

What Is so Special about Israel?

The Jews are not better than any other people in the world, but no worse either. They are simply a people chosen by God (Deuteronomy 7:7), and He will never “reject all the descendants of Israel because of all they have done” (Jeremiah 31:37).

God has always led the Jews back to their ancient homeland because the people and the Land belong together. Without the Land, the Jews shriveled up on foreign shores and became objects of mockery. Without the Jewish people the Land became a barren wilderness. But today, the Land and the people are flourishing once again because they are back together.

According to the promise in Ezekiel 36:22-26, the Jews are now returning again to Zion: “Thus says the Lord God, ‘It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. And I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord,’ declares the Lord God, ‘when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own Land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness.’”

Though Jews have profaned God’s name wherever they have lived, He always intervened and saved them, vindicating his Holy name in the eyes of the nations.

After 2,000 years, He gathered them from all corners of the earth and brought them back to the Land of their forefathers. Some theologians claim that this prophecy was fulfilled after the return from the Babylonian exile, but that is contrary to Scripture since the people only returned from one land instead of all the nations.

The phrase, “I will bring you into your own Land,” refers to ownership, to whom the Land belongs. Therefore, the

Land does not belong to the Palestinians, but to the Jewish people, which God gave to them as an everlasting possession.

When God said he will “bring back” his people to the place from where He scattered them, He meant bringing them back to the Land of Israel from where they were originally dispersed and not to Britain or the United States (Jeremiah 31:10).

When God leads His people back to Zion, He will cleanse them of their sins and give them a new heart and a new spirit so that they will forever walk in accordance with His statutes and observe His commandments. So at some point, Israel will be filled with the Holy Spirit and recognize the Lord.

There are signs that this is beginning to happen among the 5.7 million Jews in Israel today. According to various surveys, about 10 percent are ultra-Orthodox, 12 percent are religious Zionists (Orthodox), 33 percent are traditional (people who keep some Jewish traditions, such as keeping kosher, lighting Sabbath candles and observing the Jewish holidays) and 44 percent are secular. Only 1.5 percent of the population define themselves as atheists.

Zionism is God’s business and the Zionists are His tools to accomplish His work. The heroes of the faith were not supernatural beings but rather ordinary men. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Gideon, Peter and Paul were people like you and me, but they allowed themselves to be used by God for His purposes. Furthermore, it was the secular Zionists, ordinary people,

whom God used to build the State of Israel, reclaim the Land from the swamps and make the desert bloom.

According to Isaiah 43:6-7 all Jews should return to Zion: “I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back.’ Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth, everyone who is called by My name.”

Who would have believed just 20 years ago more than a million Jews from Russia would have immigrated to Israel?

There are still 7 million Jews living in the Diaspora (outside of Israel). This is why God has appointed first the fishers, who will bring them to Zion during the good times. Then the hunters will come and hunt them back to Zion by means of persecution (Jeremiah 16:16).

Until now, only 20 percent of the Jews who have immigrated to Israel have followed the call of the fishers and immigrated to Zion out of idealistic motives, while 80 percent returned to the Land because of the anti-Semitic hunters. We can assume that there will be further persecutions of Jews around the world until the Jews return to Zion in accordance with God’s promise. ☆

BY LUDWIG SCHNEIDER

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