

A Commentary on Isaiah 49:

I recently sought out a number of Bible Commentaries¹ on this amazing chapter of Isaiah. I felt that they failed to do justice to this awesome and humbling prophecy, so I have sought here to write a commentary that hopefully portrays a little of the awe and excitement I feel in mediating upon this chapter.

This prophecy of Isaiah was apparently written during the Hebrew exile in Babylon and therefore in the first instance addressed to these children of God in exile.

Isaiah writes about the return of Israel from exile (thus giving hope to the Babylonian Jews); the return of the Messiah and the glorious establishment of the Kingdom of God.

With the ultimate return of the Messiah we see the unification of Jew² and Gentile described in a most humbling and moving manner as will be discussed. The final return of Israel from exile amongst all the nations is a most interesting topic which I have already discussed in 'Israel's Return in 'Belief' or 'Unbelief'³.

1 "Listen, O coastlands, to Me, And take heed, you peoples from afar!" ⁴	1 Listen to Me, O islands, And pay attention, you peoples from afar
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The reference to coastlands is generally in the TaNak (OT) a reference to the nations and also normally all nations other than Israel i.e. the Gentiles. (See Isaiah 24:15-16; 41:5; 42:4,12; Zephaniah 2:11; Daniel 11:18; Ezekiel 39:6; 26:18). This is also a common refrain of Isaiah and as an opening to the prophecy of this chapter should alert us to his earlier Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 42.

In Isaiah 42:10, the prophet had declared "Sing to Yahweh a new song; His praise from the ends of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, you coastlands and you inhabitants of them!" just after he had spoken of the one who would be a 'light to the Gentiles', 'open blind eyes' and resurrect the dead.

The LORD has called Me from the womb; From the matrix (<i>womb</i>) of My mother He has made mention of My name.	The LORD called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me.
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Someone who is 'called' by God and follows that calling is a servant of God. This servant is 'called from the womb'. Generally, this phrase is used to describe the nation of Israel (see Isaiah 44:21 for example). We also read in Isaiah 7 that the House of Israel, this servant 'called from the womb', will be given a sign; a son called from his mother's womb who will be named Immanuel, that is 'God with us' (i.e. an ambassador of God!). We also read in Psalm 86:16 of a servant of God who is a son of Yahweh's handmaiden (Luke 1:38).

2 And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword ⁵ ; In the shadow of His hand He has hidden Me, And made Me a polished shaft; In His quiver He has hidden Me."	2 He has made My mouth like a sharp sword, In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me; And He has also made Me a select arrow ⁶ , He has hidden Me in His quiver.
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A mouth like a sharp sword. In John 7:46 men say of Yeshua (Jesus) "Never has a man spoken like this". Also in Luke 4:36 we read that the Jews marvelled at the power and authority of the words of Yeshua. (See also Rev 1:16; 2:12,16.) In Rev 19:15 we read of the power of his words in 'smiting' the nations and shepherding them with a 'rod of iron'.

¹ I found Robert Roberts & CC Walker 'The Ministry of the Prophets: Isaiah' (Birmingham June 22nd 1923) to be the best although given its composition before the events of 1948 and 1967, etc a little in need of updating.

² While the term Judean is a more linguistically valid term, I have used the term Jew because of its common usage and therefore ease of reading.

³ P F Herring 'Israel's return in 'belief' or 'unbelief' Sept. 2007 – available from www.charismacomputers.com.au

⁴ NKJV & NASB are the main Bibles quoted – in a table format for comparison purposes

⁵ Hebrews 4:12

⁶ The NASB suggests a reference or link here to Habakkuk 3:11 – in fact the prayer of Habakkuk (Chapter 3) does seem most relevant

This appears to be both a reference to the 'polished shaft' of verse 2 and to the great Messianic Psalm 2.⁷ This 'rod of iron' or 'polished shaft' or 'select arrow' (NASB) is both an implement of war and of judgement (shepherding suggests both a leading and a separation – of sheep and goats for example). The reference to Habakkuk 3:11 (see footnote 6) also fits with this understanding.

A servant of God speaking with such authority is a prophet (Jeremiah 1:5 *"Before I formed you in the belly I knew you, and before you came out of the womb I did set you apart – I appointed you a prophet to nations."*) and, in bringing Jacob back to God (v5) a political leader.

