

# The Remnant

*“Even so then at this  
present time also there  
is a remnant according to  
the election of grace.”  
Romans 11.5*

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## THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

by Elder David K. Mattingly

**T**he distinct relationship God has with Israel is not a thing of the past. This elect nation is not a mere type of the spiritual seed manifested more fully in this present Gospel Age. God has not finished His great work with the Jews. Many of His promises are still waiting fulfillment. In this paper I shall attempt to show that the Bible teaches there shall be a restoration of Israel both as a nation in the promised land, and as a nation brought back to Jehovah. To prove these things I shall—

**First**, show that the Abrahamic Covenant assures Israel that God has given him an earthly land for a continual duration; and that this promise necessitates Israel’s restoration in the land.

The Abrahamic Covenant has many provisions, and different promises were given at different times in Abraham’s life. The initial promise is made in Gen. 12.1-7. The Covenant is restated and the provisions are

extended in Gen. 13.14-17, Gen. 15.18-21, Gen. 17.1-8, and Gen. 22.15-18. Two parts of this Covenant need special consideration. One, God pledged to bring through Abraham a blessing to all families of the earth. Gen. 12.3 states: “...and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” This is restated in Gen. 22.18: “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” This promise was also given to both Isaac and Jacob. The blessing to all families of the earth was Jesus Christ. The blessing of Christ was in Abraham since, in the flesh, Christ descended from Abraham. The Gospel of Matthew begins: “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham”; then the writer traces Abraham’s seed to the birth of Christ (Matt. 1.1-17).

This blessing to all nations is spiritual in nature. It involves redemption through Christ of members of all earthly nations. Christ is praised “...thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation” (Rev. 4.9). Abraham, then, is reckoned as the father of all believers of all nationalities. Gal. 3.6-9 states: “Even as Abraham believed God, and it

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was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed.' So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." In other words, Paul shows that this provision has its fulfillment in the fact all families of the earth receive the salvation by Christ. Believers, even though they may be Gentiles, are still partakers of the Covenant blessings which God established with this Patriarch. It is important to notice, however, that Paul did not spiritualize the Covenant to show that it included Gentiles. He rather took the Covenant literally, and proved that one provision included all earthly nations.

The other part of the Covenant that we need to consider is unlike the first in that it deals not with many families, but rather with one nation. In Gen. 12.2, God promised Abraham "...I will make of thee a great nation." To this pledge the Lord adds a land promise. This Patriarch was told to get out of his country and go to a land that God would show him. We

must not confuse the two parts of the Covenant. God's vow to give Abraham's seed a land is not a type of the Church's eternal inheritance. Both are separate parts of the Covenant. To be sure, the children of God look for a land. So did Abraham. The writer of Hebrews states "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob searched not for an earthly land, but "a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Hebrews 11.10 & 16). All believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, should hope for this "better country." But this heavenly hope does not abolish Israel's earthly inheritance, for while the Patriarchs were looking for this heavenly land, they "sojourned in the land of promise" (Heb. 11.9). The land where they traveled was not an abstract. It was earthly, concrete, and specifically defined. Abraham could see it. Gen.13.14-15 states: "And the Lord saith unto Abraham, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever."

Abraham's seed could not possibly have reference to his spiritual seed, for Christians have no promise of inheriting earthly land. The seed rather refers to Abraham's natural seed in Isaac and Jacob. This land was more fully described elsewhere. The Lord told Abraham: "...unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates..." (Gen.15.18). He also promised "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting

possession; and I will be their God" (Gen. 17.8). That Israel will be restored in the land should be evident by the fact that the promise is for a continual duration. It is "forever" (Gen. 13.15), and it is "for an everlasting possession" (Gen. 17.8). It cannot, therefore, be argued that when Israel's sins caused God to remove the people from the land, this takes them away from the land forever. Rather the removal can only be temporary, or else it is not "for an everlasting possession." Israel must, therefore, be restored in the land.

