

# 1 PETER AND ISRAEL'S LAND PROMISES

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What follows is an edited and revised presentation from my upcoming (hopefully soon), book on 1 Thessalonians 4. While I do not discuss Israel's land promises in that work, my research has led me to believe that what I do present there has profound implications for a proper understanding of God's promises to Israel.

Peter's first epistle is intensely eschatological and exudes a sense of the imminent *parousia*. What is more, and this is often overlooked by the commentators, 1 Peter is focused on *the restoration of Israel*. It is common among some commentators to say that Peter is actually addressed to a Gentile audience even though he utilizes language that was normally descriptive of Israel. This is what I was personally taught in seminary. In my 2008 formal debate with amillennialist John Welch he insisted that Peter was writing to Gentiles who were unconcerned with God's O.T. promises to Israel.<sup>1</sup> I believe this is misguided. We will establish our premise by quickly noting some of the salient issues in 1 Peter. We will also compare Peter with some other related texts. Let's establish now that Peter was writing to and about the restoration of Israel in fulfillment of God's Old Covenant promises to her.

**Peter was the apostle to the circumcised (Galatians 2), those whose history and promises were in the Old Testament that he quotes. He is writing to "his audience." Just like Paul the "apostle to the Gentiles" wrote to his audience, Peter, "apostle to the circumcision" was writing to his audience.**

The geographical locations that Peter mentions are some of the very locations mentioned in Acts 2. There we are told that Jews from "**every nation under heaven**" had gathered. Did these "Jews" not go back to their home after hearing Peter speak to them about their Messiah on that momentous day? This alone is sufficient to understand that Peter truly was addressing Israel scattered abroad.

Peter specifically addresses "**the elect, those scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, etc.**" A bit more accurately, he says, "to the chosen sojourners of the dispersion..." These terms, i.e. the *elect*, *sojourners* (cf. 1:17; 2:12), and the *diaspora* are virtually technical terms for the ten northern tribes, i.e. Israel scattered abroad. Many commentators acknowledge that *diaspora* was, "a technical term among Greek speaking Jews for members of their race dwelling outside Palestine."<sup>2</sup>

Further proof that Peter is addressing the *diaspora* of Israel—albeit *now Christians of the diaspora*—is that he speaks of them being "**elect according to the foreknowledge of God**." Paul makes it clear in Romans 9-11 that it was Israel that was foreknown. It was Israel that was elected. It was Israel to whom the promises of the election were made (Romans 9:3f; 11:1-3).

Throughout his epistle Peter uses language reminiscent of Israel's bondage and exodus. The terms "strangers and sojourners" recall the Exodus. He also says that they had been "**redeemed**" (1 Peter 1:18). This word carried strong connotations of deliverance from bondage. It is used of deliverance from Egyptian and Babylonian captivity (Isaiah 43:3-7; 48:20).<sup>3</sup>

Throughout his epistle Peter cites Old Covenant prophecies of Israel's last days restoration under Messiah. He draws heavily from Isaiah 40-66 which is recognized as a set of prophecies predicting the Second Exodus, Israel's eschatological deliverance into the New Creation.

**Peter emphatically says that his eschatological hope, and that of his audience, was taken from the Old Covenant promises. Those promises were to be fulfilled at Christ's parousia (1 Peter 1:9-12). This is highly significant.**

The millennial doctrine seeks to delineate between the spiritual promises to Israel and the national promises to Israel. They will sometimes grant that the New Testament is concerned with the spiritual promises, but that all promises from the Old Testament about Christ's Second Coming are dealing with the land promises and Israel as a nation. But in the millennial view of things, Peter should not be concerned with any of those Second Coming promises made to Israel. He should not, in any way whatsoever, be speaking of any of the Old Testament promises of the restoration of Israel unless he did so in a purely futuristic tense. Israel's promises had supposedly been postponed, delayed. Again, this is critical. In

no way should Peter affirm or even suggest that any of the Old Testament promises of Israel's restoration to the land, of the establishment of the Messianic Temple, or the restoration of the diaspora were being fulfilled. And yet, this is precisely what Peter does!

