

THE MYSTERY OF ISRAEL

SESSION THREE – COREY STARK

I. UNDERSTANDING THE MYSTERY OF ISRAEL: FOUR ESSENTIAL PARTS

Rom. 11:25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery [hidden plan], lest you should be wise [haughty v. 20] in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 So all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer [Jesus] will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

A. Context: Both Jews and Jewish Christians were expelled from Rome around 49AD by an edict of Claudius, due to disturbances surrounding the validity of Jesus as the Messiah. The majority of people left in the church at Rome were now Gentile Christians. After Claudius died in 54AD, Emperor Nero allowed Jews back into Rome, but began persecuting both Jewish and Gentile Christians. That coupled with the new disturbances that arose between Jewish and Gentiles Christians, caused many Gentiles to dislike the Jews, even theologically rationalizing that the Jews were no longer God’s people.

B. Paul was *urgently warning* the Gentile believers in his day not to be *ignorant*, but rather understand the “mystery” of God’s plan to bring salvation to the nations. Why? Lest they become *wise* or “haughty” (v. 20), producing wrong conclusions about God’s plan for Israel that are *unscriptural* or worse *adversarial* (i.e. replacement theology). The Church has been mostly unfamiliar with this plan for the past 2000 years.

Rom. 11:11 Have they stumbled that they should fall [permanently losing global leadership of God’s salvation]? Certainly not! But through their fall [stumbling in unbelief], to provoke them to jealousy, salvation [leadership in the gospel] has come to the Gentiles. 12 Now if their fall [stumbling in unbelief] is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! 15 For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

C. “Salvation” coming to the Gentiles (v. 11) is more than individuals getting saved, but God giving the *primary leadership mantle* of the Kingdom to the Gentiles (Mt. 21:33-46). Israel’s original national calling was to have the *primary leadership role* in bringing God’s salvation to all the nations (Gen. 12:3; Deut. 4:6-8; Isa. 43:10-12; 44:8-9; Rom. 9:4-5). For the last 2,000 years, the Church in the Gentile nations has had the *primary leadership role* to bring a witness of the gospel of the kingdom to all nations (Mt. 24:14; 28:19-20).

Mt. 21:43 The kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.

D. In Rom. 11 Paul gives insight into the *timing* and *means* God will use in releasing His program of world redemption. We *must* understand this plan in order to cooperate with it. Paul’s urgency is noteworthy, as he hadn’t visited them before, yet was seriously concerned for their spiritual safety, warning that *ignorance* (v. 25), often progresses to *arrogance* (v. 20), which can lead to being *cut off by God* (v. 22). Why? Because the arrogant will not be able to endure the pressure of standing with God’s purpose for Israel in persecution. Some may deny their faith, while others join Israel’s persecutors imagining they’re doing service for God!

E. God’s plan for Israel includes *four essential parts*:

1. The Jewish people have a temporary and partial *spiritual blindness* at this time (v. 25).
2. The *fullness of the Gentiles* (v. 25) will provoke Israel to seek Jesus for salvation (v. 11).
3. At Jesus’ return, *all Israel will be saved* (v. 26) and restored to their rightful position (v. 12).
4. The *fullness of Israel* (v. 12) will lead to God’s glory filling the millennial earth (v. 15).

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II. PART ONE: THE JEWISH PEOPLE HAVE A TEMPORARY SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS

Rom. 11:25 I do not desire... that you should be ignorant of this mystery... that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 So all Israel will be saved...

A. The Jewish people have a *temporary* and *partial* spiritual blindness at this time (v. 25) due to stumbling in sin and unbelief. Their blindness is *partial* in that most (not all) are unable to see Jesus as their Messiah, as well as, their unique hostility against Him. However, when they turn to Him their eyes will be opened.