This should also be evident by noting that Israel has not yet had her borders fully extended to all Canaan, "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." The nation has gone back and forth in the promised land. The descendents of Abraham left it for Egypt during the days of Joseph. They entered Canaan again in Joshua's day. They both gained and lost ground during the era of the judges and kings. They were separated again from the land through the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans. But never were the full boundaries promised ever realized. The borders of Israel reached its greatest points during Solomon's rule when he "reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the borders of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life." This, however, was not all Canaan as promised in Gen. 15.18, and Gen. 17.8. (\*1) [Footnotes are on pages 9-10—Ed.] That the whole land promised to Abraham has not been fulfilled to Israel leaves several possible conclusions: 1) God lied, 2) God changed His mind during the course of time, or 3) He found Himself incapable of accomplishing His will. All these

considerations reflect upon the perfections of God, and must be discounted. A fourth possibility should rather be assumed. God still plans to keep His pledge by restoring Israel, and giving him at a future date all the land promised.

Do not confuse the Abrahamic Covenant with the Mosaic Covenant. The former is unconditional, and some of its provisions are everlasting. The latter was both conditional and temporary. The conditional covenant does not abolish the Abrahamic Covenant. God gave the Mosaic Covenant to a seed which He had a special interest in by the previous Covenant. So Israel could not lose the promises of the first Covenant because it did not meet the conditions of the second. For example, under the Mosaic Covenant, Israel's continual prosperity in the land depended on the people serving Jehovah. The Lord promised His chosen people would be blessed in their land "if ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them" (Lev. 26.3-13). He vowed He would curse, and remove Israel from the land if the people "will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments" (Lev. 26.14-39). See also Ex. 23.20-33, and Deut. 11.22-32. Even the conditions under the Mosaic Covenant did not, however, threaten the nation with a possible final loss of the land.

The Lord declared: "If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me...Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land...And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and

to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the Lord" (Lev. 26.40, 42, 44-45). What covenant is remembered? It is the Abrahamic Covenant. The Mosaic Covenant teaches the Israelites could be removed from the land. The Abrahamic Covenant comes back with—Yes, they may, but not forever. The conditions of the second covenant do not abolish the everlasting aspects of the first.

I proceed—

**Second**, to show the Pauline Epistles teach that Israel shall be restored at a future date back to Jehovah.

The book of Romans shows us not only the sense in which Gentiles may be considered Jews, and Jews considered non-Jews (Rom. 2.28-29); but it also considers the plans and relationship God has with natural Israel. Make no mistake about the fact that in chapters 9-11, where Paul speaks of Israel, he means Israel in the flesh, and where he speaks of Gentiles, he means Gentiles in the flesh. For instance, in Rom. 9.3-4, the apostle speaks of his "...kinsmen according to the flesh."

Before Paul teaches the return of Israel to the Lord, he makes the following points in chapters 9 and 11: 1) the Lord's blessings were never intended for all of Abraham's seed (9.1-13); 2) God's mercy is given to Gentiles as well as Jews (9.23-26); 3) God's effectual saving work in the past was not with all Israel, but rather with a remnant (9.27-33 & 11.1-7); and 4) blindness came upon Israel in order

that salvation might come upon the Gentiles (11.8-24).

We then come to the verses which teach the future conversion of Israel. Verse 25 says: “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.” The blindness is only in part. Even during this era in which God pours out His salvation to the Gentiles, He still saves His remnant among the Jews as He had previously done. God is not simply following a quota system by saving some Jews. That is, He is not merely saving some of them as He saves some from the other families of men. The significance of His remnant among the Jews goes deeper than that. The importance of the Jewish remnant is that by it God proves He still holds a special interest in Israel. Is this not Paul’s argument in Rom. 11.1? He asks, “Hath God cast away his people? God forbid.” He answers by pointing out himself as one of the remnant: “For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.” Notice also that the partial blindness continues only “until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.” This implies that Israel’s present blindness will not continue forever. Thus, Israel shall return to God.

Verses 26 and 27 say: “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins.” Here the restoration of Israel is clearly promised. I do not believe the context will permit any other interpretation except

natural Israel. Think of it—“all Israel.” I do not believe the Bible teaches all Hebrews throughout history were spiritually the children of God. I assume many were reprobates. But this passage deals with the condition of the people when the Lord comes to Zion. Then, all Israel shall be saved. It may not even refer literally to every individual Jew. But whether or not it shall be every Jew, it still refers to all which God reckons to be Israel. I believe the text is quoted from Isa. 59.20, where it is mentioned that the Redeemer will come “unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob.”