Note also the references to this servant of God being hidden. This servant was 'hidden' from the Babylonian Jews at the time Isaiah wrote this, as his arrival was still a long time in the future, but this double reference may also hint at his being 'hidden' after his earthly ministry in the true children of God ('quiver' – a place where a man's arrows are stored or used metaphorically in Psalm 127 as the house or storage place of a man's children, where the children are depicted as arrows).

3 " And He said to me, ' You are My servant, O Israel, In whom I will be glorified (<i>adorned</i>).'	3 He said to Me, "You are My Servant, Israel, In Whom I will show My glory."
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The 'servant of God' is given Israel's name. Is this servant then actually the nation of Israel?

We learn in verse 5 that this 'servant' is to bring the apostate national 'servant', Israel (also called Jacob) back to God and also to be 'abhorred' by the nation of Israel (v7) in the process. Therefore this servant, this 'Israel', can not logically be national Israel or Jacob, but someone or something else?

All the references here seem to clearly indicate that this servant is Yeshua. So why call him 'Israel'? Perhaps because he represents them both in his afflictions and his ultimate glory – like Isaac's son, Jacob fought with the 'messenger of God' (angel) (Genesis 32:24) and was hence bestowed the name Israel (Israel means 'to strive with God, to overcome with God, then to rule with God'⁸), so Yeshua in the garden of Gethesame and on the cross, strove with an angel, overcome with God by fully submitting unto death to the will of God, and will ultimately, rule with God. How appropriate then that Yeshua be given the name 'Israel' as well. Yeshua's being 'raised from the dead' is also illustrative of national Israel's being 'raised from the dead' in 1948 (Isaiah 66:8 – A nation was born in one day)

4 Then I said, 'I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and in vain; Yet surely my just reward is with the LORD, And my work with my God.'"	4But I said, "I have toiled in vain, I have spent My strength for nothing and vanity; Yet surely the justice due to Me is with the LORD, And My reward with My God."
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Here we see a prophecy that the Messiah Yeshua will fear that he has 'Laboured in vain'. This may refer to his apparent failure and rejection at the cross, and yet; he also says *"I know that the Father's commandment is life everlasting"*. (John 12:49-50)

The apostle Paul, a great example of Messiah to us, also expresses this same fear of failure: *Do all matters without grumblings and disputings, in order that you be blameless and faultless, children of Elohim⁹ without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding on to the Word of life, for a boast to me in the day of Messiah, that I have not run in vain or laboured in vain. In fact, even if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the offering and service of your belief, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Phil 2:14-17*

Similarly we are called to labour to the point of failure i.e. to risk labouring in vain – we are called to be faithful regardless of success, that is to prepare the horse for the day of battle but to leave the deliverance or success up to our God (Proverbs 21:31).

We also see perhaps a play on words here by Isaiah as he uses the contrasting phrase 'they will NOT toil (or labour) in vain' in the great Kingdom of God description in Isaiah 65.

⁷ See the commentary on Ps 2:6 based on the scholarship of Frank Selch - also on my website

⁸ In Biblical Hebrew Israel is two words 'ya-shar' and 'el'. 'Ya-shar' means 'straight' and 'el' God, so the word simply means 'straight to God'. Jacob is a fleshly name and Israel a spiritual name. (*Understanding the Language of G-D – A Study based on the Torah – Genesis* by Rabbi Yaakov Youlus 2003 p81)

⁹ Another Hebrew term for God

5 “ And now the LORD says, Who formed Me from the womb <i>to be</i> His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, So that Israel is gathered to Him (For I shall be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, And My God shall be My strength),	5 And now says the LORD, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of the LORD, And My God is My strength) ¹⁰ ,
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The inference here, to be further expanded upon, is that this prophecy is about more than just the return of the Jewish exiles from Babylon or even from the final scattering amongst the Gentiles. To bring back Jacob (the fleshly seed of Abraham) back to the land, to then be gathered as Israel (the spiritual seed) to God suggests the three step process outlined in my ‘Return’¹¹ article leading to the recognition of the Messiah Yeshua.