2 Cor. 3:14 Their minds were blinded. For until this day the veil remains unlifted in the reading of the O.T., because the veil is taken away in Christ... 16 when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

B. Israel's blindness is *temporary* and does not mean that she has permanently "fallen" (v. 11) from her original calling to have the *primary leadership role* in the nations (Gen. 12:3; Deut. 4:6-8; Isa. 43:10-12; 44:8-9; Rom. 9:4-5). God's sovereign calling upon nations, cities, people groups and individuals is irrevocable and remains available for all who come into agreement with God to receive it (Rom. 11:29).

Rom. 11:28 Concerning election they are beloved... 29 For the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.

C. If the Church is ignorant of the *temporary* and *partial* blindness of Israel, then we will wrongly conclude that God is finished with them instead of laboring for their salvation and full destiny in God. Romans 11 was written to a primarily Gentile church, assuring them of Israel's primary leadership role in the future Millennial Kingdom (Isa. 2:2-4; 60:3; Jer. 3:17; Zech. 8:20-23).

Zech. 8:23 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."'"

D. Israel's blindness and subsequent rejection of Jesus is *partial not total* (Rom. 11:1-10) and *temporary not final* (Rom. 11:11-32).

III. PART TWO: THE FULLNESS OF THE GENTILES WILL PROVOKE ISRAEL TO SEEK JESUS

Rom. 11:11 Through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, [ministry of] salvation has come to the Gentiles.

A. The *fullness of the Gentiles* (v. 25) will *provoke* Israel to seek Jesus for salvation (v. 11). The fullness of the Gentiles refers to them being effectively used as God's primary instrument of bringing His program of salvation to the nations for 2,000 years (Mt. 21:33-46; 24:14; 28:19; Mk. 12:1-12; Lk. 13:6-9; 20:9-19).

Mt. 24:14 This gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

B. The *fullness of the Gentiles* includes the *full number* saved (Rev. 6:10-11), who walk in fullness of *divine insight* (Jer. 23:20; 30:24; Dan. 11:32-33; 12:10), *godly character* (Eph. 3:19; 4:13; 5:27; Rev. 19:7) and *supernatural power* (Dan. 11:32-33; Mt. 16:18-19; Jn. 14:12) thus, fulfilling the *fullness* of God's purpose.

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1. Divine insight (wisdom) - In the decades leading up to the Lord's return, the saints will understand the end-time plan of God "perfectly" or in a mature way (Jer. 23:20; 30:24). An angel told Daniel, that although none of the wicked would understand it, the wise would not only understand God's plan and partner with the LORD to release it, but they would instruct many about it (Dan. 11:32-33; 12:10).

Jer. 23:20 The anger of the Lord will not turn back until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart [His plans]. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly [mature way]. (Jer 30:24)

2. Godly character (fruit) – Eph. 3:19; 4:13; 5:27; Titus 2:14; Jude 24; Rev. 19:7

Eph. 4:13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...

Eph. 5:27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish [no compromise]. (Eph. 4:13)

3. Supernatural power (gifts) – Dan. 11:32-33; Mt. 16:18-19; Jn. 14:12

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

Dan. 11:32 but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. 33 And those of the people who understand shall instruct many;

C. Gentile fullness is the result of the *greatest revival* in history, prior to Jesus' return (Joel 2:28-32; Mal. 4:5-6; Mt. 24:14; Acts 2:17-19; Rev. 12:10), producing an unprecedented *unity, purity, maturity* with radical demonstrations of *selfless love* (Dan. 11:32-33; Jn. 17:20-23; Eph. 4:13; 5:27; 1 Jn. 3:3; Rev. 12:11; 19:7).

Jn. 17:21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me... 22 that they may be made perfect in one...

D. This revival may bring forth over a *billion* radical Gentile believers from every nation (Rev. 7:9) that are used by God in Israel's salvation (v. 25-26), as *intercessors* (Ps. 122:6; Isa. 62:6-7; Joel 2:15-17), operating in the *power* of the Holy Spirit and working miracles (Dan. 11:32-33; Jn. 14:12), with *anointed singing* (Jer. 31:7; Am. 9:11-12; Acts 15:16-17) and *prophetic declaration* (Isa. 40:1-2, 9-11; 62:11-12; Jer. 31:10).

