

FAQ: Israel's Position in the Tribulation-Lesson 3

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This document addresses common questions regarding the nation of Israel's role in biblical end-times prophecy. The insights provided are drawn directly from a detailed scriptural lesson to offer a clear and concise reference for understanding these complex prophetic subjects. The goal is to provide clarity on the processes of Israel's gathering, the period of severe chastisement it will face during the Tribulation, and its ultimate, prophesied national salvation.

1.0 The Prophetic Gathering of Israel

The return of Jewish people to the land of Israel today is a development of immense prophetic significance. While it is not the final gathering described by the prophets, it is a crucial preliminary step that sets the stage for the fulfillment of end-times events. Understanding this current movement—a physical return that precedes a spiritual regeneration—is essential for grasping the sequence of events leading into the Tribulation period.

1.1 What is the significance of Jews returning to Israel today?

The contemporary gathering of the Jewish people in their ancestral homeland is a direct fulfillment of biblical prophecy and carries several layers of significance:

- **Global Population:** Of the approximately 16 million Jewish people worldwide, about 7 million now reside in Israel. The United States has "a little bit more probably 8 million," and over a million remain in Russia. The ongoing return to Israel constitutes a major demographic shift.
- **Prophecy Fulfilled:** This physical regathering is tangible evidence of "the Bible coming true." It is a modern-day demonstration of God's faithfulness to His word, specifically the promises made by prophets like Jeremiah and Ezekiel.
- **A Physical, Not Spiritual, Return:** It is crucial to distinguish that the current movement is a *physical* gathering. It must precede the future *spiritual* regeneration of the nation, which has not yet occurred. The nation, as a whole, has not yet turned to its Messiah.
- **A Precursor to Judgment:** This gathering is not for immediate redemption. Biblically, it serves as a necessary prelude to the events of the Tribulation. Many who are returning to the land are, in effect, being gathered for a period of intense punishment, and many will perish during this time.

1.2 What do the prophets say about this gathering?

Several Old Testament prophets speak directly to the gathering of Israel from the nations where they were scattered. The following scriptures provide key insights:

• **Jeremiah 31:8-10 (NKJV):** This passage underscores that the regathering is a divine initiative.

◦ God promises: "Behold, I will bring them from the north country, And gather them from the ends of the earth, Among them the blind and the lame, The woman with child And the one who labors with child, together; A great throng shall return there." (v. 8)

◦ The command is given to the world: "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.'" (v. 10)

◦ **Interpretation:** God Himself promises to personally regather His scattered people from all corners of the earth and to protect them as a shepherd protects his flock.

• **Ezekiel 37 (NKJV):** This chapter uses powerful symbolism to describe both the physical and spiritual restoration of Israel.

◦ **The Valley of Dry Bones:** The vision depicts God bringing His people up from their "graves" (Ezekiel 37:13). In this prophetic context, the graves are symbolic of the nations where the Jewish people have been scattered and figuratively "buried" for centuries.

◦ **The Two Sticks:** God instructs Ezekiel to join two sticks—one representing Judah (the southern kingdom) and the other representing Joseph/Ephraim (the northern kingdom). This act symbolizes the future reunification of the divided nation. The prophetic record asserts, "I will make them one nation in the land... and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again" (v. 22). This promise of a unified nation under one Messianic king has not yet been fulfilled and points to a future restoration.

1.3 Is the current return to Israel the final gathering?

No, the current return of the Jewish people to Israel is a preliminary gathering, not the final one prophesied in the Bible. This initial return is necessary to bring the nation back into its land to set the stage for the dramatic events of the Tribulation period. According to scripture, Israel will face another dispersion during that time, followed by the ultimate, final regathering conducted by the Messiah Himself at His Second Coming.

This preliminary gathering, therefore, is not for immediate redemption but to set the stage for the Tribulation, a time when many will have returned to the land only to be punished, and as the prophet warns, to perish.

2.0 Israel's Future Dispersion During the Tribulation

Contrary to the belief that Israel's modern establishment signifies permanent, uninterrupted peace, biblical prophecy indicates that the nation will face a severe crisis during the Tribulation. This crisis, initiated by the Antichrist, will be so catastrophic that it will force a significant portion of the Jewish people to flee their land once again in a future dispersion.

2.1 Will Israel remain secure in their land once they have returned?

The famed Israeli general Moshe Dayan once declared, "Jerusalem is ours now and we will never leave again." Despite this powerful national sentiment, it stands in direct contradiction to biblical prophecy. The prophetic record asserts that Israel will lose control of Jerusalem again, and its people will be forced to flee for their lives. The security Israel experiences today is temporary and will be shattered in the middle of the Tribulation.

2.2 What biblical prophecies indicate that the Jewish people will have to flee Israel again?

Several New Testament passages point to a future flight and dispersion of the Jewish people during the Tribulation:

- **Revelation 12:13-14 (NKJV):** In this symbolic passage, the "woman" persecuted by the dragon represents the nation of Israel. Scripture states she is given "two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness to her place," where she is nourished for "a time, and times, and half a time." This period is consistently interpreted as three and a half years—the second half of the Tribulation. This flight is described with the imagery of being 'given two wings of a great eagle,' a phrase the source suggests could even point to a modern event like a military airlift.

- **Matthew 24:16 (NKJV):** Jesus gives an explicit command to those living in the end times. He states that when the "abomination of desolation" occurs—the moment the Antichrist desecrates the Temple and declares himself to be God—those in Judea are to "flee to the mountains."

- **The Cause:** This flight is directly precipitated by the Antichrist breaking his seven-year peace treaty with Israel. After three and a half years, he will betray the nation and set himself up as "the god of the world," unleashing a period of unprecedented persecution.

