the Father.
- ❖ He had to be man or His sacrifice could not apply to humans.
- ❖ There is no salvation apart from Christ and Him crucified. [I Cor. 1:23-24; 2:2]
- ❖ Apart from the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness for sins. [Heb. 9:22]
- ❖ I pierced Jesus Christ by MY sins!

4. God's Salvation Produces Genuine Repentance In Our Hearts

- ❖ Israel will mourn over the pierced Savior.
- ❖ Genuine repentance is not something that a person must work up in order to be saved.
- ❖ It does accompany saving faith.
- ❖ Ongoing repentance should mark the life of a believer as we continually look to the Savior who was pierced for our sins.
- ❖ Repentance is not glib, shrugging off sin as no big deal.
- ❖ Matt. 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Lev. 16:29-31 And this shall be a statute forever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:

³⁰ For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.

³¹ It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute forever.

Just as the day of Atonement was a day of personal "afflicting" for the Jews, so they will mourn when they see their Messiah (Zech. 12:10-14). God will give them "the spirit of grace and supplication" (v. 10), and they will repent of their sins and believe in Him. "They will look on Me, the One they have pierced, and they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child." Israel's repentance and faith will lead to their cleansing. "On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and impurity." Their Messiah who died for them will be their sin offering and burnt offering, and they will make a new beginning as a forgiven people, beloved of the Lord. What the Lord said about the Jewish remnant returning home from Babylon will be true of the nation in that great day: "Search will be made for Israel's guilt, but there will be none, and for the sins of Judah, but none will be found, For I Will Forgive The Remnant I Spare" [Jer. 50:20]