

The Conversion of the World and the Jews

by Arno Clemens Gaebelein

Arno Clemens Gaebelein preaches about the future conversion of the world as prophesied in the Old Testament, emphasizing that this glorious future is linked with the second coming of Christ. He explains that converted nations will enter into the Kingdom of God and be subjects under Christ's reign, highlighting the role of a remnant of Israelites in preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations during the Great Tribulation. Gaebelein discusses the significance of the conversion of Israel, who will become a blessing to all nations and play a crucial role in bringing the nations of the earth into the Kingdom during the Millennium.

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Transcript

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Church has been completed and taken into glory." - q: "What will happen to the nations that are converted?" a: "The converted nations will be gathered into the Kingdom and inherit the earth." - q: "What role will Israel play in the Kingdom?" a: "Israel will be a kingdom of priests and become the nucleus of the Kingdom, and will be used to bring the nations of the earth into the Kingdom." quotes: - "When that jubilee time comes the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the deep;" - "These are they which came out of the Great Tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." - "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." applicationPoints: - "We should pray for the conversion of the nations and the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth." - "We should support the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom and the work of Israel in bringing the nations into the Kingdom." - "We should be prepared for the future judgment of the nations and the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth." keywords: - "conversion of the world" - "Old Testament Prophetic Word" - "second coming of Christ" - "judgment of the nations" - "Gospel of the Kingdom" - "Israel" - "kingdom of priests" - "millennium" ---

The term, the conversion of the world, is nowhere used in the Bible. That there is, according to the predictions of God's Holy Word, a wonderful future in store for the earth, when nations will learn war no more, but learn righteousness instead, and worship Jehovah as King and Lord, is too well known to every intelligent Christian to need restatement. When that jubilee time comes the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the deep; the groaning creation, now so sadly sharing in the curse of man's sin, will be delivered from its groans. It is noteworthy that there are no promises in the New Testament which would authorize the Church of God to expect the accomplishment of these predictions as the result of her testimony and activity. If this were her work, to convert the world, to lead nations to know God, to abandon the most horrible result of sin, war--we would have to confess that she has failed miserably. Nor is it true, as some now say, that this world war will, when it ends, bring about these blessed things by man's renewed efforts. If it is the work of present agencies, the expected world conversion lies in an unreachable distance.

According to Prophecy

It is in the Old Testament Prophetic Word where we find the promises that the nations of the world will be brought to know God, that all the ends of the earth shall turn to the Lord and that all kings shall fall down before Him. It is written that "All nations shall serve Him," "All nations shall call Him blessed," and that the whole earth will be filled with His glory.[1] Nor is the Old Testament Prophetic Word silent as to how and when all this is to be brought about. As the writer has shown in his "Harmony of the Prophetic Word," before this glorious future can come for the nations of the earth the Lord's return must have taken place; and this event is preceded by judgments upon the nations, and partial restoration of God's ancient people to their own land, the calling of a God-fearing remnant amongst them, and by the great Tribulation. When these things have come to pass, immediately after the days of that Tribulation, our Lord will appear in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory. The Day of Vengeance has come, but in wrath mercy will be remembered. All Israel living in that day will be saved, and His Kingdom will be established upon this earth. The nations of the earth are then gathered into this kingdom. They will not be gathered into the Church, as is often said, for the Church is no longer here but has entered into glory to reign with Christ over the earth.

Daniel in his vision beheld the Son of Man coming with the clouds of Heaven: "And there was given Him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be

destroyed" (Dan. vii:13-14). As the result of the first coming of our Lord in humiliation and His sacrificial death He receives the Church, which is now forming during this age. When He comes the second time He receives this world-wide Kingdom, in which the nations of the earth will be subjects. When that time comes, and not before, the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, "and He shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. ii:15). So much for the conversion of the world, and the blessings promised to the nations and to the whole earth. It is inseparably linked with the second coming of Christ.

