

Israel, Egypt, and Arabs: Epicenter of God's End-Time Plan (Isa. 19:24)

I. THE GREATEST SOCIAL MIRACLE IN HISTORY (ISA. 19:24; JN. 17:23)

A. Isaiah 19:24 describes the greatest international social miracle in history—the descendants of Abraham including those of Isaac and Ishmael together with Jacob and Esau will be deeply unified. This miracle of unity occurring throughout the Middle East will happen in context to Jesus' return. It will be the epicenter of the Spirit's worldwide work of unifying God's people (Jn. 17:21-23).

²⁴In that day [related to Jesus' return] Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land [the earth], ²⁵whom the LORD...shall bless... (Isa. 19:24-25)

***²²And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:
²³...that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.
(Jn. 17:22-23)***

¹⁵...so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace. (Eph. 2:15)

1. The *ancient Assyrian Empire* included significant parts of modern-day Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon with parts of Armenia, Turkey, Iran and seven Persian Gulf countries (Iraq, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE)—it refers to parts of at least 14 modern nations.
2. The implications of this dramatic story will impact the whole earth. The Old Testament prophets provide much information to fill in the gaps to this dramatic global story. There are 150 chapters in the Bible in which the main subject is the generation that Jesus returns.

B. This dramatic divine storyline will include an unprecedented outpouring of the Spirit along with an unprecedented measure of persecution and demonic rage as the Lord shakes all nations (Hag. 2:7). Both God's glory and deep darkness will continue to increase as we approach the return of Jesus. Isaiah 60:2 highlights the unique dynamics related to an outpouring of the Spirit which will result in a great harvest (Rev. 7:9), a victorious Church (Rev. 19:7), and the national salvation of Israel and Egypt (Isa. 19:21; 59:20-21; 60:21) even as darkness and judgment also increase greatly.

²For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people [the nations]; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. (Isa. 60:2)

⁷“...I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations...” (Hag. 2:7)

- C. I identify 4 common interpretations of the biblical narrative of escalating darkness and glory.
1. Those who proclaim ***both*** the coming unprecedented revival in context to escalating darkness.
 2. Those who proclaim ***only revival*** while denying or minimizing the escalating darkness.
 3. Those who proclaim ***only the escalating darkness*** while denying or minimizing revival.

4. Those who see prophecies of trouble as being *mostly fulfilled* in AD 70 or as symbolic.
- D. What the Spirit will do *in fullness* when Jesus returns in releasing God's glory and/or judgments, He is doing now *in part* and in an accelerating way, leading up to Jesus' return. Thus, we pray for millennial promises to be released in part now, knowing that their fullness awaits His return.
- E. The Lord's end-time plan includes national salvation for Israel, Egypt, and parts of the 14 middle eastern nations that are represented by the territory in the ancient Assyria Empire.
- ²¹...*the Egyptians will know the Lord...*²³*there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria...and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians.* ²⁴...*Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land [Euphrates to Nile],* ²⁵*whom the LORD of hosts shall bless...* (Isa. 19:21-25)
- F. *A blessing in midst of the earth*: The result will be the release of the blessing of the garden of Eden, in Jerusalem and throughout parts of Israel, Egypt, and Assyria (Isa. 11:6-9; 35:1-8; 51:3; 65:17-25; Ezek. 34:29; 36:35; 47:6-12). Jesus will restore the agriculture, atmosphere, and animal life to the conditions seen in Eden. Millennial Jerusalem will be the epicenter from which “garden-of-Eden” blessings will progressively spread to fill the whole earth with God's glory (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14).
- ³⁵*This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden...* (Ezek. 36:35)
- G. *A highway*: The highway in Isaiah 19:23 is a physical highway that will be built after Jesus returns. It will facilitate the relational, economic, political, and spiritual unity that will exist in a deep way. Isaiah prophesied a “highway” to be established in the end times. He wrote of it 7 times *directly* and 3 times *indirectly* (Isa. 11:16; 19:23; 35:8; 40:3; 43:19; 49:11-12; 62:10; cf. 42:16; 43:2, 5-9; 57:14; Jer. 31:8-9, 21). It also refers to the dynamic relational-spiritual highway developing today.
- H. Isaiah highlighted many aspects of this highway—
1. It is for the *remnant of Israel returning to Zion* after God dries up the Euphrates (11:15-16).
 2. It *connects Assyria and Egypt* and facilitates international interaction and relationships (19:23).
 3. It is called the *Highway of Holiness* for the redeemed to walk on when returning to Jerusalem (35:8).
 4. It is a *highway in the desert for God* when all flesh will see God's glory together (40:3).
 5. *God will make a road in the wilderness* and rivers in the desert when He does a new thing related to Jesus' return (43:19).
 6. *God will make a road through mountains* and elevate His highways so the remnant of Israel may return from the north and west and from Sinim (which most see as China; 49:11-12).