Jer. 31:7 Thus says the Lord: "Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, 'O Lord save Your people, the remnant of Israel!'... ¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him [direct, protect, provide] as a shepherd does his flock.'"

E. As in the Exodus with Moses, some of the *greatest miracles* will be seen in context to the salvation and deliverance of the nation of Israel (Isa. 11:11; Jer. 16:14-15; Mic. 7:15; Rev. 11:1-3).

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

Jer. 16:14 "Therefore behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "that it shall no more be said, 'The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,' 15 but, 'The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.' For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers."

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IV. THE GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR ISRAEL TO GET SAVED – THE GREAT TRIBULATION

A. How does Israel go from *hostility* against Jesus to *jealousy* for Jesus? Something drastic will need to happen in order to change Israel's current view of Jesus and His Church. Both the *global context of hostility* and *believer's radical demonstration of selfless love* will cause Israel to be provoked to *godly jealousy*, meaning to desire what the Gentile Church possesses spiritually in their relationship with God. This can also be referred to as the *fruit* of the olive tree of Israel (Mt. 21:33-46; Rom. 11:17, 24).

B. The unique reality of the *Great Tribulation* that God is orchestrating will create the necessary global context to radically shift Israel's views. It will be the *most severe* time in human history for everyone – the nation of Israel, the Church and even unbelievers (Mt. 24:21; Jer. 30:7; Ezek. 5:9; Dan. 12:1; Joel 2:2).

Dan. 12:1 At that time... there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation... 7 and [the angel] swore... that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time [3½ years]; and when the power of the holy people [Israel] has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished. (Jer. 30:7)

Mt. 24:21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved;

C. The Great Tribulation describes the unique dynamics and unusual events of the final 3½ years of natural human history that will grow in intensity like “birth pangs” (Mt. 24:7-8, 21). Four *eschatological winds* will converge in *fullness*, creating the perfect storm to *bring forth a mature church, bring in the great harvest and bring down all that hinders love*. It will be the greatest pressure the world has ever seen (Jer. 30:7; Mt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1) and catalyst that transitions the earth unto the age-to-come - Millennium (Isa. 66:8).

Isa. 66:8 Who has heard such a thing? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day?

D. The *four-fold eschatological winds* are:

1. *Creations Groan* (Ps. 82:5; Is. 24:5-6, 20; Jer. 23:10; Mt. 24:7-8; Lk. 21:23-26; Rom. 8:18-22)
2. *Man's Sin* (Dan. 8:23; Joel 3:13-14; Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43; 2 Th. 2:7-10; Rev. 9:20-21; 14:17-20)
3. *Satan's Rage* (Dan. 7:19-25; Mt. 24:15-22; Rev. 12:7-17; Rev. 13)
4. *God's Zeal* displayed in a 7-fold shaking (Hag. 2:6-9) of *wrath* (Rev. 15:1) and *glory* (Acts 2:17-19).

E. Right now Israel doesn't want Jesus as their king (Jn. 19:15). After rejecting God as their king, He judged Israel by giving them the idol of their own heart in king Saul (1 Sam. 8:1-22; 10:18-19; 12:17, 19). Once again, God will give Israel the king that they desire (Antichrist) and wait patiently (Isa. 28:14-15; Dan. 9:27; Jn. 5:42). Eventually, the global pressure will cause Israel to cry out for their true King (Isa. 64:1-12).

1 Sam. 12:12 you [Israel] said to me [Samuel], ‘...a king shall reign over us,’ when the LORD your God was your king. 13 Now therefore, here is the king whom you have chosen and whom you have desired... 17 your wickedness is great... in asking a king for yourselves (1 Sam. 8:1-22; 10:18-19; 12:17, 19)

Jn. 5:42 But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. 43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name [Antichrist], him you will receive.

