

## Israel's glorious future - Part 1

The law which God gave to Israel by Moses gives great importance to men keeping their word - **Numbers 30:2** - because God always fulfils what he has pledged - **Hebrews 6:13-18**. The apostle Paul showed complete confidence in what God has promised - *"I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers. To this promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain"* - **Acts 26:6-7**. What promise was that? It was the same about which the apostles asked Jesus at his ascension - *"Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"* - **Acts 1:6**. The king of that kingdom is Jesus, as the angel informed Mary - *"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end"* - **Luke 1:32-33**. David ruled over all Israel who had settled in the land of Canaan. It was that land which God, about 500 years after the great flood in Noah's time, promised to give to Abraham - *"All the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever"* - **Genesis 13:15 ESV**.

God then defined exactly what territory he was promising - *"On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates'."* - **Genesis 15:18 ESV**. Who are the offspring? Paul the apostle explains in **Galatians 3:16 ESV** - *"Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, 'And to offsprings,' referring to many, but referring to one, 'And to your offspring,' who is Christ."* Christ's brethren will rejoice in what he says in **verse 29**, *"and if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise"* - the faithful will enjoy a share of the inheritance which God promised to Abraham - as Jesus declared, quoting **Psalms 37:11** in **Matthew 5:5** - *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth"* (Hebrew, *eretz* = land". That land which Jesus refers to, is the same territory which is referred to in **Psalms 72:1** - *"Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's Son. . . He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth"* (**verse 8**).

In 1848 the land of Israel was firmly in the grip of the Turkish empire, and more than 99% of Jews lived outside that land. Yet at that time a student of Bible prophecy concluded that the Promised Land "was to extend from the Euphrates to the Nile, comprehending a tract of country of considerable extent . . . that is, from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf; and its greatest length, *'from the river to the end of the land'* or, from the Euphrates at its junction with the gulf, northward; and from the Pelusiac branch of the Nile to the entrance into Hamath. . . Here, then, is a noble domain, lying between Assyria, Persia, Arabia, the Red Sea, Egypt, and the Mediterranean . . . Such is the land, containing, according to the survey of the British Government, 300,000 square miles, concerning which God said to Abram, *'I will give to you and to your offspring forever'.*" - J. Thomas in his book *Elpis Israel*.

How could this ever happen? Will indeed the restored State of Israel occupy the entire western half of the Fertile Crescent? Will Christ be king over an Israel which will be larger than the combined areas of the reunified East and West Germanies plus Poland plus Austria plus Belgium? But what about that vast territory east of the Jordan known as the Syrian desert! What use would that area be to the Twelve Tribes? Will it always be desert, even during the Millennium? It is remarkable what Isaiah has to say about the deserts in and around Israel:

*"The LORD will comfort Zion, He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness will be found in it, thanksgiving and the voice of melody"* - **Isaiah 51:3**.

*"The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as*

*the rose; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the excellency of our God” - Isaiah 35:1-2.*

Next time, God willing, we will look at the Scriptures which show that Israel restored, ruled by Jesus Christ, will prosper and flourish. Current deserts, as we see in Isaiah, will become fertile and productive. And that in turn will support a growing population, already swelled by the influx of the remaining Jews from all around the world.