Verses 28 and 29 state: “As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election they are beloved for the fathers’ sake. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” Here Gentiles [*i.e.*, God’s children among the Gentiles] are the intended readers. The Jewish rejection of the Gospel was for the benefit of Gentiles so that the Gospel might be taken to the heathen. This did not, however, cause an immutable God to turn from the promises made to the Patriarchs by removing Israel as His elect.

Another reference to Israel’s restoration back to God is found in 2 Cor. 3.13-16: “And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.” In these verses, we see that Moses’ vail typifies the blindness of

the Jews. But reference is made to a time when the heart of the Jews shall turn to the Lord. Consideration is not paid here to the Jews individually who turn to Christ. Rather the subject is national Israel. It was the nation as a whole that was blinded. So then, it is the nation that shall turn to the Lord.

I proceed—

**Third**, to show the Old Testament prophets foretold the future restoration of Israel in the land, and conversion to God when the nation is settled in the land.

Amos 9.11-15 prophesies the return of Israel to the land. Note particularly verses 14-15: “And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of the land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.” These words could not have had their fulfillment in the Hebrew’s past, because each time the people returned from exile, they were pulled out of the land again. The view of this prophecy is toward a time when the people will remain forevermore in the land. The prophecy could not, therefore, have already been fulfilled.

Other prophecies connect the Jewish conversion to the period when the nation is again in the land. Attention is called to Eze. 20.33-44. Notice particularly in verse 34, Israel’s gathering together: “And I will bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye are gathered.” When was this

scripture ever accomplished? It was not when the people returned from Babylonia, because then the Jews were not scattered about in many countries. They rather returned from just one country. Then notice that the rod of affliction and the purging of the rebels will lead to Israel again knowing the Lord. Three times (verses 38, 42, & 44) the prophecy declares: “Ye shall know that I am the Lord.”

That Israel shall be converted when the nation dwells again in the land is shown also in Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39. The prophecy is against “Gog,” of the land of “Magog” (38.2), and against the allies of Magog (38.5-6). My Smith Bible Dictionary informs me that the term “Gog” means “leader,” and that “Magog” is currently the land called Russia. In other words, the prophecy concerns the leader of Russia. It is very interesting to note this in the light of current events.

Since the end of World War II, by the development of her military and naval forces, and by her successful diplomatic efforts of siding with the Arabs against the Jews, Russia has gained a foothold in the Middle East. Chapter 38 teaches that God’s controversy with Magog is that she invades Israel. Chapter 39.1-21 teaches that God will miraculously turn back the forces of Magog, and her allies. As a result of Israel’s plight, the people will, according to 39.22-29, turn to the Lord. Notice verse 22: “So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward.” Notice also verses 28 and 29: “Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I

hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.” This prophecy has not been fulfilled in the past. Israel has neither been invaded before by the Russians, nor has the nation in the past remained always faithful to God. (\*2)

Isa. 59.19-21 also ties the conversion of Israel in with the nation’s struggles with the enemy: “So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun.” Notice when this fear begins: “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.” Then comes the passage Paul probably refers to in Rom. 11.26-27: “And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord. My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever.”

**Finally**, Zech. 12.9-10 speaks of Israel’s restoration coming at the time when the nation faces the invaders: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and 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.” Here is a prophecy of Christ Crucified; and more than that, a

statement that Israel will mourn for Him. This scripture has not been fulfilled in the past. It cannot be applied to the Jewish release from Babylonia, because only one nation then had come against Jerusalem, but verse 9 refers to “all the nations that come against Jerusalem,” and beside that, Christ had not at that time yet been pierced. Also the outpouring of the Spirit cannot refer to the Jewish remnant that was converted on the day of Pentecost. The Pentecostal experience took place before the Roman invasion of the city. This prophecy speaks of the invasion prior to the giving of the Spirit. Beside that, again, Rome was just one nation, but verse 9 puts the invaders in the plural.

**In summary**, the prophecies we studied reveal Israel will return to their land. While in the land, a number of nations will attempt to invade the land. God will, however, successfully defeat the enemies, and the people will turn to the Lord. The Jews’ conversion, unlike previous ones in history, will, this time be permanent.

