

# Israel's glorious future - Part 6

Last time reference was made to an Old Testament prophecy which shows that Israel will be a populous and powerful nation under Christ - **Isaiah 19:24** *In that day Israel will be **THE THIRD** (see map) with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, **25** whom the Lord of hosts has blessed, saying, "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance."* The state of Israel, in contrast to its current size, will, as we have seen already, grow both in land area and in population. This passage shows that Israel will be comparable in size with Egypt bordering on the south (currently 90 million inhabitants in one million square kilometres) and on the north to "Assyria" - the similarly-sized area lying north and east of the Euphrates river between Turkey and Iran.

Zechariah explains this great expansion of Israel. Speaking of the descendants of the northern kingdom of Israel - **7 ... their children shall see it and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the Lord. 8** *I will whistle for them and gather them, for I will redeem them; and **they shall increase** as they once increased... **10** I will bring them into the land of **Gilead and Lebanon** (east and north of modern Israel), **until no more room is found for them - Zechariah 10.***

That these prophecies concern the descendants of natural Israel is also shown by **Isaiah 61:7** *Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, and instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land **they shall possess\* double**; everlasting joy shall be theirs.*

\* possess = Strong 3423 *yarash* = to occupy (by driving out previous tenants, and possessing in their place).

After Israel had proved unfaithful to God, he abandoned them to their enemies. Israel became a weak, minor nation. But God promised through the prophet **Hosea 1:10** *Yet the number of the children (descendants) of Israel (Jacob) shall be as **the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered.** And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' there it shall be said to them, 'You are the sons of the living God.'* And the same prophet adds in **Hosea 14:5** *I will be like the dew to Israel; He shall **grow** like the lily, and **lengthen his roots** like Lebanon. **6** His **branches shall spread**; his beauty shall be like an olive tree (see Romans 11), and his fragrance like Lebanon. **7** Those who dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall be revived like grain, and **grow like the vine...***

God speaks here of natural Israel as a plant which flourishes under the gardener's care. He will provide the necessary "dew" or water to a land which was previously uninhabitable - **Isaiah 51:3** *For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her **wilderness LIKE EDEN**, and her **DESERT like the garden of the Lord**; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.* How ironic that, like the court of king Canute who imagined that he could command the tides, the nations of the world have recently decided that they are going to take control of the world climate and turn down the thermostat! But it is this earth's Creator who is in control - **Jeremiah 10:10** *The Lord is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth will tremble, and the nations will not be able to abide His indignation.... **12** He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, And has stretched out the heavens at His discretion. **13** When He utters His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens: And **He causes** the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth. **He makes** lightning for the rain, **He brings** the wind out of His treasuries.*

The climatic changes which undoubtedly are now in progress, may be one way in which God is preparing to fulfil his promise to make Israel flourish - more next time, God willing.