Peter quotes *verbatim* from Hosea 1:9-10; 2:23 which is the prediction of the restoration of the ten tribes: "**who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.**" As Dubis cogently notes, according to Hosea and the other prophets, "it is only when God regathers Israel and Judah to the promised land that they are once again called 'Sons of the Living God....Thus, when 1 Peter 2:10 takes up the language of Hosea 1:6, 9, 2:25 (LXX), and says that those who were formerly called 'Not a people' (*ou laos*) are now called 'People of God' (*laos theou*), and that 'Not pitied (*ouk eleemenoi*) has now received pity (*nun...eleethentes*), this is tantamount to saying that Israel's restoration from exile has taken place."<sup>4</sup> It is also tantamount to saying that the promises of "the land" must be taken spiritually.

The fact that Paul and Peter affirm the fulfillment of the OT promises of Israel's restoration "in the land" as fulfilled in Christ and the church becomes divine commentary on the meaning of "the land" as seen by the NT writers. As we are seeing, Peter and Paul indisputably affirmed the fulfillment of key restoration prophecies (Isaiah 49; Hosea; Ezekiel 37, etc.). And, they affirmed the *spiritual fulfillment* (1 Peter 2:4-5). If the temple was spiritual, if the sacrifices were spiritual, if the priesthood was spiritual, *then the land was spiritual!*

Peter tells his audience, *experiencing the restoration promised by Hosea*, "**you also, as living stones, are being built into a spiritual house.**" (1 Peter 2:4). This is parallel to Paul who said that the Ephesians were, "**being builded together for an habitation of God**", i.e. "**An holy temple in the Lord**" (Ephesians 2:20-21). Also like Paul, Peter says his audience was built on the foundation— the Rejected Stone— Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5f, cf. Ephesians 2:20).

Remember that the promise of Hosea and Ezekiel was that when Israel was restored under Messiah and the New Covenant, *in the land*, He would establish His temple among them. Now, here is the apostle to the circumcision addressing the people to whom the promises were made long ago, citing those promises and telling them that they were the living stones of that promised Messianic temple! For ease of understanding I would form the thoughts like this:

Hosea and Ezekiel foretold the restoration of Israel under Messiah.

Ezekiel said that when Israel was restored under Messiah the Messianic Temple would be constructed and YHVH would dwell among His people, *in the land* (Ezekiel 37:26-27).

Peter says that the restoration of Israel promised in Hosea (and thus in Ezekiel), was taking place through Christ and the church when he wrote (1 Peter 2:9-10).

Peter likewise affirmed that his *audience* was the promised temple. They were the living stones of that promised temple and Messiah himself— in fulfillment of Israel's promises-- was the foundation stone of that promised temple.

Therefore, for Peter, the Messianic Temple was being established— *in the land*-- as promised to Israel in Christ and the church.

As Dubis notes, "Peter has transferred<sup>5</sup> first century expectations of an eschatological temple to the Christian community (2:5). Thus, the OT images of a gloriously restored temple are ultimately realized in the church for 1 Peter....According to 1 Peter 2:5 the restoration of the temple has already begun— the temple is already 'being built' (*oikodome is the present tense*)."<sup>6</sup> (Woes, 2002, 55).

Notice how all of this is supported.

Peter says that his Christian audience was receiving the promises of restoration made to the ten northern tribes. His words are unambiguous.

That promise was the promise of restoration taken directly from Hosea.

Hosea's promise is directly parallel to the promise of Ezekiel 37, where the prophet said that when Israel was restored, God would establish His temple among the people, in the land.

Peter affirms that his audience was now comprising *living stones*, the promised Messianic Temple.

Peter, interpreting the promise of the promised temple, says that his audience was a spiritual temple, a spiritual priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices.

This is a radical, unexpected interpretation of the promises made to Israel to be sure. And yet Peter is undeniably focused on those promises to Israel. Here are a few essential facts from 1 Peter 1:10-12 to consider in light of Peter's unexpected interpretation of the prophet's promises.

