

# WILL ISRAEL GO EXTINCT?

## Part 2

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My last article reviewed Israel's tenuous situation in the world today. With national leaders suggesting Israel's days are numbered, and with passions and sentiments clearly mounting against this tiny Mideast nation, it seems natural to wonder.

Instead of being the salt and light it's supposed to be – proclaiming truth and dispelling darkness – much of the church chooses to sing in unison with the world's dirge. In the wake of neglecting Biblical truth, many Christians advance heresies which appear all-inclusive and politically-correct on the surface, but which are more effective at fostering carnal attitudes against the Jews.

The Bible assures us that God still has a plan for Israel. In accordance with that plan, there are two occasions in which worldwide Israel is regathered. This sequence is important because it helps us understand Israel today and how it aligns with God's intentions.

In review, the first worldwide regathering of the Jews is in spiritual unbelief. That was formalized on May 14, 1948 when Israel became a nation once again following the Nazi holocaust. That regathering still continues as Jews from all parts of the world flee persecution and pour into Israel. As we saw in Ezekiel 20:33-38 and Ezekiel 22:17-22 this first worldwide regathering is "in judgment" and "for wrath," so a future element still needs to play out.

Despite Israel's continued unbelief, God has sovereignly collected His people together as He prepares them for His greater plan. The specific events of history in our lifetime align perfectly with the prophetic language of the Word of God.

But the next worldwide gathering of Israel is very different, and this one is the focus of Isaiah 11:11-12:6. In this text, Isaiah describes the final regathering as preparation for Israel's *imminent blessing*. This text makes it clear that this regathering is just prior to the earthly Millennial Kingdom, and it will take place "in belief" or "in faith." So this final worldwide regathering is much different than the first one which occurs "in unbelief."

It's important to note that Isaiah 11:11 states this next event will be "*...a second time.*" So, the ramifications are clear: the second time is the final time. Therefore, there could only be one worldwide regathering before it, and all phases of that first regathering are steeped in spiritual unbelief.

Now, some people may wish to argue that the Jewish return from Babylonian exile was the first time this regathering phenomenon occurred. There are various problems with that position, but two of those dilemmas are most clear.

The first problem is the return from Babylon was plainly a return from one nation, and the passages in Ezekiel and Isaiah make it evident that these two worldwide regatherings are from multiple nations. The

Jews have indeed been scattered over the face of the entire earth, and it is from these remote locations that they will return to Israel.

The second problem is one has to find a way to explain why the Bible does not mean what it says. My view is that “...*second time*” means just that. The Babylonian argument implies there are more than two worldwide regatherings despite the Scripture’s position. I’ll take God at face value since He does not waste words.

It should not be overlooked that several Old Testament prophecies, Zephaniah 2:1-2 among them, further clarify that the first regathering in unbelief occurs before the Tribulation period, a time referred to as “...*the day of the Lord.*” Since the Tribulation hasn’t started yet, everything checks out there too.

So what does all this regathering stuff have to do with Israel’s precarious situation in the world today? The answer is there are logical implications from the bigger picture. As I’ve stated before, the Bible clarifies everything, so let’s process what we already know.

For the Tribulation to begin, the nation of Israel must first exist according to Daniel 9:27. Well - Israel exists right now as the result of the first worldwide regathering in unbelief. Furthermore, it is because of their preexistent condition of unbelief that Israel will even agree to the antichrist’s future covenant!

That means there’s a real problem if one believes Israel will be wiped off the map between now and then. In such a situation, Israel’s demise would require a *second worldwide regathering of the Jews in unbelief* in order to reform the nation once more and position it for the precise conditions of the Tribulation’s start. These notions are a real stretch and they have no Scriptural support.

So is Israel entirely safe and secure now? No, I don’t think so. It’s within reason to imagine Israel could find itself in a major conflict and suffer unthinkable trauma. Personally, I feel the greater body of the Word of God paints that situation as unlikely, but even if that happened, the conditions of all the prophetic scriptures we’ve reviewed here would still hold true.

Israel, *because* of its present condition of spiritual unbelief, *will* come dangerously close to extinction at the very end of The Tribulation period. Events leading up to this point will be nightmarish for the Jews – the most horrific circumstances they’ve ever endured. It’s why the Bible calls this “...*the time of Jacob’s trouble*” (Jer. 30:7), and those Jews who persist in their faithlessness will die according to Zech. 13:8-9.

This is the final phase of the first worldwide regathering in unbelief, and its purpose is “for wrath” as we saw in Ezekiel 22:17-22. It concentrates the Jews in Jerusalem and purges Israel of its non-elect. It fulfills God’s purpose to prepare events for the second worldwide regathering of the Jews “in belief.”

By God’s sovereign design, Israel will come right to the brink as a nation, but it will be spared. Jesus Christ, their true Messiah, will return to save the Jewish nation at the very moment when all seems lost for them. This is all laid out candidly in the Scriptures.

The bottom line is present day Israel is not going away, and speculations concerning Israel’s imminent demise are inconsistent with God’s Word. Israel is prophetically significant “as it is,” and God always keeps His promises. He is still at work with His chosen people despite what world leaders and worldly preachers say.

I've said before that events with Israel may yet take place which tax our knowledge and test our faith, but we cannot permit the instability of human reason to override what the Bible plainly teaches.

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