**In conclusion**, let me make two final comments.

**First**, it should be observed that Israel’s future restoration rests on the fundamental belief that God still stands as a Covenant God to the descendents of Jacob. It rests upon the conviction that God has not withdrawn His election of Israel. I have attempted to show in this paper that neither the Mosaic Covenant nor the Gospel Age removed the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant. Because the Mosaic Covenant was essentially a conditional covenant, and because Israel did not live up to the conditions of that covenant, the relationship between

God and Israel was naturally strained. But God never completely forsook the Jews. Despite Israel's backsliding, Jehovah declared: "I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee..." (Hos. 11.9). The fact God is immutable spared the rebellious people: "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Mal. 3.6). The Gospel Age, which includes blessings to the Gentiles, also has not removed the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant, because, as we have already seen, this Covenant even foretold the blessings of salvation upon the Gentiles. At the present time, both the provisions to the nation of Israel, and the provisions to the Gentiles, are in force.

Even though God has a chosen people, made up of both Jews and Gentiles, whom He saves everlastingly from sin by Jesus Christ, He still retains a special interest in the Israelites. Despite the way the Jews wickedly dealt with Christ, and turned against the Gospel, Paul taught "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew" (Rom. 11.2); and again, he pointed out the Jews were enemies to the Gospel for the Gentiles' sake, but they remained the elect for the fathers' sakes (Rom. 11.28).

What good does it do to so spiritualize election so that the blessings to a natural seed are somehow transferred to a spiritual seed? The real heart of the matter is whether or not God keeps His word. Since the Abrahamic Covenant has within it some provisions which are everlasting in nature, if God has abandoned His elect Nation, what evidence is there to suppose that God also will not find cause to abandon His spiritual seed?

If, as some argue, God transfers His special love from Israel to the Church, what might this mean for you? Well, it may imply that one of these days the Lord will drop you in favor of someone else.

In short, I believe God has both a chosen Nation whom He will bless abundantly on earth; and a spiritual seed, made up of both Jews and Gentiles whom He will bless with salvation from sin. That God has not withdrawn Himself from His Covenant with the Hebrews, confirms my faith that He will not withdraw Himself from me.

The **second** point I would like to make is that when we talk about the restoration of Israel, we are not altogether talking about the future. In 1948, the United Nations carved out a section of the Middle East, and gave the land to the Jews. The nation is now a fact. The restoration is by no means complete. But with each conflict with the Arabs, the land gets a little bit larger.

Think of it! Israel has been reborn. After more than 2500 years without a land, the Jews now can return home. And they are going home. The ones scattered abroad are joining the Palestinian Jews in the land. Some have left America. They are leaving Europe. Some are leaving Asia. They are going home. Who would have thought it at the turn of the Twentieth Century? I have in my library a set of New Testament Commentaries from a Nineteenth Century Bible scholar. He thought the idea of the Jews returning to nationhood was ridiculous. He belittled the very idea. To him the possibility was more than remote. He, therefore, spiritualized every passage where the scripture presented the idea that God still stood in Covenant relationship to Israel. (\*3) I can excuse this scholar's lack of foresight. But



what about us living today? We have an advantage he did not have. We today actually see Israel numbered with the nations. What do you think about the fact that Israel is a nation? Do you see it as just one of those unusual things that happen? I rather see it as the work of a Mighty God working among the nations in our lifetime. We live during a time when the Bible is held in such contempt. Many today are questioning the relevance of religion. But here the Scriptures confirm themselves as the holders of the truth. The prophets spoke of the revival of Israel. It seems as if they spoke of an impossible event. But here, right before our eyes, Israel is today a fact. Religion is only irrelevant when God is not seen. But in the restoration of Israel we see His mighty hand at work. Do not be blind to it. I exhort you to look at it. Israel is a fact. The Jews are going home.