*Some versions such as ‘The Scriptures’ have here ‘**though Israel is not gathered to Him ...**’. This could in fact be the correct rendition if Isaiah is referring in verse 5 to the time between the first and second comings of the Messiah, that is, the time before national Israel recognizes her Messiah.*

6 Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’”	6 He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."
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God declares through Isaiah that it is a ‘small matter’ to raise up the tribes of Jacob (clearly national Israel) and bring back the preserved ones of Israel. (i.e. return from exile, those preserved or kept ethnically pure and obedient throughout some 1900 years of the last exile).

A small matter to God but an amazing miracle that we have witnessed over the last 60 years.¹²

This verse then essentially says: “Therefore, I will also make you a light to the gentiles (i.e. all people) and bring to all nations the offer of deliverance or salvation from this evil age and the curse of death into the everlasting life of the Kingdom of God.”

Here we see God’s order – to the Jews first and also to the Gentile. [Note: If Gentiles are to receive deliverance then they must also have ‘circumcised hearts’¹³.]

Yeshua had been a ‘great light’ in Galilee (Isaiah 9:2) – but he has been removed from the scene of his labours – now his ‘light’ is through the preaching of his disciples like Paul (Acts 13).

7 Thus says the LORD, The Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One, To Him whom man despises, To Him whom the nation abhors, To the Servant of rulers: “ Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship, Because of the LORD who is faithful, The Holy One of Israel; And He has chosen You.” 8 Thus says the LORD: “ In an acceptable time I have heard You, And in the day of salvation I have helped You; I will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people, To restore the earth, To cause them to inherit the desolate heritages;	7 Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One, To the despised One, To the One abhorred by the nation, To the Servant of rulers, "Kings will see and arise, Princes will also bow down, Because of the LORD who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You." 8 Thus says the LORD, "In a favorable time I have answered You, And in a day of salvation I have helped You; And I will keep You and give You for a covenant of the people, To restore the land, to make them inherit the desolate heritages;
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¹⁰ Isaiah 12:2 – part of the description of great joy at the revelation of the ‘Yeshua of Yah’, the true Messiah!

¹¹ ‘Israel’s return in ‘belief’ or ‘unbelief’ Sept. 2007 – available from www.charismacomputers.com.au

¹² See for example: <http://www.100prophecies.org/page3.htm>

¹³ For an expansion on this issue see ‘Living The Way – The Path of the Circumcised Heart’ – also on website

Note here that the servant, is abhorred by the nation of Israel and that this prophecy is clearly not speaking of national Israel as the servant. Psalms 22 and 69 (see particularly Ps 22:6-8 and Ps 69” 69:7-9 as well as Isaiah 53:3) are worth reading here to see the clear references to the Messiah.

The mention of “Kings shall see ...” appears to be a reference to Messianic prophecies such as Psalm 2; Isaiah 52:15; Isaiah 19:23-25; Isaiah 27:1-5.

Note 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 “And working together, we also call upon you not to receive the favour of Elohim in vain – For He says, “In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in a day of deliverance I have helped you.” See, now is the well-accepted time, see, now is a day of deliverance ...”. Note also that at the end of this chapter in Corinthians the Apostle Paul exhorts his readers to “Therefore, “Come out from among them and be separate, says YAHWEH, and do not touch what is unclean, and I shall receive you. “And I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me, says YAHWEH the Almighty.””

Here is another call and parallel with Isaiah 49, for Gentiles and apostate Jews to turn to God and become His sons and daughters; that is, to become true children of God and spiritual descendants of Abraham by faith.

Paul though says “now is the day of salvation/deliverance”- can we apply this to this century?

Clearly, this call to repentance is valid in all ages but surely, evermore so as the end of this present age approaches. As we will relate, both here and in referenced articles, this does indeed appear to the ‘last days’; the time of the final tribulation does appear very eminent.

Verse 8 has ‘given for a covenant’ – who is this?

If not our Messiah Yeshua, then who? Does national Israel look for this person today? All Jews know that a covenant is a contract between two parties and when one of those parties is the God of Israel, the covenant involves the killing and eating of sacrificial animals. This expression is also found in Isaiah 42:6 “I, YAHWEH, have called You in righteousness, and I take hold of Your hand and guard You, and **give You for a covenant to a people, for a light to the gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison¹⁴, those who sit in darkness from the prison house.”**

Yeshua, during the Passover meal, the night before he was put on the cross, told the disciples to share in his sacrifice by eating of the bread and drinking of the wine which he said represented his body and his blood.

