

The Restoration/Conversion of Pagan Nations in the KOG

Zechariah visions close with the restoration of Israel & surrounding pagan/*enemy* nations:

14.16 “Then everyone who **survives** of all the nations [from God’s plagues, vv.12-15] that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, YHWH of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths [cp. **Ezek. 46.9-12**].”

Fulfillment of the Abrahamic/Gospel promise:

Gen. 12.1-3: YHWH said to Abram: Go out from your land, your relatives, and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, I will curse those who treat you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

Gal 3.8: In Scripture it is foreseen that God makes right the non-Jews who believe Him. Thus the Christian Gospel was preached to Abraham ahead of time with these words: “With faith like yours, Abraham, all the nations will be blessed.”

compare:

Zech. 8.12b-13: “Then I will allow the remnant of my people to possess all these things. Furthermore, house of Judah and Israel, even though you used to be a curse among the nations, now I will surely save you, and you will be a blessing.”

Jer. 4.1-2: “If you return Israel, says YHWH, return to me: put away your abominations out of my sight and no longer stray away. You must be truthful, honest and upright when you take an oath saying, 'As surely as YHWH lives!' If you do, **then the nations will be blessed, and they will be honored by me.**”

Ps 72.1, 17: “YHWH, give your judgment to the King and your righteousness to the King's son...Let his name be blessed forever and endure longer than the sun: and all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.”

Isa 65.15b-16: “My servants [from the nations? v.1] will be called by **a new name which shall be blessed on the earth**; for they shall bless the true God: and they that swear upon the earth shall swear by the God of truth.”

God’s Judgment *restores* their inheritance/blessings: **Deut. 2:5, 9, 15**

“Don’t go to war with [Edom], because I am not giving you any of their land, not even a footprint, for I have given Mount Seir as an inheritance for Esau...Do not ye quarrel with the Moabites, and do not engage in war with them; for I will not give you of their land for an inheritance, for I have given Aroer to the children of Lot to inherit...And when you enter the land of the Ammonites, the descendants of Lot don’t bother them or start a war with them. I have given the land of Ammon to them as their inheritance, and I will not give you any of their land.”

NOTE: “The umbrella term for Israel’s restoration, [‘**reverse the fortunes**’, (lit. ‘turning the turning’), *subsebut*], is also the umbrella term for Yhwh’s restoration of Moab, Ammon & Elam (**Jer. 48.47; 49.6; 49.39**), and for Sodom and Samaria (**Ezek. 16.53**). After Nebuchadnezzar’s invasion, Egypt ‘will settle down as in former days’ (**Jer. 46.26**).” *Old Testament Theology*, v2: Israel's Faith, John Goldingay, p 819.

Ezek. 16.53: “But someday I will **restore the fortunes** of Sodom and Samaria, and I will restore you, too.”

Ezek. 29.13-16: “For this is what the Lord GOD says: At the end of 40 years I will gather the Egyptians from the nations where they were dispersed. I will **restore the fortunes** of Egypt and bring them back to the land of Pathros, the land of their origin. There they will be a lowly

kingdom. Egypt will be the lowliest of kingdoms and will never again exalt itself over the nations. I will make them so small they cannot rule over the nations. It will never again be an object of trust for the house of Israel, drawing attention to their sin of turning to the Egyptians. Then they will know that I am the Lord Yahweh.” Cp. **Jer. 46.26**; Moab, **48.47**; Ammonites, **49.6, 39**

The people of God now include *restored* pagan nations as His inheritance: **Isa 19**.

16 On that day Egypt will be like women. She will tremble with fear because of the threatening hand of YHWH of Hosts when He raises it against her.

17 The land of Judah will terrify Egypt; whenever Judah is mentioned, Egypt will tremble because of what YHWH of Hosts has planned against it.

18 On that day 5 cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear loyalty to YHWH of Hosts. One of the cities will be called the City of the Sun.