—*David K. Mattingly*  
July 3, 1972

**Elder Mattingly's comments on the above article:**

I took this article that I had written by hand in a notebook more than 34 years ago and typed it on my computer. If I was writing on this subject today I would have added some things and left other things out. However, I have avoided the temptation of rewriting the piece. Changes have been very minor: spelling and punctuation in a few places have been all the modifications that have been made. Usually, each sentence has remained as it originally was written. I set no rules for myself in this regard. I am unable to tell anyone why I made a few slight changes and left everything else as it was before. In reviewing this work there were three areas I felt important enough to footnote. These footnotes contain the only

areas that I feel at present absolutely require further commentary:

(\*1) In retrospect I should have spent more time dealing with the fact Israel has never fully controlled all of the land promised to Abraham. Since writing this piece I have had to frequently deal with folk who have argued that texts such as Joshua 11.23 and 21.43-45 teach that the Israelites did in fact hold all the land they were promised. I believe I was aware of these passages when I wrote this article but I thought my argument would not be challenged based upon the overwhelming number of verses in Joshua that taught they did not fully control the land in his day. For example, even after the statement of 11.23, 13.1-13 clearly teaches the Israelites did not possess a good portion of the land. Or, by examining 15.63 it is plain the Jews were unable to drive the Jebusites from Jerusalem, and, as a matter of fact, it was not until David's reign that Jerusalem came under Israel's control (II Samuel 5.4-9). One can also review Joshua 16.10; 17.12-13, and 18.2 and see that there was still much of the land Israel did not possess.

Finally, Judges 2.11-23 serves as a preface to what most of the book recorded: that is, the struggles Israel faced with the other nations who inhabited the land during the time of the Judges. How anyone can ignore the overwhelming evidence that Israel did not fully control all the land is beyond me. Therefore, texts such as Joshua 11.23 and 21.43-45 should be viewed in balance with the whole biblical record. Maybe Israel's case was similar to what was presented to America during its early history. The Louisiana Purchase may have given the U.S. Government a claim it had rights to the territory it purchased from France, but it took this nation a long time to control all the land. Many of the native tribes were not (and prob-

ably still not) convinced France had the authority to sell their land to this government. During Joshua's day Israel claimed all the land, and even enjoyed rest from their enemies in the places where they conquered but there was still a lot of land they did not possess.

(\*2) Looking back over what I had written about Israel and its enemies I can draw the conclusion 34 years later that as much as things have drastically changed they really have changed very little. More than 34 years ago, the Soviet Union sided with many of the countries in the Middle East against the Jewish state. Today, the Soviet Union no longer exists but the Russian Government is increasingly siding with other Middle Eastern nations and offering little support to the Jewish cause.

Back then, the Middle Eastern oil producers were very important to the rest of the world. Today, with increasing industrialization in countries throughout the world, these oil producers are even more vital in world affairs. Two months after I had written this article, Middle Eastern terrorists entered the Israeli camp during the Olympics in Munich, Germany and killed a number of the Israeli athletes. Today, the terror caused by men and women who profess the religion of Mohammed are felt not only in the Middle East but it is felt all over the world. As explosive as the Middle East once was, it is even more so today. Religious fanatics rule Iran. They appear to be seeking to develop nuclear weapons. Our own country is fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq. Israel has been involved in trying to destroy terrorist strongholds in Lebanon. Although their efforts have caused much destruction in Lebanon, they have not been successful in clearing out their enemies. It is uncertain now how

long a current truce in the area will last. The Jews have been battling Palestinian terrorists for many years. Western Europe, the United Nations, and our own government remain unable or unwilling to bring peace to the Middle East. Until our great God will perform His work among the nations as prophesied in scripture, I see no prospects of things changing.

(\*3) Looking back to the time I wrote about having commentaries from a writer who spiritualized texts to the extent that he did not literally believe Israel would be restored to nationhood, I must confess I simply did not know what I was talking about. I will have to guess why I wrote what I did. The commentaries I had back then were the same ones I have now: John Gill's Commentaries and Adam Clarke's Commentaries. After reviewing both, I find no evidence either of these men said what I reported. As a matter of fact, anyone who will review what they wrote about the last chapter of Amos and the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of Romans will see they took the same positions as I have taken. Therefore, my guess is I had read some writing that took the position that scriptures referring to Israel's restoration should not be interpreted literally but rather should be applied to the Gospel Church. It is not unreasonable to believe I had read this view somewhere. Many hold to such a view or something similar to it. I reckon I had mistakenly transferred in my mind these thoughts from an author unknown to me now to one of these two scholars. Although I did not intentionally make a false statement, I feel I must apologize for the fact I did mistakenly say something that was not true.