The Nations which Enter into the Kingdom

In Matthew xxv:31 our Lord speaks of what will take place when He has returned, "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." We are aware that this passage is often looked upon as teaching a universal judgment of the whole human race; but it is not that. Not a word is said by our Lord concerning the resurrection of the dead. The dead are not included in this judgment. This judgment can therefore not be identified with the Great White Throne Judgment of Revelation xx. Nor is the Church in any way connected with this judgment, because when that takes place the saints are with the Lord in glory. It is the judgment of the living nations which the Lord finds on earth at the time of His second coming. This judgment will cover the first part of His reign as King, when He will first rule like David in subduing His enemies, when Gog and Magog, under the leadership of the Prince of Rosh, will also be dealt with in judgment (Ezekiel xxxviii and xxxix), and that will be followed by His reign as Prince of Peace, as foreshadowed by the reign of Solomon. Now, at this judgment of the nations, when He divides them as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, there will be nations which He puts at His right hand, and to which He saith, "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." These nations are therefore converted nations, righteous nations, declared to be fit for that Kingdom over which He will reign. The question arises, When were these nations converted? Though the Gospel has been preached for about 1900 years yet we do not know of any converted nation on the earth to-day. The nations which we term Christian nations are at present engaged in the most bloody war of all history. Yet in as much as the Lord finds converted nations on the earth when He comes back and receives His throne, these nations must have been converted previous to His coming. It is therefore an important and interesting question, When and how were the nations converted which the Lord at the judgment of nations calls blessed, and bids to enter the Kingdom on earth? They were not converted by the preaching of the Gospel as it is done to-day, for if they were converted as the result of the testimony of the Church they would share in the glorious destiny, "Caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air." The only alternative then is that they will be converted after the true Church has been completed and taken into glory.

Sometimes before our Lord is manifested from Heaven with His holy angels, a turning of nations to God must therefore take place. It will be during the time when God deals with this earth in mighty judgments, when the earth and the heavens are shaken, when Antichrist, Satan's masterpiece, is on the earth and produces the Great Tribulation. It will be one of the startling events of the end of the age, after the Church has been removed from the earth. During these years of trouble, judgment, and great tribulation, God will give a final witness to all nations. Of this our Lord speaks in Matt. xxiv:14, "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." Though the Gospel of Grace is being preached world-wide, the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom as a witness

unto all nations has not yet taken place. It falls into the seven years preceding the visible coming of our Lord.

Who Will be Used in the Conversion of These Nations?

But who will be the preachers who proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom if all true Christians have left the earth and the true Church is no longer here? The apostates and destructive critics of to-day, with the mass of professing Christians who received not the love of the Truth will surely not take up the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, for we read in the Word of God that those who received not the love of the Truth that they might be saved will follow the strong delusion of Antichrist and believe the lie (2 Thess. ii:10-11). Who then are the preachers? An elect company of God's ancient people, Israel. They are now scattered among all the nations of the earth, judicial blindness is upon them; but it will not be always so, for God has not cast away His people.

When the Church is gone the Lord will not leave the world without a witness. He will raise up a company of God-fearing people, Israelites; take away the veil from their hearts and use them as heralds. As it was in the beginning of this present dispensation, so will it be at the close. The first preachers were Jews, and the last heralds before the Lord comes in visible glory will again be Jews. To them will be given the last evangel of God's mercy to a lost world. "To every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Rev. xiv:6); and the message, "Fear God and give glory to Him for the hour of His judgment is come, and worship Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. xiv:7). They will preach the Gospel of the coming Kingdom, that the Kingdom is about to come, and then call upon all nations to repent and turn to God.

It would be intensely interesting if we could follow the calling of this remnant of Israelites for this testimony as revealed in different portions of the Old Testament. Such a remnant of believing Israelites is anticipated in the Psalms, which speak of the coming final deliverance of Israel. There we read of their persecutions, their prayers, and their expectations. The reader will please turn to Psalm xlv:10-26; Psalms lv to lvii; Psalm lxiv, lxxix and lxxx; Isa. lxiii:15 to Isa. lxiv. And how well this remnant is fitted to give a world-wide testimony among all nations, for they are scattered amongst the nations and acquainted with the different languages. Therefore the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations will be accomplished before the real end comes.