Matthew 26:26-28 And as they were eating, Yeshua took bread, and having blessed, broke and gave it to the taught ones and said, “Take, eat, this is My body.” And taking the cup, and giving thanks, He gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. “For this is My blood, that of the renewed covenant, which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins.

9 That You may say to the prisoners, ‘Go forth,’ To those who <i>are</i> in darkness, ‘Show yourselves.’ “They shall feed along the roads, And their pastures <i>shall be</i> on all desolate heights. 10 They shall neither hunger nor thirst, Neither heat nor sun shall strike them; For He who has mercy on them will lead them, Even by the springs of water He will guide them.	9 Saying to those who are bound, 'Go forth,' To those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves ' Along the roads they will feed, And their pasture will be on all bare heights. 10 "They will not hunger or thirst, Nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; For He who has compassion on them will lead them And will guide them to springs of water ¹⁵ .
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‘Feeding in pastures’ – perhaps a reference to the Shepherd-King (Isaiah 40:11).

¹⁴ This is a Hebraism for release from the snare or works of the devil (2 Tim 2:26), release from sin, or resurrection – that is, to raise to life (one of the works of the devil is death, as the devil has ‘power of death’ (Heb 2:14), those who are in the darkness of death. Yeshua said his purpose was to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8)

¹⁵ See the Kingdom of God description in Isaiah 35 (‘springs of water’ referred to in Is 35:7). In John 4:10, & John 7:37-39 Yeshua tells us that if we ask him he can give us ‘living water’; that is God Almighty, who is referred to as the ‘fountain of living water’ in Jeremiah 2:13; 17:13. We read also in Zechariah 14:8, that on the return of the Messiah, the living waters will flow perpetually from Jerusalem.

This could be an allusion to Psalm 121, a Psalm of protection and pilgrimage which seems most appropriate here.

11 I will make each of My mountains a road, And My highways shall be elevated. 12 Surely these shall come from afar; Look! Those from the north and the west, And these from the land of Sinim.” 13 Sing, O heavens! Be joyful, O earth! And break out in singing, O mountains! For the LORD has comforted His people, And will have mercy on His afflicted.

11 "I will make all My mountains a road, And My highways will be raised up. 12 "Behold, these will come from afar; And lo, these will come from the north and from the west, And these from the land of Sinim." 13 Shout for joy, O heavens! And rejoice, O earth! Break forth into joyful shouting, O mountains! For the LORD has comforted His people And will have compassion on His afflicted.

These verses speak of the coming Kingdom of God, that is, they speak of the restoration of the earth; the revegetation of the ‘ruined –desolate- inheritances)(v8); the re-establishment of the Land of Israel.

In the related and similar prophecies of Daniel, Zechariah and Isaiah 42 we see a description of the new age, the coming Kingdom of God when peace will at last come to all the earth. The prisoners called to ‘Go forth’ or ‘go out’ are those ‘who are in darkness’. That is, they are the dead (see for example, Isaiah 26:19).

Similarly, Yeshua went forth out of prison and showed himself when he came out of the tomb and appeared to the disciples.

Almost every word of this prophecy seems to have been used or quoted by Yeshua and the apostles. [See for example John 6:35 “And Yeshua said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall not get hungry at all, and he who believes in Me shall not get thirsty at all.” and especially Rev 7:16-17 “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun strike them, nor any heat, because the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall shepherd them and lead them to fountains of waters of life. And Elohim shall wipe away every tear from their eyes,”]

Note here the reference to ‘the way’ in verse 11 but translated ‘a road’ in the NKJV. (The Scriptures: “And I shall make all My mountains a way, ..) - the mountains of Israel are ‘the way’. Yeshua speaks in Revelation 16:12 of the ‘the way of the Kings of the East’ being prepared by the drying up of the Great River Euphrates.

[R Roberts & CC Walker¹⁶ argue that the ‘Kings of the East’ is the Ottoman/Turkish empire that controls the mountains of Israel (essentially the ‘West Bank’ or Judea & Samaria). Roberts & Walker argued for this understanding in 1923. Since that time the Turks have lost this control and the nation of Israel has once again been established and in 1967 reclaimed the ‘Mountains of Israel’. Given that prophecy is fulfilled over time, and often it seems over a greater time period, than we would perhaps anticipate, this could be a valid interpretation and therefore another sign of the end times. This understanding is certainly consistent with the messianic nature of Isaiah 49. Thus we are witnessing the fulfilment of verse 11]

Of course, just like we see Yeshua as a representative of his Father, Yahweh and as a representative of Israel in this chapter of Isaiah, he is also a representative of ‘the way’ or the path of righteousness. Our Messiah Yeshua is ‘the way’, the truth and the life – John 14:6).