-David K. Mattingly

September 3, 2006

## EDITORIAL COMMENTS

**W**e are extremely thankful that Sister Mattingly has made Elder Mattingly's article available to *The Remnant* for publication. His expressed desire was to finish this article before his departure. On December 25, 2011, he wrote:

To Elder Morris:

The article regarding Romans 2 vs 9-11, you are free to publish in the Remnant if you desire to do so. The article that I am working on now, it's a Restoration of Israel. I may never get finished with it. However, I have written a good portion of it that expresses basically my views. There are a lot of things in it that you will probably agree with. And if you want to utilize any of the things I have written, you are free to do so as you wish because it would probably take me on my own a 2-month period of time to be satisfied that I had said everything I wanted to say the way I wanted to say it.

Yes, Brother David, there are many things in your article that I agree with; all of it, in fact, as much as is humanly possible. One more time, you have written on subjects I have wanted to write about, covered ground I have wanted to cover, and said things needing to be said, as only you have been blessed to do.

My very human desire would be that he had had the "2-month period of time" granted to him that he might "be satisfied that [he] had said everything [he] wanted to say the way [he] wanted to say it." But this was not meant to be, in the mind and purpose of Him Who hath done all things well (Mark 7.37). May we ever be graced to say with our Lord, "Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done (Luke 22.42)."

"Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them (Revelation 14.13)."

Having said these things, the following observations came to mind during the reading of this timely article.

### 1. NOT ONE, BUT TWO LAND COVENANTS:

It is worthy of note that Elder Mattingly brought out something overlooked by 99% of those who comment on Jehovah's relationship with Israel: the TWO covenants—the **unconditional**, Abrahamic, land-*grant* covenant, and the much later, **conditional** land-*occupancy* covenant given under Moses. If all men were blessed to see the differences between these two covenants (I speak as but a fool), there would be neither conditionalism, nor amillennialism, nor the modern, so-called "replacement theology."

*Conditionalism* would disappear because the conditional promises of Israel's occupying their land would be seen in their proper context. The conditional promises to Israel have no place being applied to the New Testament church.

*Amillennialism* would dissolve because the unswerving purpose of God, to have for Himself **both** an earthly people **and also** a spiritual "heavenly" people, would be acknowledged as being in plain evidence literally from Genesis through Revelation.

So-called "*replacement theology*" would have never found a toe-hold because it is evident that God, in His predestinated purpose, never had an alternate, contingency "Plan B" to replace Israel with a more carefully selected bunch of Gentiles, should His primary "Plan A" for Israel fell through. The church was never designed or intended to replace national Israel.

Clues are numerous throughout the Old Testament, say, beginning at least as early as Genesis 22.16f (and probably earlier). It was there, on Mount Moriah, when Abraham and Isaac prophetically enacted the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ at the Father's own hand, that God told Abraham: "**By myself have I sworn**, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; 18 And in thy seed [which is Christ, Galatians 3.16] shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." *Two* types of seed are here spoken of—a heavenly seed ("as the stars of the heaven"), the elect from among the Gentile nations, comprising the church, and an earthly seed "as the sand which is upon the sea shore"), national Israel. Who can miss it, and how can they miss it?

So many grope around the door and seem to not to recognize it. The Old Testament ministration was glorious, but the New Testament ministration is rather more glorious. Both are given by Jehovah, and both are valid throughout all time:

"5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; 6 Who also hath made us **able ministers of the new testament**; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. 7 But if **the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious**, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; **which glory was to be done away**: 8 **How shall not**

**the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?** 9 For if **the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.** 10 For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. 11 **For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.** 12 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: 13 And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: 14 But **their minds were blinded** [for God's predestinated purpose: "blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."]: **for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ.** 15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. 16 **Nevertheless when** [note WHEN, not IF] **it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away** (2 Corinthians 3.5-16)." (See Elder Mattingly's comments on this text on page 5-6.) Israel, for the time being, is benched, sidelined, in the "penalty box," but still an active player yet to be reinstated and reactivated in God's own time!

## 2. ABRAHAM AND THE PROMISES

For a moment envision the patriarch Abraham, four thousand years ago, dying at 175 years of age (Genesis 25.7f), standing alone, waiting, not having received the promise. "These all died in faith, **not having received the promises**, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth (Hebrews 11.13)."

This text, “these all died in faith,” in context (verses 8-19), is specifically applied to Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob.