7. It is a divine call to *build a highway for the people* to enter Jerusalem (62:10).

- I. **Provoked:** Israel will be provoked by godly jealousy to experience God's love and power that they will witness in the lives of Gentile believers walking in the fullness of the Spirit (Rom. 11:11, 25). Israel's national salvation is connected to the fullness of the Gentiles in the end times (Rom. 11:25).

¹¹...to provoke them [Israel] to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles...²⁵blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶So all Israel will be saved...³¹even so these [Israel] also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you [Gentile believers] they also may obtain mercy...³³Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! (Rom. 11:11, 25-33)

II. JESUS PROPHESED A TIME OF UNPRECEDENTED CARNAGE (MT. 24:15-22)

- A. Jesus prophesied that difficulties in Israel and the nations will surpass any time in history (24:21) with unprecedented death tolls (24:22). He emphasized the carnage by saying that if this time were not kept short (42 months), no one would survive. This abomination occurs when the Antichrist places his image in the temple and requires the mark of the beast (2 Thes. 2:3-4; Rev. 13:12-18).

¹⁵“Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place [in Jerusalem]” (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶“then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything...²¹There will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world...nor ever shall be. ²²And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved...” (Mt. 24:15-22)

- B. In Matthew 24:15 and 21, Jesus referred to the final vision in the book of Daniel (Dan. 11-12) where the abomination of desolation occurs and the Antichrist sets up his palace in the land (Dan. 11:45), launching his reign of terror, bringing unprecedented trouble to Israel and the nations (Dan. 12:1).

³¹[The Antichrist]...shall place there [in the Jerusalem temple] the abomination of desolation...³²but the people who know their God shall...carry out great exploits...⁴¹He [Antichrist] shall also enter the Glorious Land [Israel], and many countries shall be overthrown...⁴⁵He shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain [Jerusalem]...^{12:1}At that time...there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was...even to that time. (Dan. 11:31-12:1)

1. The four angels bound at the Euphrates River will kill 1/3 of all the Gentiles—2+ billion??

¹³...“Release the four angels who are bound at the...Euphrates.” ¹⁵So the angels, who had been prepared for the hour...were released to kill a third of mankind. (Rev. 9:13-15)

2. The carnage will be seen in Israel as 2/3 in the land are killed and 1/3 are saved (Zech. 13:8). The Hebrew word *ha'arets* or *eretz* can mean “the earth” or “the land.” The context determines which to use “the land” (of Israel) or “the earth,” but sometimes it is inconclusive.

⁸*It shall come to pass in all the land [eretz: land of Israel or the earth],” says the LORD, “that two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it...” (Zech. 13:8)*

- C. The subject of Christians and Israel *enduring captivity* in end-time prophecy is a sober reality.

1. The New Testament describes *Christians* suffering persecution and even being taken captive (Rev. 13:7, 10; cf. Mt. 10:21-22, 28; 24:9; Lk. 12:4-7; 21:16-19; Jn. 15:18-16:4; 2 Tim. 3:12; Rev. 6:9-11; 11:7; 12:11, 17; 16:5-7; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2; 20:4).

2. Zechariah prophesied that of half the *Jewish people* living Jerusalem (in the final 42 months) will be taken into captivity (Zech. 14:2). Current, nearly 600, 000 Jews live in Jerusalem.