He affirms that the Old Covenant prophets were informed that fulfillment was not for their day.

He affirms that *those prophets did not understand the nature of the things they foretold.*

He affirms that the prophets foretold his (Peter's) day.

He affirms that through the Spirit *he was revealing the nature of what the Old Covenant prophets promised.*

So, Peter tells us that the Old Covenant prophets did not understand the time or *nature* of their promises, but that through the Spirit he was giving the inspired interpretation of their promises. And, he says that his audience, as followers of Christ, *was* the promised Messianic Temple. They were the priesthood promised by the prophets (cf. Isaiah 66:17f). They were offering the sacrifices promised by the prophets (cf. Isaiah 56:7f;<sup>6</sup> Ezekiel 40-47). Of course, what is so critical in consideration of our topic is that Peter says it is a *spiritual* temple, a *spiritual* priesthood and *spiritual* sacrifices. This virtually *demands* that the land promises that lie within the very promises that he says were being fulfilled was likewise *a spiritual land!* If the temple was spiritual, does not a temple have to "reside" somewhere? And if the temple is *spiritual*, does it dwell on literal dirt, or does that spiritual temple not have *a spiritual land?* In corroboration of this consider the spiritual priesthood that Peter mentions.

In the Old Testament, YHVH allotted land to the tribes. However, when it came to the Levitical, priestly tribe, they did not receive a portion in the land:

"And the LORD spake unto Aaron, *Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land,*<sup>7</sup> neither shalt thou have any part among them: *I am thy part and thine inheritance* among the children of Israel. And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. But the Levites shall do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity: it shall be a statute for ever." (Numbers 18:20f- My emphasis)

Notice that the priests did not have an inheritance in the literal land of Israel. *God Himself was their inheritance!* And yet the prophets foretold the restoration of Israel to the land, when the remnant would themselves be made into a priesthood (Isaiah 66:17f).

Now, Peter affirmed the restoration of Israel— which was to occur *in the land.*

Peter affirmed the establishment of the Messianic Temple— which was to occur *in the land.*

Peter affirmed the existence of a spiritual priesthood— which was to serve *in the land.*

Peter affirmed the offering of spiritual sacrifices— which were to be offered *in the land.*

Since all of these things were to take place "in the land" and since Peter says what was promised was being fulfilled *spiritually* in Christ, this serves as powerful proof that the land promise must be understood spiritually. As God said that He was the inheritance of the Old Covenant priests, and they had no lot in the land, Christ is the inheritance of the new priesthood, in the Messianic Temple, to offer up those spiritual sacrifices.

If the Old Covenant priests had no inheritance in the physical land, but a spiritual inheritance in YHVH, then how much more does this indicate that the spiritual priesthood in Christ— being the fulfillment of the restoration promises— has no inheritance in the physical land? And since the spiritual priesthood in Christ is the restoration promised in Hosea and Ezekiel, this proves that there is no physical land promise to Israel!

The key thing to understand is that Peter is affirming the fulfillment of the Old Covenant promises of the restoration of Israel. He clearly affirms the spiritual nature of that fulfillment. The Jews- and the modern millennialists- expected a literal temple. Peter said what the prophets actually foretold was a spiritual temple. The Jews, and our millennial friends, expected a restored Levitical priesthood. Peter affirms that the prophecies actually foretold a new spiritual priesthood. The Jews, and our millennial friends, believed that in the millennial temple literal sacrifices would continue to be offered. Peter says the sacrifices are spiritual.

Now consider this: Could a spiritual priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices in a spiritual temple be resident in anything other than *a spiritual land*? And what would that land be but what was promised to Abraham? Read Hebrews 11:9-16:

"By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them."

