

The Kingdom of God - What will it be Like? – 4

Last time we saw how the **Jews** who are still **scattered** away from their ancient homeland will **hear** that Jesus, their **Messiah**, has returned and has taken over the **government** of Israel. The prophet Isaiah foretold how **Gentile nations** will transport the Jewish diaspora, now eager to return, **back** to the Promised Land.

- Up to the time when God sent Jesus to His people, it was **only the natural descendants of Jacob** who were the people of God. Jacob had been sent by God into Egypt, where his descendants **grew into a nation**. After the remarkable rescue of Israel from slavery in Egypt, God made a **covenant** with the nation through Moses who organized the nation under God's law.

By this covenant, or formal agreement, **God promised** to care for the nation who would live in the land which He had promised to Abraham - *"If you...**keep My commandments...5 you shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely...12 I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.**"* The nation of Israel, on their part, promised to remain faithful to God's law, and to refrain from any other worship - *"...they said, 'All that the Lord has said **we will do, and be obedient**.'" - **Leviticus 26:3;24:7.***

- More than 3,000 years ago God **warned** his people through Moses that **failure** to keep their side of the agreement would bring **punishment**. By their adopting the **idolatry** of the surrounding nations God would **remove** his nation from safety and prosperity, finally removing them from **their land**- *"But if you **do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments...17 I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies...20 your land shall not yield its produce...25 I will send pestilence among you; and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy**" - **Leviticus 26:14.***

Israel would be **scattered** from their land for a **long time** - **31** *"I will lay your **cities waste...32 I will bring the land to desolation...33 I will scatter you among the nations...***" While they would be hounded and persecuted over 18 centuries, their numbers would be kept small, - **37** *"...you shall have **no power to stand before your enemies...39 And those of you who are left shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands...***"

- No people are now identifiable as **Hittites, Assyrians or Medes**, but miraculously, although the **Jews** were banished from their own land for many centuries, they have **not lost** their national **identity**. More than this, Moses predicted that in the end they would **return** to their **land** - *"Now it shall come to pass...**3 that the Lord your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the Lord your God has scattered you**" - **Deuteronomy 30:1.***

This **began** to be fulfilled before 1948 when the State of Israel was **reestablished**, but is to be fully accomplished **after** Jesus has returned - *"I will **gather the remnant** of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall **be fruitful** and increase. **4 I will set up shepherds** over them who will feed them; and they shall **fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking, says the Lord**" - **Jeremiah 23:3.***

- From other prophecy it is clear that **these "shepherds"** will be working **under** the direct authority of **Jesus**. Their **oversight** of Israel will **ensure** that (a) they will **never again** stray away from God, and (b) Israel will consequently **prosper** and **expand** non-stop until the end.