²*I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken... half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. ³*Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations...* (Zech. 14:2-3)*

3. The Old Testament addresses *Jewish people* being scattered, persecuted, and/or taken captive at various times in history, yet particularly in context to the generation of Jesus' return (Ps. 102:20; Isa. 11:11-14, 16; 14:1-3; 19:23; 27:12-13; 40:11; 42:7, 16, 22; 45:14; 49:9-12, 21, 24-26; 60:10, 12, 14; 61:1, 5; Jer. 30:3, 8, 10, 17; 31:16, 23; Ezek. 34:27; 39:23-29; Hos. 11:11; Joel 3:1-2, 8; Amos 9:14; Mic. 2:12-13; 4:6-7; 5:6; 7:12; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 9:11-12; 10:10-11; 13:8; 14:2; cf. Mt. 25:43; Lk. 21:24). Moses' prophecy of Israel being scattered and in captivity (Deut. 28:64) was partially fulfilled at the hands of Assyria (721 BC), Babylon (586 BC), and Rome (AD 70)—its ultimate fulfillment will be in the end times.

- D. The day of the Lord will be a time of judgment for those in Israel who refuse God's leadership (Amos 5:18). It can be compared to fleeing the Antichrist (a lion) in Israel by escaping to Islamic nations (a bear). God is “preparing a table” for Jews fleeing from Judea in the end times—by sending a great revival resulting in millions of deeply committed Egyptian and Arab believers throughout the Middle East to reveal the God of Israel's love and salvation to unsaved Israel.

¹⁸*Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! For what good is the day of the LORD to you? ...*

¹⁹*It will be as though a man fled from a lion [Antichrist], and a bear met him! (Amos 5:18-19)*

⁵*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies...my cup runs over. (Ps. 23:5)*

- E. God has ordained places of provision for Israel as she flees into the wilderness of the nations (Ezek. 20:35). The “wings of an eagle” spoke of Israel being brought to God at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 19:4).

³⁵I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples [nations, NIV], and there I will plead My case with you face to face. ³⁶Just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of...Egypt, I will plead My case with you...³⁷I will bring you into the bond of the covenant... (Ezek. 20:35-37)

¹³Now when the dragon [Satan]...persecuted the woman [the remnant of Israel]...¹⁴The woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for [3½ years]...¹⁶The earth helped the woman...and swallowed up the flood [of Satan's persecution]...¹⁷The dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who...have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Rev. 12:13-17)

- F. One task of the global body of Christ is to encourage Arab believers to stand with one another in supporting Israel as well as messianic believers to stand with one another in loving Arabs.
- G. The healing of Abraham's family will be the *epicenter of the end-time drama*—it is the stage for the earth to see God's glory (Jn. 17:23). Jesus prophesied there would be those who would believe they were serving God by killing believers and Jewish people (Jn. 16:3). This hostility will be a global theater for many to see "greater love" (Jn. 15:13) and "greater works" (Jn. 14:12; cf. Mic. 7:15).

²²And the glory...I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³...that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. (Jn. 17:22-23)

²...the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. (Jn. 16:2)

¹³Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends... (Jn. 15:13)

¹²...the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do... (Jn. 14:12)

¹⁵As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders. (Mic. 7:15)

III. ISRAEL REFINED: 7 SITUATIONS FOR JEWS IN THE LAND IN THE LAST 42 MONTHS

- A. The Lord will bring 1/3 of Israel through the fire to refine them in bringing them to salvation. It is possible that 5-6 million Jews worldwide will look to Jesus for salvation in the end times.

⁹I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them...and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name...and each one will say, "The LORD is my God." (Zech. 13:9)

- B. I identify 7 situations for the Jews living in Israel during the Tribulation (final 42 months):
 1. Some will *remain in the land*—protected by God (Isa. 4:3; Zech. 12:6-14; 14:2; Rev. 7:4).
 2. Some will be *anointed for ministry* (Joel 2:28; Mic. 7:15; Rev. 11:3; 16:6; 18:24).
 3. Some will be *empowered for battle* in military conflict (Is. 41:15 Zech. 9:13; 10:3-7; 12:6-8).
 4. Some will *flee into the wilderness* of the nations (Ezek. 20:35; Mt. 24:16; Rev. 12:14).
 5. Some will be *taken captive*—including half of the city of Jerusalem (Joel 3:1; Zech. 14:2).

6. Some will be *killed* by the Antichrist's forces (Dan. 7:21; 25; Zech. 11:16; 13:8; Rev. 13:7).
7. Some will *rebel against God* (Ezek. 20:38; 34:16-22).

IV. JEWISH REFUGEES WILL RETURN TO ISRAEL FROM EGYPT AND ASSYRIA

- A. In context to Jesus' return, Jewish captives and refugees who fled Israel to escape the Antichrist's reign of terror will return to Israel from Egypt and Assyria (Isa. 11:11, 16; 19:20; 27:12-13; Hos. 11:10-11; Mic. 7:12; Zech. 10:10-11; 14:2).