Notice that Abraham actually dwelt in the physical land of promise. In addition, we know that in spite of the millennial claims to the contrary, the children of Israel received all of the physical land promises made to Abraham.<sup>8</sup> But the Hebrew writer tells us that neither the physical land in which Abraham dwelt, nor the one he left, was the true focus of God's promises. Abraham did look for a land, a city, a country. But he was not centered on a plot of dirt in the Middle East. What he looked for was a heavenly, spiritual city and country. And in an interesting and not insignificant twist, the Messianic Temple is also posited as part of the Abrahamic promise according to Hebrews 6:13-20. The author says that the Abrahamic promise they were eagerly anticipating "enters in within the veil."

The Hebrew writer, like Peter, is very focused on the promise of the Messianic temple. And like Peter he believes that the temple was even then a reality. Jesus, as king and priest, was ministering in that temple! When he speaks of that temple and Christ's work he references one of the promises of the Old Testament that modern evangelicals insist must be taken literally, Zechariah 6:12-13: "Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: 'Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, And He shall build the temple of the LORD; Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.'"

So, Zechariah foretold the Messiah, the Branch, who would build his temple and he would rule as *king and priest* on his throne.

Notice that Hebrews 8 says Christ was sitting at the right hand of the Father (where he would *rule* until the parousia, 1 Corinthians 15:23f). Sitting at the Father's right hand was in fulfillment of Psalms 110:1-4, where Messiah is posited as *king and priest*, just like in Zechariah! The Hebrew writer tells us that the temple of Jesus' service is "*the true tabernacle*,<sup>9</sup> *which the Lord erected, and not man*." Notice that Jesus, *the Lord*, just as Zechariah foretold, erected this "true tabernacle"! Furthermore, just like Zechariah foretold, the Branch was ministering as *king and priest* in that temple.

Keep in mind that according to Ezekiel 37 the Messianic Temple would be in the land. So, Jesus was doing *what* Zechariah said he would, serving as King and Priest. He was doing that in the (*True*) *Temple*, as Zechariah said he would. This can only mean that he was doing this "in the land."

We should note that this True Tabernacle has a changed priesthood. Just as Peter affirms a change in priesthood from a genealogically confirmed ministry to a spiritual priesthood, Hebrews says the Levitical priesthood was, even as he wrote, *being changed* (Hebrews 7:10). Christ was the high priest after the order of Melchizedec. Jesus could not be a priest on earth in the literal temple, (Hebrews 8:5), so a new priesthood was being established. Jesus was ministering in that True Temple.

Just like in Peter, where a spiritual priesthood was offering spiritual sacrifices in a spiritual temple, the author of Hebrews urges his readers-the brethren of the new High Priest-- to "*offer up the sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of our lips*" (Hebrews 13:15– i.e. spiritual sacrifices!). Note that the Hebrew Christians were able to offer sacrifice however, and they

were physically on earth. They were priests ministering in the True Tabernacle, as was Jesus, but, this demonstrates what Paul said in Ephesians 3:14f, that the "family of God" spans heaven and earth.

Where does Hebrews posit this True Temple? Jesus ministered in the *heavenlies* (8:1-2). Where does Hebrews posit the *city* and *country* longed for by Abraham? In one of the most dramatic New Testament statements to be found anywhere the Hebrew author says "**you have come to Mt. Zion!**" (Hebrews 12:21f). To any Jewish reader, thoroughly familiar with the Old Covenant promises, this had to be one of the most thrilling, yet challenging statements possible!

Zion was the epitome and the symbol of "the land." Ezekiel said that Jerusalem, Zion, was set in the center of the nations (Ezekiel 5:8f). Zion in Messianic prophecy would be the location of the Messianic Supper, the resurrection, the locus from which the New Covenant would flow, the city of salvation, etc. Every eschatological and soteriological tenet one can imagine is posited in Zion in the Old Covenant prophecies.

So, when the Hebrew author insists that his first century audience had come to *Zion* this is tantamount to saying that the time of the kingdom, the resurrection, the restoration of Israel—*in the land*—had now arrived! You cannot divorce the promises concerning Zion from the restoration promises, and you cannot divorce the restoration promises from the land promises. If the promises concerning Zion were being fulfilled, then the promises about the land were being fulfilled. There is no disjunction between the city and the land. But of course, in the mind of the Hebrew writer, he was not speaking of a physical city, a physical land. Just as he spoke of the change in the priesthood, the altar (Hebrews 13:14ff), the sacrifices, the temple, etc. he likewise saw that there was now a change in *Zion* and the *land*!