It is worth reading Isaiah 35 at this juncture to see how ‘the way’ will be after the Messiah returns and the Kingdom of God is established.

Verse 12 speaks of a great gathering and return from afar and from all directions; from the north, the west and the land of Sinin. Given that north and west are already mentioned, the land of Sinin appears to be either east or south. There is some disagreement amongst scholars as to what ‘Sinin’ refers to.

It seems most likely to refer to China. The Chinese have amongst them some lost tribes of Israel as well as a great many very committed and heavily afflicted Gentile believers.

¹⁶ Robert Roberts & CC Walker ‘The Ministry of the Prophets: Isaiah’ Birmingham June 22nd 1923 p 604

14 But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me."	14 But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, And the Lord has forgotten me."
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Just as our Messiah Yeshua cried on the cross 'My God. My God, why have You forsaken me?' (Matt 27:46), national Israel also continues to mourn in her on-going affliction and as a secular nation she continues to worship other gods and therefore believes that God has forsaken her.

Again, we see this in the current state of play. Despite the return of Israel to her land, the undeniable miracles of God in affecting this return and in its on-going nature, Israel as a nation at this time is still in denial and rebellion. But her God is reasoning with her.

15 "Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.	15 "Can a woman forget her nursing child And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.
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Here the Creator of the Universe is actually pleading with His Chosen People. It seems that Yahweh speaks with tears in His eyes! He says 'can a mother ignore the needs of her baby?'

We would say that in normal circumstances the answer is no and yet God says, that even if she could He will not!

How great is God's love for His Chosen Ones! In many places such as Isaiah 44:21, God declares He will not forget the nation of Israel. In fact, God will not forget any of His children (We love Him because He first loved us. I John 4:19).

16 See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me. 17 Your sons (builders) shall make haste; Your destroyers and those who laid you waste Shall go away from you. 18 Lift up your eyes, look around and see; All these gather together and come to you. As I live," says the LORD, " You shall surely clothe yourselves with them all as an ornament, And bind them on you as a bride does	16 "Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands ¹⁷ ; Your walls are continually before Me. 17 "Your builders hurry; Your destroyers and devastators Will depart from you. 18 "Lift up your eyes and look around; All of them gather together, they come to you As I live," declares the LORD, "You will surely put on all of them as jewels and bind them on as a bride.
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Here God describes the true 'citizens of Zion'; the believers in Messiah, both Jew and Gentile as ornaments. This figurative description is expressed in many places such as by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 "For what is our expectation, or joy, or crown of boasting? Is it not even you, before our Master Yeshua Messiah at His coming? For you are our esteem and joy."

God sees the 'walls' of the towns of Israel; that is, He sees and is aware of their need for protection, but now is being described a time when the enemies of Israel will depart; Israel's children, both natural-born and adopted will come to her and 'adorn' or clothe her with beauty. The reference to the beautiful adorning of a bride seems relevant to a great time of rejoicing.

19 "For your waste and desolate places, And the land of your destruction, Will even now be too small for the inhabitants; And those who swallowed you up will be far away.	19"For your waste and desolate places and your destroyed land-- Surely now you will be too cramped for the inhabitants, And those who swallowed you will be far away.
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Here we see the Earth based, and Land of Israel centred, nature of this prophecy and heartfelt pleading by God to His people. Not only will He remember them and restore them, but He will transform the wastes and deserted places into bountiful vegetation (see v9-10) and blossoming peoples (v19). The Land of Israel will become too small to contain the nation of Israel and the citizens of the Kingdom of God. We also see confirmation of this lack of room after the gathering of all the sons and daughters of Israel in

¹⁷ Possibly a reference to Exodus 28:9-12.

Zechariah 10:10. As the enemies of God and His people have been removed, the Kingdom will be expanded such that the whole Earth comes under the Lordship of the Messiah and his followers.

