

## "A Land Still Promised?"

Deuteronomy 9:4-7

October 22, 2023

### □ Review from last week

- The Church didn't replace Israel - Believing Gentiles were included *into* God's one Old Testament people through faith in Christ.

*1 Corinthians 10:1-3* - <sup>1</sup> For I do not want you [Gentiles] to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup> and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup> and all ate the same spiritual food,

- True membership in God's one true people never had anything to do with physical descent.

*Romans 2:27-29* - <sup>27</sup> Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. <sup>28</sup> For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. <sup>29</sup> But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

*Philippians 3:3* - For we [Paul and his Gentile readers] are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—

- Jewish people today are lost without Christ (yet a future generation will be restored! Rom. 11).

*1 John 2:23* - No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.

### I. Old Testament Israel never had an *inherent* right to the Promised Land; it was a gift.

- A. God makes this plain in Deut. 9:4-7.
- B. The Canaanites were being driven out because of their wickedness, not Israel's righteousness.
- C. God was graciously giving the Promised Land to the Israelites based on His promise to Abraham.

### II. Israel's *remaining* in the Promised Land was always conditional.

*Joshua 23:14-16* - <sup>14</sup> "And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that not one word has failed of all the good things that the Lord your God promised concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one of them has failed. <sup>15</sup> But just as all the good things that the Lord your God promised concerning you have been fulfilled for you, so the Lord will bring upon you all the evil things, until he has destroyed you from off this good land that the Lord your God has given you, <sup>16</sup> if you transgress the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them. Then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and you shall perish quickly from off the good land that he has given to you."

- A. Many warnings were given to Israel with this in mind:

*Leviticus 18:24-28* - <sup>24</sup> "Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all these the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean, <sup>25</sup> and the land became unclean, so that I punished its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. <sup>26</sup> But you shall keep my statutes and my rules and do none of these abominations, either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you <sup>27</sup> (for the people of the land, who were before you, did all of these abominations, so

that the land became unclean),<sup>28</sup> lest the land vomit you out when you make it unclean, as it vomited out the nation that was before you.

- B. When Israel was ejected from the Land by the Lord, the same reasons were given.

**2 Kings 17:7–8** - <sup>7</sup> *And this occurred because the people of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods<sup>8</sup> and walked in the customs of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel, and in the customs that the kings of Israel had practiced.*

- C. Even God's Old Testament promises of post-exile restoration and return to the Land were conditional (Dan. 9:1-19).

**Malachi 4:5–6** - <sup>5</sup> *“Behold, I will send you Elijah [John the Baptist] the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. <sup>6</sup> And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”*

1. The Israelites did not heed John the Baptist when he prepared the way for the Lord's coming.
2. Thus, the Jewish people rejected the Messiah, God in human flesh.
3. The land was struck in 70 AD, as Jesus foretold, with a decree of utter destruction:

**Luke 19:41–44** - <sup>41</sup> *And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, <sup>42</sup> saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. <sup>43</sup> For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side <sup>44</sup> and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”*

4. Following the scattering of the Jews at that time, God made no more promises of Jewish return.

### III. God's Land promises are fulfilled in the Holy Spirit indwelt New Covenant people of God.

**John 4:19–24** - <sup>19</sup> *“Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” <sup>21</sup> “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup> Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”*

- A. Because of Christ's work and His inheritance of *all* the nations (Ps. 2; Matt. 28:18) true worship and fellowship with God is longer confined to the temple in Jerusalem.
- B. After Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit on believers, *any* land they dwell in is now the Holy Land.
1. Christians are the temple of God.
  2. They are the temple as individuals (1 Cor. 6:19) and as gathered churches (1 Cor. 3:16-17).
- C. All of the Old Testament importance given to geography and physical space was a prophetic preview of what is now the fulfillment: God's one, worldwide, Holy Spirit indwelt church.