What exactly did Abraham see afar off? Of what was he persuaded? What exactly was *the promise* he embraced? Was it not—in part—the same LAND promise God had given him a hundred years previously (Genesis 12.4)?

Abraham had received the promise of the LAND upon which he stood, and all the LAND as far to the north, south, east, and west as he could see (Genesis 13.14-17). God promised this LAND would be his and inherited by his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob, and their descendants for ever and ever—was this old man deluded, persuaded of a false promise from God Himself? Did he embrace a figment of his imagination or worse?

Will the Lord God Almighty who, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself to Abraham, will He some day tell His old friend (James 2.23), “I did not really mean *the land*, wherever you put the sole of your foot; and I did not really mean your *physical* descendants, and I did not really mean *for ever*.... This was all figurative language for preachers to use thousands of years later for ‘spiritual applications’ to the church”? GOD FORBID! Let God be true and every man a liar!

“For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect (Romans 3.3)?” In this case, those who—

(a) ”spiritualize away” the plain language of God’s literal promises and prophecies;

(b) say God’s *unconditional* promises were *conditioned* upon obedience, and Israel permanently forfeited those *unconditional* promises by sinning them away;

(c) say Israel is no more a nation before God; that the church has taken her place in God’s economy.

Those who say such things brazenly contradict the unchanging God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. “Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the LORD hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them (Jeremiah 33.24).”

That is the troublesome thing about taking a verse or two out of context here, there, and everywhere, making plain language symbolic, contradicting God to His face.

“Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. (Matthew 15.6).”

“And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. 16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. 17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee (Genesis 13.14-17).”

**The best of both worlds:** Abraham will inherit not only the land, but He will also inherit the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21.1ff; for he looked not only at the land-grant promise. “...for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11.10).” See the other texts cited by Elder Mattingly (pages 2 and 3).

“And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west [the elect from among

the Gentiles], and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 8.11).”

Because of texts like these, it appears that the Old Testament saints are included in the church, the body of Christ. God does not have two ways of saving His people—one way for the Old Testament saints and another for the New. Nor will there be “second-class citizens” among the eternally glorified saints. Or so it seems to me.

If God could go back on His word to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants, sworn to by His oath, sworn on Himself, His honor, His unchangeable integrity, and His unconditional covenant of grace, if He can thus deny Himself, then pray tell why He could not do the same and go back on His word to His church?

How many friends does God have? Are you one of them? Am I? Abraham was. “Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of **Abraham thy friend for ever?** (2 Chronicles 20.7)” “But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of **Abraham my friend** (Isaiah 41.8).”

### 3. ISRAEL IN THE LAND TODAY

An argument is sometimes advanced that the sovereign nation of Israel, recognized as such in May of 1948, is not a fulfillment of prophecy because they are yet in unbelief, as though all Jews must be converted first, before God brings them back to the promised land. We reply, their being brought back in unbelief, yet to be converted (at Christ’s appearing) is in perfect accord with the prophetic Scriptures. To cite no other, examine Ezekiel 36.16-32 (read the whole chapter!):

“Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 17 Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman. 18 Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it: 19 And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. 20 And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land. 21 **But I had pity for mine holy name**, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went. 22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; **I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake**, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. 23 **And I will sanctify my great name**, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and **the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.** 24 **For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.** 25 **THEN will I** sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, **will I** cleanse you. 26 A new heart also **will I** give you, and a new spirit **will I** put within you: and **I will** take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and **I will** give you an heart of flesh. 27 **And I will** put my Spirit within you, and cause you to

walk in my statutes, and **ye shall** keep my judgments, and do them. 28 And **ye shall** dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and **ye shall** be my people, and **I will** be your God. 29 **I will also save you [!]** from all your uncleannesses: and **I will** call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. 30 And **I will** multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that **ye shall** receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. 31 **THEN** shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. 32 **Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you:** be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. 33 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded.”