20 The children you will have, After you have lost the others, Will say again in your ears, ‘The place <i>is</i> too small for me; Give me a place where I may dwell.’	20 "The children of whom you were bereaved will yet say in your ears, 'The place is too cramped for me; Make room for me that I may live here.'
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And now to an incredible revelation!

21 Then you will say in your heart, ‘Who has begotten these for me, Since I have lost my children and am desolate, A captive, and wandering to and fro? And who has brought these up? There I was, left alone; But these, where <i>were</i> they?’”	21 "Then you will say in your heart, 'Who has begotten these for me, Since I have been bereaved of my children And am barren, an exile and a wanderer? And who has reared these? Behold, I was left alone; From where did these come?'"
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The ‘you’ who speaks in his heart is clearly national Israel. Firstly, national Israel having been in exile for some 1900 years has seen much bereavement, much mourning. As a people they have been wandering as they have had no place to call home (until 1948).

Israel has to some degree been barren, especially in terms of producing off-spring who are true Jews, that is, who have the faith of Abraham; have recognized their Messiah and who have circumcised hearts. But here we learn that she ‘suddenly’ discovers she has almost too many ‘sons’; too many off-spring.

Israel asks, how can this be?

As in the days of Joseph, when Jacob’s sons thought Joseph was long dead yet such was the rejoicing when they discovered this ‘King’ of Egypt was their long lost brother. So to will Israel as a people rejoice when their Messiah and King of Kings stands on Mount Zion.

When Yeshua is revealed to them, they will then ‘see’ the many children that Yahweh, in Messiah, has given them. These children have been ‘brought up’ or ‘brought forth’ both through nourishment by the word of life or word of truth (James 1:18); that is, by the very words of Messiah Yeshua, and through the literal end-time resurrection from the dead.

The Messiah himself is called ‘the first born of the dead’; his followers are called ‘his seed’ (Matt 13:37-38)

See also Romans 9:6-8 “For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, neither are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham, but, “In Isaac your seed shall be called.” That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of Elohim, but the children of the promise are reckoned as the seed.”

22 Thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples; They shall bring your sons in their arms, And your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders ¹⁸ ;	22 Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will lift up My hand to the nations And set up My standard to the peoples; And they will bring your sons in their bosom, And your daughters will be carried on their shoulders.
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As part of this amazing revelation of the great many sons and daughters of Israel, the natural seed of Abraham will see at last that many Gentiles, have been adopted as sons and daughters and hence as a result of their repentance and learned righteousness through the words and actions of Yeshua, this ‘bride of Messiah’ will at last become one with the ‘wife’ of God, the restored nation of Israel.

¹⁸ In the Middle East, amongst travellers it was quite common, even as late as the nineteenth century, for women to carry their children on their shoulders, even when riding atop a horse or camel. (see ‘Mode of Carrying’ p 33.34 of *Bible Notes by the Wayside* by Rev Horatio B Hackett 1872). The reference to both the sons in their arms and daughters on their shoulders, probably alludes to the idea of first, travelling from afar to the Promised Land and secondly, using a variety of means and modes. I don’t think anything deeper should be read into the division of *sons in their arms and daughters on their shoulders*.

23 Kings shall be your foster fathers, And their queens your nursing mothers; They shall bow down to you with *their* faces to the earth, And lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I *am* the LORD, For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me.”

23 "Kings will be your guardians, And their princesses your nurses. They will bow down to you with their faces to the earth And lick the dust of your feet; And you will know that I am the LORD; Those who hopefully wait for Me will not be put to shame.

Not only are Gentile children adopted into the family of God; into the Israel of God, but these ‘sons and daughters’ of Israel have been raised by the nations of the world; by their leaders, their Kings and Queens. These adopted children from all over the earth both living and resurrected will acknowledge their indebtedness to the chosen people of God, to the cultivated Olive Tree into which they have been grafted (Romans 11), to the family of their Messiah.

In verse 23 we also see in the words ‘They bow down to you ...’ that these Kings and Queens; these leaders of this present evil age, who have perhaps unknowingly raised many ‘sons and daughters’ of Israel, will be forced to acknowledge the rightful authority and exalted place of the Messiah and of the restored and redeemed nation of Israel. This total submission of the nations leaders is also indicated in the great Messianic Psalm 72 (see in particular, verse 9) and in Micah 7:17.