19 On that day there will be an altar to YHWH in the center of the land of Egypt and a pillar to YHWH near her border.

20 It will be a sign and witness to YHWH of Hosts in the land of Egypt. When they cry out to YHWH because of their oppressors, He will send them a savior and leader, and he will rescue them.

21 YHWH will make Himself known to Egypt, and Egypt will know YHWH on that day. They will offer sacrifices and offerings; they will make vows to YHWH and fulfill them.

22 YHWH will strike Egypt, striking and healing. Then they will return to YHWH and He will hear their prayers and heal them.

23 On that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. Assyria will go to Egypt, Egypt to Assyria, and Egypt will worship with Assyria.

24 On that day Israel will form a triple alliance with Egypt and Assyria — a blessing within the land.

25 YHWH of Hosts will bless them, saying, “Egypt My people, Assyria My handiwork, and Israel My inheritance are blessed.”

NOTE: This does not cancel national distinctions:

Ps 22.27-31 [future generations...yet unborn];

Ps 47.9: “The princes of the nations are incorporated/joined with/to the people of the God of Abraham.”

Ps 67.4-5: “Let the nations rejoice and shout for joy, for You judge the peoples with fairness and lead the nations on earth. Let the nations thank you, O God!”

Isa 2.1-4: “In the future the mountain of YHWH’s temple will endure as the most important of mountains, and will be the most prominent of hills. All the nations will stream to it. People from many nations will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHWH, to the house of Jacob’s God. There he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths.’ For YHWH’s teaching will go out from Zion; his word will go out from Jerusalem.”

Jer. 16.19-21: YHWH, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in a time of distress, the nations will come to You from the ends of the earth, and they will say, “Our fathers inherited only lies, worthless idols of no benefit at all.” Can one make gods for himself? But they are not gods. “Therefore, I am about to inform them, and this time I will make them know My power and My might; then they will know that My name is Yahweh.”

NOTE: “While Ezekiel seemed to have understood that foreigners could become members of the covenant community (e.g., **Ezek. 44:9**; but cf. **37:28**), Zechariah depicts them as simultaneously retaining their distinctive identities (cf. Zech. 8:20–23; also **Isa. 19:23–25**).” ESV

The conversion/restoration of the nations will be as a result of Israel's restoration:

Romans 11.11 So am I saying that [the Jews] stumbled and consequently failed completely and permanently? Not at all! But as a result of their spiritual failure, salvation has come to other nations, to “make Israelites jealous.”

12 Now if their failure benefits the world, and their loss profits the nations, how much more beneficial it will be if they were to completely fulfill what they were meant to be.

13 Now let me speak to you nations. Insofar as I am a missionary to the nations, I promote what I am doing for God,

14 that somehow I might make my physical relatives jealous and save some of them.

15 If the result of God’s rejection of them is that the world becomes God’s friends, the result of God’s acceptance of them will be like the dead coming back to life.

NOTE: “Israel will fulfill the function that God promised to Abraham for his descendants (**Gen 12.3**). They will be a blessing to the world, a means whereby the blessings of God can come to all peoples, a means whereby the election of Israel is extended to everyone (‘Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork’, **Isa 19.25**).” *Isaiah*, John N. Oswalt.

The final point: as the seed of Abraham we must understand God’s gospel plan so that we can prepare ourselves now to qualify to be in that great Day coming:

1Peter 1.7 The point of your current trials is the testing of your faith, which is more precious than gold which perishes even though it is refined by fire. The object is that your faith may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the 2nd coming of Jesus the Messiah.

Rom. 2.7 Those who have persisted in doing what is right will receive glory and honor, and immortality in the Age to Come.

Get ready to inherit your reward: **Matt 19**

27 Peter asked Jesus, “We left everything to follow you. What’s in it for us?”

28 And Jesus replied, “When I, the Messiah, sit upon my glorious throne in the Kingdom when the world is reborn, you my disciples shall certainly sit on 12 thrones to govern the 12 tribes of Israel.

29 And anyone who gives up his home, brothers, sisters, father, mother, wife, children, or property, to follow me, shall receive a 100 times as much in return, and receive immortal life in the Age to come.