2.3 How many Jewish people are prophesied to perish during this time?

The Old Testament contains a sobering prophecy regarding the scale of this future persecution. It is prophesied that **two-thirds** of the Jewish nation will perish during this period of intense suffering.

This catastrophic loss of life, prophesied to include two-thirds of the nation, underscores the severity of the coming judgment. However, scripture frames this tragedy not as a final destruction,

but as a purposeful and divine chastisement intended to purge rebellion and bring a faithful remnant to salvation.

3.0 The Chastisement and Salvation of Israel

To understand the Tribulation's role for Israel, one must grasp its dual nature as both a crucible of judgment and a mechanism for redemption. The scriptures present this period not as arbitrary suffering, but as God's definitive response to centuries of covenantal unfaithfulness. It is through this intense "chastisement" that the nation will be purged of rebellion, ultimately leading to the national salvation promised by the prophets.

3.1 Why is Israel being gathered in the end times?

According to scripture, Israel is being gathered in the end times for two primary and sequential reasons:

1. **Chastisement:** The first reason is for judgment. The nation will be severely chastened, particularly during the final three and a half years of the Tribulation, as a direct consequence of its long-standing rejection of Jesus Christ as the Messiah.
2. **Salvation:** The second reason is for redemption. The chastisement itself is the divine process God uses to deal with the nation's sin and bring about a national turning to Him. Before there can be salvation, sin must be dealt with, and for Israel, this will occur through the "great purging" of the Tribulation.

3.2 How does the Bible describe God's judgment on rebellious individuals within Israel?

The Bible uses powerful language and parables to illustrate the purging of rebellious and unbelieving individuals from the nation during this time.

- **Ezekiel 20:33-37 (NKJV):** This passage describes God's direct judgment. He declares that He will rule over Israel with "fury poured out" and will plead His case with them "face to face." He promises, "I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me." This depicts a sovereign and forceful removal of those who persist in rebellion.
- **Matthew 25 - The Parable of the Ten Virgins:** This parable, spoken to the nation of Israel rather than the Church, illustrates the division between believers and unbelievers at the Messiah's Second Coming.
 - The **bridegroom** represents Jesus Christ.
 - The **five wise virgins** with oil for their lamps represent believing Jews who are prepared for the Messiah's return. They are ready and enter the wedding feast, which symbolizes the Kingdom.

- The **five foolish virgins** without oil represent unbelieving, rebellious Jews. They are unprepared and find the door shut. To them, the Lord says, "Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you."

- This parable graphically illustrates the purging of unbelievers from the nation when Christ returns to judge them "face to face."

3.3 What is the ultimate outcome for the nation of Israel?

Following the period of intense chastisement and purging, the prophesied outcome for the nation is salvation. This is stated plainly in **Romans 11:26 (NKJV)**, which says, "So all Israel will be saved."

The interpretation of this verse is that "all Israel" refers to the nation as a whole. While rebellious individuals will be judged and purged, the surviving remnant will turn to the Messiah, and the nation as a corporate entity will be saved. The precise number of individuals within that saved nation is determined by God.

This arduous process of judgment and salvation paves the way for the final state of comfort and complete restoration that God has long promised His people.

4.0 The Final Fulfillment of God's Promises

After the unparalleled turmoil of the Tribulation and the painful process of chastisement, the Bible describes a final and glorious restoration for the nation of Israel. In this era, God's covenant promises, made centuries ago, will be fully and eternally realized, bringing the nation into a state of peace, unity, and security under the direct rule of their Messiah.

4.1 When will the *final* and complete gathering of Israel take place?

The final, complete gathering of Israel—what the speaker calls "*the real reathering that the prophets spoke of*"—is prophesied to occur immediately *after* the Tribulation, at the physical return of Jesus Christ. This event is distinct from the preliminary gathering happening today.

- **Matthew 24:31 (NKJV)** describes this moment: "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

- This worldwide gathering is reinforced by other prophets. **Isaiah 43:5-7 (NKJV)** speaks of bringing God's descendants from the east, west, north, and south. Likewise, **Jeremiah 32:37 (NKJV)** confirms, "Behold, I will gather them out of all countries where I have driven them in My anger."

- The purpose of this final, angelic gathering is to bring the Jewish people from every corner of the earth back to their land to enter into God's Kingdom.

4.2 What is the "Comfort of Israel"?

Following the intense period of chastisement, God promises a time of profound comfort and restoration. This is described in **Isaiah 40:1-2 (NKJV)**:

"Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your God. "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the LORD's hand Double for all her sins."

The phrase "double for all her sins" is explained by the principle that to whom much is given, much is required. Israel received more divine revelation, covenants, and promises than any other nation. Consequently, their failure and rebellion warranted a more severe judgment, which is followed by this complete pardon and deep comfort.

4.3 What will the nation of Israel look like after this final gathering?

During the Messianic Kingdom, the nation of Israel will be restored to a state that far surpasses its current condition. The promises of the prophets will be fully realized:

- **Safety:** They will finally "dwell safely" in their land (**Jeremiah 32:37**), a condition of true peace that is absent today.
- **Unity:** The nation will be given "one heart and one way" (**Jeremiah 32:39**), ending the internal division and spiritual rebellion that has marked its history.
- **Covenant:** God will make an "everlasting covenant" with them, bringing to completion the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (**Jeremiah 32:40**).
- **Land:** Their national territory will be far larger than it is today. It will stretch to the Euphrates River and encompass the entirety of the "fertile crescent." The modern state of Israel is described as just a "little preview" of the glorious geographic and spiritual reality that awaits the nation in the Kingdom.