Four things are evident from this passage:

1. **First**, in order: God will bring Israel back in unbelief—there is no indication they will be converted while they are still dispersed among the heathen or even when they are first brought back, still in unbelief, into their land as they are, in part, today (verses 17-24)

2. **Second**, in order: Only THEN will He convert and SAVE Israel when He returns and Israel recognizes Him by the wounds in His hands (verses 25-30; Zechariah 12.8-14 and chapters 13 and 14)

3. **Third**, in order: Only THEN, converted and saved Israel will bring forth fruit meet for repentance (verse 31)

4. **Fourth**, in order: The nations “*that are left round about you*” (Israel) [no doubt *after* the war of Armageddon, described in Ezekiel

38 and 39.1-8, *etc.*] will be brought to confess the grace of God in His preserving, restoring, and saving His chosen nation (verses 23 and 35-36).

#### 4. ROBBERS OF CHURCHES? (ACTS 19.37)

It has been said that, by applying these Scriptures literally to national Israel, the premillennial view takes away the spiritual applications to the church of countless texts. **It does no such thing. There is a vast difference between the one valid interpretation of a Scripture and the many applications of that Scripture.**

For example, Ezekiel 36.25-27, above, has properly been applied to the church as exactly describing the church’s experience of salvation in Christ Jesus. That is the “spiritual application” to the church, which no one I know of denies, least of all *this* writer. Those verses may properly be applied to the church **and** to individual believers alike, and they have been so applied for lo, these many centuries. But reading the context, (the preceding and following verses and chapters), there is and can be only **ONE INTERPRETATION—RESTORED NATIONAL ISRAEL.**

Further, applying this text *only to the church* robs Israel of the truth of this prophecy, whereas **interpreting** it correctly as speaking of Israel and applying the truths of the text to the church, with New Testament Scriptures corroborating this application, robs neither Israel nor the church of anything.

Keeping **the distinction of one interpretation and many applications** in mind when they approach the sacred Scriptures would be to the advantage of all serious Bible readers and commentators. —C. C. Morris

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**2. The Apostle John**, son of Zebedee, a Galilaean fisherman, and brother of the apostle James. (Jesus also had a half-brother named James—Galatians 1.19—the son of Joseph and Mary; James the Lord’s brother was the first pastor of the church in Jerusalem.)

The apostle John lived to be around 100 years old. According to church history and tradition, he is the only apostle who did not die a martyr’s death. This John is the apostle who wrote five of the books of the New Testament.

There are many contrasts between John the Baptist and John the Apostle:

a. John the Baptist died as a young man, scarcely thirty years old, beheaded by the authority of king Herod; John the apostle lived to be around one hundred years old.

b. John the Baptist was of the tribe of Levi and came in the spirit and power of Elias. Of what tribe the apostle John was born, there seems to be no record.

c. John the Baptist wrote no part of the Bible; the apostle John wrote five books of

the New Testament: the gospel that bears his name, plus 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and the Revelation.

**3. John Mark**, who wrote the gospel called “The Gospel According to Saint Mark.” John was his Hebrew name but his Roman name was Marcus (Colossians 4.10, Philemon 24) or Mark. He was closely associated with Peter (1 Peter 5.13), probably through his mother, to whose house Peter went after his miraculous deliverance from Prison (Acts 12.12).

John Mark was also the nephew of Barnabas who was Mark’s mother’s brother. He traveled with Paul and Barnabas a short time but soon went back home, thereby earning Paul’s disfavor. This caused a strong disagreement between Paul and Barnabas that led to Paul’s taking Silas instead of Barnabas with him on his next evangelistic trip. John Mark and Paul were later reconciled, and Paul said Mark was “profitable to me for the ministry (2 Timothy 4.11).” —CCM

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We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over.

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2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation;

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes;

4—The absolute predestination of all things;

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall in

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6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself;

7—The sovereign, irresistible, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in quickening the elect of God; the new birth is by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit without the use of any means;

8—The final preservation, perseverance, and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace alone;

9—No works are good works other than those which God Himself has so designated; none of the works called good are left up to men to perform or not, at the creature's discretion; nor do the works of the creature, either before or after regeneration, result in merit accruing to his account in God's sight;

10—The peaceable fruits of righteousness are the certain result of God's working in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and His people will be found walking in paths of righteousness for His name's sake;

11—The separation of church and state;

12—The principles outlined in the Black Rock Address of 1832;

13—The bodily resurrection, first of Christ, and also that of all the dead;

14—The final and eternal judgment; and,

15—The bliss of the redeemed and the torment of the wicked are both eternal and everlasting.