So, Hebrews speaks of these things that were the object of promise and hope of the Old Covenant worthies, including Abraham and his seed. But like Peter, the author of Hebrews sees the fulfillment of those promises as *spiritual*. He insists that the promises had nothing to do with a patch of *terra firma*, a literal city, an earthly temple. Let's go back to 1 Peter for a moment.

I will not develop it here, but Peter's extended discussion of the Rejected Stone (1 Peter 2:5f), shows that Peter was positively affirming the fulfillment of God's promises to Old Covenant Israel concerning the temple, and thus the land.<sup>10</sup> God had foretold the rejection of His Messiah (Psalms 2; Isaiah 53; Daniel 9:26), but that rejection would be the ground and foundation of the enthronement of Messiah in his temple. Of course, this means that the Cross did not postpone *anything*. It was *The Plan* all along. It is just that "*The Plan*" was not understood or appreciated by Israel.

Thus, Peter's declaration that his audience was being built up as a spiritual temple, built on the promised Rejected Stone was showing that *Israel's promises had not failed*. However, there was a dark side to that discussion of the Rejected Stone for those who rejected him were about to be crushed by him.<sup>11</sup>

**Peter's repeated and emphatic declarations of the nearness of the consummation falsifies any attempt to remove the fulfillment of those Old Testament promises to Israel beyond his generation. His emphasis on the then present fulfillment of God's promise of the Messianic Temple shows that for Peter—as for Paul—the promise of the temple and the land did not entail the restoration to a physical land, but the restoration of God's fellowship with man.**

**Peter's use of the Shepherd motif (1 Peter 2:25; 5:1f), is a clear echo of the Old Covenant promises of Messiah (Isaiah 40; 49), and the promises of the land. For brevity, we will focus on Isaiah 49.**

This great chapter foretold the coming of the Servant of YHVH who would redeem the tribes of Jacob and give light to the Gentiles (49:6). He would also be the covenant for the people, when the earth (eretz) would be restored. He would lead His people to living waters and they would never hunger or thirst anymore (Isaiah 49:10f). All of this would take place in "**the acceptable time, the day of salvation**" (Isaiah 49:8). For ease of understanding let me frame my argument like this:

**Israel would be restored—in the land—in "**the acceptable time, the day of salvation**" (Isaiah 49:6-8).**

**Paul said, "**now is the acceptable time, today is the day of salvation**" (2 Corinthians 6:1-2).**

**Therefore, the time for the restoration of Israel—in the land—had arrived at the time when Paul wrote.**

*Do you catch the power of this?* Paul said that the acceptable time, the day of salvation that Isaiah said was the time of the New Covenant, the salvation of Israel, and the restoration in the land was present in the first century. His statement is unequivocal, unambiguous, undeniable. Look now at Ezekiel 37.

## EZEKIEL 37

"Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people." (Ezekiel 37:26f)

Ezekiel 37 is a familiar passage. Its bearing on our discussion is great since the N.T. writers often not only allude to it but make extensive commentary on it (e.g. Ephesians 2:2 Corinthians 3-6).

For brevity we can outline the constituent elements of the prophecy.

- 1.) God would reunite the two houses of Israel (37:15f). The reunification would be the resurrection out of their "graves" (37:10-14). The referent is not to physical graves however, but to the death and grave of alienation from God.
- 2.) The reunification would be under Messiah (v.22-24).
- 3.) The reunification would involve a New Covenant (v. 26). This is the time of the Wedding promised in Hosea.
- 4.) The reunification would involve a new tabernacle "*in their midst forever*" (v. 26).
- 5.) The reunification, focused around the new tabernacle, would result in God's dwelling with the people, "*My tabernacle shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be my people. The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore*" (v. 27-28).

In spite of the objections and claims of the millennialists, we have *prima facie* proof that Ezekiel was being fulfilled in the first century, in the body of Christ.