Revelation--Chapter Seven

We call attention here to the seventh chapter of Revelation. In this chapter we read of the sealing of one hundred and forty-four thousand. How much confusion might have been avoided if expositors and Christians had not lost sight of two facts in connection with this sealed company. First, this sealed company cannot be called now, nor are they in connection with the Church of God, because the Church according to the scope of the Book of Revelation is no longer on the earth when this takes place; and secondly, the Word states clearly that these sealed ones are "of all the tribes of the children of Israel." This sealed company therefore is of Israel, and will be called after the Church has been removed to her heavenly destination.

In the second half of this chapter in Revelation we read of another company. John writes, "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands." When one of the elders had asked, "Who are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence

came they?" He told John, "These are they which came out of the Great Tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." We learn that this multitude of all nations comes out of the Great Tribulation. It is not the Church, for the Church is not in the Great Tribulation. This great multitude represents the Gentile nations who heard the final testimony and who believed, They turned in repentance to God and were then washed in the Blood of the Lamb. This great company does not stand before a heavenly throne, but it is the millennial throne which is in view here, and their blessedness throughout the millennial kingdom, after having suffered in the Great Tribulation, is described. They are the nations which the King calls blessed, and which will inherit the Kingdom. They are the fruits of the faithful witness of the elect Jewish remnant heralding the Kingdom before the Lord comes.

"These My Brethren"

When our Lord addresses from His throne these converted nations He says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Who are His brethren? He means by this term His brethren according to the flesh, from whom as concerning the flesh He came (Rom. ix:4-5). The nations who listened to their testimony when they appeared with the Gospel of the Kingdom, and who believed that message, manifested their belief by treating the messengers with kindness, giving them to eat and to drink, and clothing them. They did what the Gentile Rahab did to the Jewish spies, the advance guard of the victorious host of Israel. And the other nations who despised the final offer of God's mercy in the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom showed no kindness to the Jewish messengers; and these nations which spurned the last offer will pass away from the earth.

What Else Converted Israel Will Do

When the Lord comes all Israel living in that day will be saved, except the apostates (Ezekiel xx:38), those who have worshipped the Beast and followed Anti-christ. "They shall look upon Him Whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him" (Zech. xii:10). This converted nation will be a kingdom of priests, and become the nucleus of that Kingdom into which the nations converted during the Tribulation, and all nations throughout the Millennium, will be gathered. Beautiful are the words of Isaiah, speaking of that time (Isa. lxi:6-9): Then the Gentiles shall come to the light which has risen among that nation, and kings to their brightness. Read the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah. In fact the entire prophetic Word witnesses to the fact that Israel, so long a curse among the nations, will be a blessing to all the nations.

It seems from another passage that when the Millennium begins with the coming of the King, that certain portions of the earth must yet be reached, and that work is to be done among different nations to make known the great events which have taken place. And God will use Israel for this work. Isa. lxvi:19: "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles." The last sentence of this prophecy, "they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles," tells us that they will have a work to do after His glory has been manifested. There is another passage in Zechariah which also speaks of how they will be used, Zech. viii:23: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." This necessarily also comes after the Lord has come and set up His Kingdom.

Israel will therefore be definitely used in bringing the nations of the earth into the Kingdom. In that coming Kingdom, converted, Spirit-filled Israel will be the head of all nations, and be used in world-wide ministry and blessing. Then will be fulfilled what the Lord said through Isaiah: "Ye shall be named the priests of the Lord; men shall call you ministers of our God; ye shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves." What blessing is in store for the whole world, when that time comes may also be learned from Rom. xi:12-15. Let all true believers pray as never before, "Even so, come Lord Jesus."

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