THE CASE FOR GOD AND THE BIBLE

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God’s Challenge to Idols

Isaiah 41:21-23 “Present your case,” says the LORD. Set forth your arguments,” says Jacob’s King. “Tell us, you idols, what is going to happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their final outcome. Or declare to us the things to come, tell us what the future holds, so we may know that you are gods. Do something, whether good or bad, so that we will be dismayed and filled with fear.

Isaiah 44:6-8a “This is what the LORD says – Israel’s King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God. Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come – yes, let them foretell what will come. Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago?”

The Second Regathering of the Remnant of Israel

Isaiah 11:11&12(NASB) Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again recover the second time with His hand the remnant of His people, who will remain, from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath and from the islands of the sea. And He will lift up a standard for the nations and assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Isaiah prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jothan, Ahaz and Hezekiah (Isaiah 1:1), from approximately 740-680BC. The northern tribes rebelled in 930BC and went into captivity in 722BC, during his ministry. Isaiah predicts that a remnant of Israel (the northern tribes) and Judah (Judah, Benjamin and Levi and some from the northern tribes) will return from being removed from the land “a second time” in the last days.

Isaiah 11:12&13 He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth. Ephraim’s jealousy will vanish, and Judah’s enemies will be destroyed; Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, nor Judah hostile toward Ephraim.

Isaiah predicts that these two nations, which had been at war with each other for most of 208 years will return as one people and no longer be hostile towards one another. Jesus spoke of this return in Luke 21 when he predicted the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans that happened in 70AD.

Luke 21:24 “They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”

Jacob and Esau

Genesis 25:23 The LORD said to her, “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other; and the older will serve the younger.”

Genesis 27:28&29 “May God give you heaven’s dew and earth’s richness – an abundance of grain and new wine. May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed.”

Genesis 27:39&40 His father Isaac answered him, “Your dwelling will be away from the earth’s richness, away from the dew of heaven above. You will live by the sword and you will serve your brother. But when you grow restless, you will throw his yoke from your neck.

Genesis 36:9 says Esau is the father of the Edomites who lived in Mount Seir.

King David conquered Edom about 1,000BC and Judah ruled over them for about 150 years until they rebelled during the reign of Jehoshaphat’s son who married Ahab and Jezebel’s daughter Athaliah and who died “to no one’s regret” (2 Chronicles 21:20).

After the Maccabean revolt against the Syrian part of what was left of Alexander the Great’s empire, the Maccabees conquered Idumea (southern Judah) – where the descendants of Esau had fled from Nebuchadnezzar and then the Nabatean Arabians who took control of their homeland after the Babylonians left. The Jews ruled over them until they themselves were conquered by the Romans.

Ezekiel 36: 5 “’this is what the Sovereign LORD says: In my burning zeal I have spoken against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, for with glee and with malice in their hearts they made my land their own possession so that they might plunder its pastureland.’”

When the Romans essentially banished the Jews from the Holy Land the descendants of Esau moved north and took over all of what had been Judea and Galilee. They claimed that because they were the descendants of Esau that it belonged to them.

Ezekiel 35:5&6 “’Because you harbored an ancient hostility and delivered the Israelites over to the sword at the time of their calamity, the time their punishment reached its climax, therefore as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I will give you over to bloodshed, bloodshed will pursue you.’”

When the Jewish remnant returned the second time, there was a series of bloody conflicts with the Palestinians, the descendants of Esau, which the Jews have always won. Both Hamas and the Palestinian Authority pay out thousands of dollars annually to the families of suicide bombers.

Climate Change

When the Jews came out of Egypt, the Holy Land was the “land of milk and honey.” During the first and second centuries, before the Jews were banished, the Holy land was the Garden Spot of the Roman Empire. After the Jewish population left, the rainfall diminished significantly. Since the Jews have come back, it has increased significantly, and once again the Holy Land is the “land flowing with milk and honey.”

This fulfills the part of Isaac’s blessing that said to Jacob: “May God give you heaven’s dew and earth’s richness” and also what Isaac said to Esau: “Your dwelling will be away from the earth’s richness, away from the dew of heaven above.”

Things to Remember

In the Book of Isaiah God challenges the false gods of his day to predict the future and then make it happen to prove they were really gods.

Things predicted in the Bible that were extremely unlikely have happened and continue to happen demonstrating that God is who He said He is and that the written record of His communication with man in the Bible is reliable.

After the first dispersion of the northern tribes and before the dispersion of Judah, Isaiah prophesied that these two nations that had been separate for over 200 years would be removed from the Holy Land twice and that twice a remnant would return and that they would return as one nation.

Rebekah was told the descendants of Esau would serve the descendants of Jacob and that concept was repeated by Isaac and it has happened.

Ezekiel said that the descendants of Esau would claim the Holy Land as their own and that there would be a bloody conflict when the Jews returned the second time.

Isaac said the descendants of Jacob would live in a fertile land and the descendants of Esau would not. When the Jews have lived in the Holy Land it has been amazingly fertile, when the descendants of Esau have claimed it as their own, it has not.

We trust the Bible to be the revelation of God to mankind because it accurately predicts the future.