¹²The Lord will thresh from the channel of the River [Euphrates in Iraq] to the Brook of Egypt; and you will be gathered one by one, O you children of Israel. ¹³In that day: the great trumpet will be blown; they [Jewish refugees] will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, and they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord...at Jerusalem. (Isa. 27:12-13)

¹¹It shall come to pass in that day that the LORD shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people who are left, from Assyria and Egypt... (Isa. 11:11)

¹⁰I will bring them [Jewish refugees] back from the land of Egypt...into the land [of Israel]... (Zech. 10:10)

¹⁰They [Israel] shall walk after the Lord. He will roar like a lion. When He roars, then His sons...¹¹shall come trembling like a bird from Egypt...from the land of Assyria... (Hos. 11:10-11)

¹²In that day they will come to you [Israel] from Assyria and the cities of Egypt, and from Egypt to the River [Euphrates], from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain. (Mic. 7:12; ESV)

¹²It will be a day when they will come to you [Israel] from Assyria and the cities of Egypt, from Egypt even to the Euphrates, even from sea to sea and mountain to mountain. (Mic. 7:12; NAS)

V. GOD'S GRAND FAMILY PLAN—DIVINE CHECKMATE

- A. God intentionally set things in motion in Genesis 12-25 that put Himself in "*divine checkmate*."
- ³...He made known to me the mystery ...⁶that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs [with Israel]...⁸that I should preach...⁹and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God...¹⁰to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers... (Eph. 3:3-10)***
- B. Abraham's family will be healed when the Gentile *sons of Ishmael* (Abraham's first biological son) and the *sons of Esau* (Isaac's first son) are reconciled to each other and to Israel—the *sons of Jacob*.

- C. **Abraham's first biological son was Ishmael:** The Angel of the Lord promised Hagar that He would multiply her descendants exceedingly through her son Ishmael (Gen. 16:10-12; 17:20). Ishmael was half Egyptian (Gentile), being the son of Abraham with Hagar, his Egyptian maidservant.

¹⁰**The Angel of the LORD said to her [Hagar], "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly..."**

¹²**He [Ishmael] shall be a wild man; his hand shall be against every man..." (Gen. 16:10-12)**

²⁰**As for Ishmael, I have heard you [Hagar]...I have blessed him... will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. (Gen. 17:20)**

- D. God put "two nations" in Rebecca's womb (Gen. 25:23)—*Esau and Jacob*. Esau was the uncle of Jacob's 12 sons, and Ishmael was their great uncle. Esau's offspring were Gentiles. Jacob's mother, Rebecca, was from Syria (Gen. 25:20). Jacob's grandparents, Abraham and Sarah, were from Ur (modern-day Iraq). Thus, Abraham's family has roots and heritage in Israel, Egypt, Iraq, and Syria.

²³**The LORD said to her [Rebecca]: "Two nations are in your womb; two peoples..." (Gen. 25:23)**

- E. **Divine checkmate:** The Lord promised Abraham that He would make his descendants (Israel) the most powerful nation *politically* and the most influential nation *spiritually*. God put Himself in a seemingly impossible situation by promising that Israel, the nation that would *resist Jesus the longest*, would become the nation *that loves Jesus most* and would lead all the nations to love Him (Deut. 30:6; Isa. 2:3), and that Israel as the nation that is *most hated* and *most threatened with annihilation* would become the nation that is *most loved* and *most secure* on the earth (Isa. 62:7). God put the oil in Ishmael's land so that at the end of the age they would have great advantages.

- F. "The decision" referred to in Joel 3:14 includes the body of Christ agreeing to partner with Jesus' leadership in bringing the truth about the love and salvation of the God of Israel to unbelieving Israel—even at the cost of their lives—in context to international hatred and oppression of Israel.

¹⁴**Multitudes...in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. (Joel 3:14)**

- G. The whole earth will face a "valley of decision." Nobody will escape it. God's Word insists that the Church stand with God's purposes for Israel. It is a *litmus test* of the Church's obedience to Jesus' leadership. We love Jesus; therefore, we want to embrace what He values and love what He loves. The consequence of churches not training their people in what Scripture says about God's end-time purpose for Israel is that their children and grandchildren will have no foundation to stand for Israel.