**Will Israel Be Restored?**

**Introduction:**

Many people over the last one hundred years have looked for the restoration of Israel to the land, the rebuilding of the temple, and the reinstitution of animal sacrifices. Some believe this started in 1948 with the establishment of Israel as a nation. These mistaken beliefs came from a misapplication of several Old Testament prophecies.

**Body:**

1. **Prophecies Concerning the Babylonian Captivity**

* Jeremiah 29:10-14 “For thus says the Lord: ‘After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,’ says the Lord, ‘thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you,’ says the Lord, ‘and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,’ says the Lord, ‘and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.’ ” NKJV Jeremiah 30:3 “ ‘For behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord, ‘that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah.’ Says the Lord, ‘And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers and they shall possess it.’ ” NKJV Jeremiah 24:1-10 “The Lord showed me, and there were two baskets of figs set before the temple of the Lord, after Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah and princes of Judah with the craftsmen and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. One basket had very good figs that are first ripe; and the other basket had very bad figs which could not be eaten, they are so bad.’ Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 5 ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge those who are carried away captive from Judah, whom I have sent out of this place for their own good, into the land of the Chaldeans. 6 For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land; I will build them and not pull them down, and I will plant them and not pluck them up. Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart. And as the bad figs which cannot be eaten, they are so bad’ – surely thus says the Lord – ‘ So will I give up Zedekiah the king of Judah, his princes, the residue of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who dwell in the land of Egypt. I will deliver them to trouble into all the kingdoms of the earth, for their harm, to be a reproach and by word, a taunt and a curse, in all places where I shall drive them, And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence among them, till they are consumed from the land that I gave to them and their fathers.’ ” NKJV Note especially Verses 5-6. Jeremiah prophesied before the Babylonian captivity and during it.
* Zechariah 8:1-8 “Again the word of the Lord of hosts came saying, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; With great fervor I am zealous for her. Thus says the Lord: I will return to Zion, And dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, The Mountain of the Lord of Hosts, The Holy Mountain. Thus says the Lord of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit In the streets of Jerusalem, Each one with his staff in his hand Because of great age. The streets of city Shall be full of boys and girls Playing in its streets. Thus says the Lord of hosts: If it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, Will it also be marvelous in My eyes?’ Says the Lord of hosts. Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘Behold, I will save My people from the land of the east And from the land of the west; I will bring them back, And they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They shall be My people And I will be their God, in truth and righteousness.’ ” NKJV Zechariah prophesied around the time of Israel’s return from captivity.
* Deuteronomy 4:27-31 “And the Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the Lord will drive you. And there you will serve gods, the work of men’s hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat or smell. But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the Lord your God and obey His voice (for the Lord your God is a merciful God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them.” NKJV Prophecy was made by Moses before Israel entered the Promise Land.
* All of these prophecies were fulfilled when the people were released from captivity to come back to Judah. (Ezra 1:1-4) “Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the descendants of the captivity were building the temple of the Lord God of Israel, they came to Zerubbabel and the heads of the fathers’ houses, and said to them, ‘Let us build with you, for we seek your God as you do; and we have sacrificed to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here.’ But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the fathers’ houses of Israel said to them, ‘You may do nothing with us to build a house for our God; but we alone will build to the Lord God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us.’ Then the people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them in building.” NKJV (Ezra 7:6-7) “this Ezra came up from Babylon; and he was a skilled scribe in the Law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given. The king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him. Some of the children of Israel, the priests, the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the Nethinim came up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes.” NKJV
* Also, only a remnant would return. (Jeremiah 23:1-3) “ ‘Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!’ says the Lord. Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: ‘You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings.’ Says the Lord. ‘But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.” NKJV

1. **The Fulfillment of the Land Promise**

* The land promise was originally given to Abraham. (Genesis 12:7) “Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I will give this land.’ And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him.” NKJV
* This promise was fulfilled by Jehovah. (Joshua 21:43-45) “So the Lord gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. The Lord gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. Not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.” NKJV (Joshua 23:14) “Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth. And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed.” NKJV
* Israel had to remain faithful to keep the land. (Deuteronomy 30:1-3) “Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God drives you, and you return to the Lord your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, that the Lord your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the Lord your God has scattered you.” NKJV
* This they did not do! (Jeremiah 9:13-16) “And the Lord said, ‘Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice, nor walked according to it, but they have walked according to the dictates of their own hearts and after the Baals, which their fathers taught them,’ therefore thus says the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will feed them, this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. I will scatter them also among the Gentiles, whom neither they nor their fathers have known. And I will send a sword after them until I have consumed them.’ ” NKJV

1. **The Tabernacle of David**

* Amos 9:11-15 “ ‘On that day I will raise up The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, And repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days of old; That they may possess the remnant of Edom, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name,’ Says the Lord who does this thing. ‘Behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord, ‘When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, And the treader of grapes him who sows seed, The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, And all the hills shall flow with it, I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, And no longer shall they be pulled up From the land I have given them.’ Says the Lord your God.” NKJV This prophet lived many years before both the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.
* Some people believe this is a prophecy of a future rebuilding of a literal temple in Jerusalem. But the Bible reveals how this was fulfilled. In the first century the apostles and elders came together for a meeting commonly called the “Jerusalem Council.” The purpose of this meeting was to discuss whether the Gentiles could be saved and enter the Lord’s church without keeping the Law of Moses. Yes, they could. (Acts 15:13-19) “And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, ‘Men and brethren, listen to me: Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.’ And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: ‘After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; So that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the Lord who does all these things.’ Known to God from eternity are all His works. Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God,” NKJV This prophecy of the tabernacle of David was about the church of Christ, not a physical building.

**Conclusion:**

So as we have seen, the restoring of the kingdom of Israel with the building of a temple and reinstitution of animal sacrifices is not prophesied in Scripture. Now, in Christ, the Jews have died to the law. (Romans 7:1-6) “Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then If, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another – to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.” NKJV

Bobby Stafford April 9, 2017 [Evening]