Note that in 2 Corinthians 6:14f Paul contrasts the temples of idols with the church, the temple of God. Paul then says to the Corinthians, "*you are the temple of the living God, as God has said, 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God and they shall be My people.'*" Notice Paul's emphatic "*you are, as God has said.*" The "*you are*" that he identifies them as being is the temple / tabernacle promised in Ezekiel 37! The Messianic temple promised to Israel was becoming a reality. *Israel was being restored.*

Ezekiel's promise was that God would dwell with man, and that man would see His presence via the temple *in the land* (His *people*—not a building—in 2 Corinthians). Paul said that the Corinthians were the promised temple. This demands that the temple promise and the land promise were spiritually fulfilled.

So, we have Paul's emphatic, unambiguous, undeniable commentary on Isaiah 49 and Ezekiel 37, two of the foundational Old Covenant promises of the restoration of Israel in the land. We likewise have Peter's specific statement that his audience was receiving the restoration promised to Israel in Hosea.

It needs to be understood that Paul and Peter preached *nothing* but the hope of Israel found in Moses and the prophets (Paul-24:14f-26:21f; 28:18f/ Peter- Acts 3: 21f; 1 Peter 1:10f; 2 Peter 3;). So, when these two said that the promised and anticipated time for the restoration of Israel—in the land—had arrived our options and choices are very limited.

We can claim that they were wrong. This is clearly untenable.

We can claim that they spiritualized the promises to Israel. But, Paul said he was preaching the hope of Israel, that for which, "*our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain*" (Acts 26:6-8). He also said that "*Israel has not obtained that for which she sought, but the elect has obtained it*" (Romans 11:7f). So, whatever it was that was the hope of Israel the elect was entering into the fulfillment when Paul wrote. This was not a distorted or perverted, or spiritualized hope. It was the *true* hope of Israel as explained and revealed by the Spirit (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:6f).

Noted dispensationalist John Walvoord, commenting on what he calls the spiritualizing hermeneutic of amillennialism and postmillennialism, said, "A literal prophecy spiritualized is exegetical fraud."<sup>12</sup> The millennialists claim that because Israel had a literal land, city, temple, priesthood, sacrifice, cultus, etc., and since the Old Testament foretold the restoration of Israel, then those physical realities must have been the focus of God's promises. This view completely overlooks the typological reality, and purpose, of each of these elements.

While Israel was given physical realities, as Max King noted in response to Walvoord, "A spiritual promise literalized is exegetical fraud!" (His emphasis) Here is the point, "God's promise in Christ is a spiritual promise from the day it was made to Abraham. How then can that which is spiritual be spiritualized?"<sup>13</sup> In other words, while God gave physical, literal promises to Abraham and to Israel, those physical realities simply foreshadowed the greater *spiritual* realities. God's promises to Abraham and to Israel were *ultimately concerned* with the spiritual, heavenly reality. The physical, national form was never the determinative purpose of God.

While a great deal more could be said, what we have seen is a powerful demonstration that the apostles of Jesus did not believe in a failed or postponed kingdom plan. What they affirmed was that through the Spirit, they were preaching *the true message of what the prophets foretold*. And that message was the message of fulfillment in Christ, *spiritual fulfillment*.

The promised restoration was spiritual.

The promised Temple was spiritual.

The promised priesthood was spiritual.

The promised sacrifices were spiritual.

The promised city was spiritual.

The promised land was spiritual.

For moderns to insist on the restoration of the physical realities of Old Covenant Israel is, in essence, a rejection of the glorious fulfillment of the promises made by the prophets. It is a rejection of the Spirit inspired interpretation of the Old Covenant promises. We dare not be like the disillusioned disciples on the road to Emmaus who believed that the death of Jesus delayed their Messianic hopes. Just as God promised, His servant would not (and did not), fail (Isaiah 42:4-6)! The Rejected Stone became the chief corner stone of the promised Messianic Temple, and that glorious Temple dwells *in the holiest land of all*, the God of heaven! He is our Inheritance!