

I. Why is Jesus Returning to Jerusalem?

- A. We start from the understanding that we, as believers today, are preparing the way for the return of the Lord (Is. 40:3)
- B. In the plan of God, He has chosen to save us from all the nations in part to make His own people zealous.

*“I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy [zealous], salvation has come to the Gentiles.” (Rom. 11:11, NKJV)*

- C. When the Gentiles have come in, in fullness – more than just saved, but walking in fullness – it will serve to provoke Israel to this jealousy.

*“<sup>25</sup>For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. <sup>26</sup>And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.’” (Rom. 11:25-26, NKJV)*

- D. “Why” Jesus is returning to Jerusalem is connected to the idea that we, the Gentile believers, need to understand this mystery behind why we’ve been saved, which includes making the Jewish people jealous/zealous for their land, and for the promises of God to them.
- E. There are two “returns” that must take place: a physical return (Ezk. 36:24) and a spiritual return (Ezk. 36:25-27).
  - 1. Even today, the Jewish people recite Psalm 126 every Shabbat (sometimes up to four times), which is all about the people of Israel being returned to their land, and the rejoicing that it will produce in the people of God (Jew and Gentile).
  - 2. As Christians, we need to acknowledge that we were brought into this story when we ourselves were saved.
  - 3. For the Jewish people who understand the prophetic Scriptures, Christians who pray and help their people return to the land are a sign to them that Messiah is near.

II. How Will Jesus Return to Jerusalem?

- A. Peter declared that there is a restoration of all things that must precede the return of Jesus. Part of that restoration includes the return of Jewish people from exile to their land.

*“<sup>19</sup>Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, <sup>20</sup>and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, <sup>21</sup>whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:19-21, NKJV)*

1. *“He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.” (Ps. 72:8, NKJV)*

Though Canada has borrowed this verse, it was written for and about Israel and her King. Yet even today, this wording has been skewed as rhetoric to call for Israel’s removal from the land. But God has promised that Israel will be planted there.

2. The disciples anticipated that the “restoration of all things” was upon them after Jesus’ resurrection, but Jesus told them there was more to do first.

*“<sup>6</sup>Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, ‘Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ <sup>7</sup>And He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:6-8, NKJV)*

- B. Jesus’ call to the disciples to “watch and pray” (Mt. 26:40-41) still stands for us today. There is still a need for watchmen to rise up and pray for the restoration of Israel (Is. 62:6-7). To not only pray for this restoration, but to help work toward it.

1. There are many encouragements in the Old Testament for *the nations* to pray for Israel and her restoration (Jer. 31:7; Is. 49:22; Is. 14:1-2)

- C. How does He return? He uses us to prepare the way and make His people zealous. This means we have to be connected to them, praying for them, and having the courage to take action in helping in the work of Aliyah.

*“Hear 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 as a shepherd does his flock.’” (Jer. 31:10, NKJV)*

*“<sup>22</sup>But this is a people robbed and plundered; all of them are snared in holes, and they are hidden in prison houses; they are for prey, and no one delivers; for plunder, and no one says, ‘Restore!’ <sup>23</sup>Who among you will give ear to this? Who will listen and hear for the time to come?” (Is. 42:22-23, NKJV)*

*“<sup>5</sup>Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, and gather you from the west; <sup>6</sup>I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ And to the south, ‘Do not keep them back!’ Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth – <sup>7</sup>everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him. <sup>8</sup>Bring out the blind people who have eyes, and the deaf who have ears.” (Is. 43:5-8, NKJV)*

1. This is the restoration that God has spoken about through the mouths of His prophets for a long time (Acts 3:21).
2. When we participate in this restoration, we are preparing the way for Jesus’ return.

III. When Does Jesus Return to Jerusalem?

- A. The timing is marked by the restoration of all things – the return of the Jewish people to the land, and even more so to the heart of God.
- B. God is looking for His Church to rise up and pray (Rev. 5:8) for the restoration of the people of Israel in times of their trouble.

*“<sup>17</sup>Let the priests, who minister to the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar; let them say, ‘Spare Your people, O LORD, and do not give Your heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’ <sup>18</sup>Then the LORD will be zealous for His land, and pity His people...” (Joel 2:17-18, NKJV)*

*“<sup>7</sup>Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. <sup>8</sup>‘For it shall come to pass in the day,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘That I will break his yoke from your neck, and will burst your bonds; foreigners shall no more enslave them. <sup>9</sup>But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. <sup>10</sup>Therefore do not fear, O My servant Jacob,’ says the LORD, ‘Nor be dismayed, O Israel; for behold, I will save you from afar, and your seed from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet, and no one shall make him afraid. <sup>11</sup>For I am with you,’ says the LORD, ‘to save you; though I make a full end of all nations where I have scattered you, yet I will not make a complete end of you. But I will correct you in justice, and will not let you go altogether unpunished.’” (Jer. 30:7-11, NKJV)*

1. When we do this, the Lord will stir up His zeal and act on behalf of Israel in protecting them, and in pouring out His Spirit on them (Joel 2:20,28). This is an indication of revival in the land.
- C. This links to clear indications that Jesus gave us as to the timing of His return:

*“For I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’” (Mt. 23:39, NKJV)*

1. The people of Israel will cry out and receive Jesus together, but this will not happen until the Gospel of the Kingdom (which includes the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, Acts 1:6-8) goes out to all the nations of the earth.

*“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” (Mt. 24:14, NKJV)*

*“<sup>3</sup>And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone 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...<sup>9</sup>It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup>And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. <sup>11</sup>In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimon in the plain of Megiddo. <sup>12</sup>And the land shall mourn, every family by itself...” (Zech. 12:3,9-12, NKJV)*

- a. As we continue reading through the Zechariah passage, it culminates in feet landing on the Mount of Olives – and the angel did tell the disciples that we would see Him descend, just as they saw Him ascend (Acts 1:11).