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V. UNDERSTANDING SATAN’S RAGE AGAINST THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND CITY OF JERUSALEM

A. Satan’s rage is fueled by his main agenda to stay out of prison (Rev. 20:1-3). This will only occur after Jesus wins the battle for Jerusalem and takes control of the city by invitation from Israel’s leaders (Mt. 23:39; Rev. 19:11-21). When this happens, Satan is immediately sentenced to prison without probation.

Rev. 19:11 Behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war... 20:1 Then I saw an angel... 2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for 1000 years; 3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more...

B. In Mt. 23:39, Jesus promised that He would not return to Jerusalem until the governmental leaders of Israel voluntarily invite Him back. Satan seeks to exploit this prophecy as a *loophole* in God’s end-time plan by seeking to ensure that Jerusalem’s leaders *will not* receive Jesus as their King.

Mt. 23:37 O Jerusalem... how often I wanted to gather your children... but you were not willing! ³⁹for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!”

C. If Jesus returns without the key prophecy of Mt. 23:39 being fulfilled, then Satan can demonstrate before all that Jesus’ word is false. And if Jesus’ prophecy is shown to be a lie, then He can’t *justly* imprison Satan as a liar and deceiver (Rev. 20:1-3). That would not be righteous judgment (Ps. 45:4; Isa. 63:1; Rev. 19:11).

Rev. 19:11 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

D. Satan’s end-time strategy includes:

1. Ensuring that Israel is so *offended at Jesus* that they will not receive Him as their King
2. Deceiving Israel into an alliance with the Antichrist; the mark of the beast (Isa. 28:14-15; Dan. 9:27)
3. Killing the Jewish race so there are no leaders to invite Him as king (Zech. 13:8-9; Rev. 12:13-17)
4. Controlling or destroying Jerusalem, so there is no city to return to (Joel 3:1-6; Zech. 14:2; Rev. 11:2)

E. Satan wants to exterminate the entire Jewish race to ensure that no qualified leader remains in Jerusalem to invite Jesus back as King. God will supernaturally intervene to protect Israel from total annihilation (Rev. 12:13-17; Zech. 13:8-9). Like Pharaoh and Caesar, the Antichrist will most likely kill babies (Mt. 24:15-22).

Rev. 12:13 When the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman [Israel] who gave birth to the male Child [Jesus]... 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman...

Rev. 12:6 The woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there 1,260 days... 14 where she is nourished... [3½ years] from the presence of the serpent...

F. Satan’s attack on Jewish people results in 2/3 being killed. Since there has never been a time when 1/3 of the Jews in Israel testified that they received Jesus as their Messiah, we know that this prophecy has a future fulfillment. The word “land” can either mean *Israel* [current pop. 6M] or *whole earth*. [current pop. 12M].

Zech. 13:8 It shall come to pass in all the land... that two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die... 9 I will bring one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver... and test them as gold is tested. (Mal. 3:2-3)

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G. Half of Jerusalem will be taken into captivity (Zech. 14:2). About 600,000 Jewish people currently live in Jerusalem; thus, as many as 300,000 of them may be deported in the coming crisis (Joel 3:1-6). The city shall temporarily be taken, creating the context in which Jesus will deliver Israel (Isa. 64:1-12; Zech. 14).

Zech. 14:2 For 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...

H. The context will be parallel to the 1940s when the Nazis hunted for Jewish people to kill them.

Jer. 16:16 Afterward, I will send for many hunters [Antichrist's regime], and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks...

I. Isaiah emphasized that Jesus' ministry to Israel will include delivering their captives from prison (Isa. 11:11-16; 27:12-13; 42:6-7, 22-24; 49:5-25; 61:1-2). One of the *most prominent* themes in Scripture related to Jesus' second coming is Israel's future persecution and her captivity (Jer. 30:3-24; 31:1-23; Ezek. 20:33-44; 39:25-29; Hos. 11:10-11; Amos 9:8-15; Joel 3:1-2; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 9:10-14).

Isa. 42:6 I will give You as a covenant to the people... ⁷to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house... ²²But this is a people robbed and plundered; all of them are snared in holes, and hidden in prison houses; they are for prey, and no one delivers.