Some of the scriptures that declare this are:

*Rev 2:25-26 “But hold fast what you have until I come. “And he who overcomes, and guards My works until the end, to him I shall **give authority over the nations**, and he shall shepherd them with a rod of iron, as the potter’s vessels shall be broken to pieces, as I also have received from My Father.*

*Rev 5:9-10 “ ..You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and **made us kings** and priests to our God, and **we shall reign upon the earth.**”*

*Dan 7: 18 ‘Then the **set-apart ones of the Most High shall receive the reign**, and possess the reign forever, even forever and ever.’*

*22 until the Ancient of Days came, and **right-ruling was given to the set-apart ones** of the Most High, and the time came and the set-apart ones took possession of the reign.*

27 ‘And the reign, and the rulership, and the greatness of the reigns under all the heavens, shall be given to the people, the set-apart ones of the Most High. His reign is an everlasting reign, and all rulerships shall serve and obey Him.’

See also Psalm 2 and Revelation 7.

Note also God’s proclamation that those obedient and righteous Jewish believers who have waited on the Lord (Isaiah 26:8,9), as for example, Simeon (Luke 2:25) and the prophetess Hannah (Luke 2:38) in Yeshua’s day, will not be put to shame as King David declared in Psalm 25 (this is also reiterated in the end-times prophecy of Joel 2 – see Joel 2:27), but will lift up their heads in joy as their patient obedience instead brings great comfort and eternal blessing.

It is possible that when Simeon, filled with the power of God, spoke a prophecy over the baby Yeshua, brought to him by the baby’s parents Joseph and Miriam (Mary¹⁹), he referred to Isaiah 49 when he declared the Yeshua would be a light for the unveiling of the Gentiles and the esteem(glory) of God’s people Israel.

Perhaps Simeon was speaking here of the unveiling of the Gentile children of Israel and the end-times glory of Israel when all nations would humble themselves before Jerusalem and her God?

¹⁹ In Hebrew the name of Moses older sister is מִרְיָם (probably meaning bitter). This is transliterated into English as Miriam or Miryam. The same Hebrew name was given to Yeshua’s (Jesus) mother, yet most Bibles follow the KJV in using Mary.

<p>24 Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, Or the captives of the righteous be delivered? 25 But thus says the LORD: “ Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, And the prey of the terrible be delivered; For I will contend with him who contends with you, And I will save your children.</p>	<p>24 "Can the prey be taken from the mighty man, Or the captives of a tyrant be rescued?" 25 Surely, thus says the LORD, "Even the captives of the mighty man will be taken away, And the prey of the tyrant will be rescued; For I will contend with the one who contends with you, And I will save your sons.</p>
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God here is reiterating that He will save His people from the powers of this evil age and as the unrighteous nations display their might, God also will display His might (through His Messiah Yeshua), and save all who are known by Yeshua. See Ezekiel 38,39 & Zechariah 14.

<p>26 I will feed those who oppress you with their own flesh, And they shall be drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine. All flesh shall know That I, the LORD, am your Saviour, And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”</p>	<p>26 "I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh, And they will become drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine; And all flesh will know that I, the LORD, am your Saviour, And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."</p>
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So emphatic will God's triumph over the evil powers of this present age, that they will be reduced to devouring themselves rather than the children of Israel. It appears from the context of Isaiah 9 where in verse 20 Isaiah speaks of evil men eating their own arm, that what is meant by this phrase is that the oppressors of Israel will turn against themselves. The great many nations that have come up against Israel will fall away fighting and destroying each other. In their absolute decimation and loss they will recognize that the God of Israel is the only true God and they will witness His redemption and restoration of Jacob!

Rev 14:8 And another messenger followed, saying, "Babel is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her whoring."

The humbled state of the Gentiles after the judgement of God through the return of the Messiah is also revealed in the last verse (v 16) of Zechariah 14: “ And it shall be that all who are left from all the gentiles which came up against Jerusalem, shall go up from year to year to bow themselves to the LORD, Yahweh of hosts, and to observe the Festival of Booths.” This is also described in Isaiah 66:12, 20.

Through His only begotten Son, the Messiah, God will show Himself most emphatically and with absolute finality, the ultimate Saviour and Redeemer of Israel, and of all who call upon the Name of the Messiah.

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