

Their Reception-Life From the Dead

by Arno Clemens Gaebelein

Arno Clemens Gaebelein delves into the intricate relationship between Israel's fall, the salvation of the Gentiles, and the future blessings awaiting both Israel and the nations. He emphasizes the importance of understanding God's dispensational plan, the role of the church in this age, and the future restoration of Israel leading to the conversion of the nations. Gaebelein highlights the significance of Israel's conversion and restoration in bringing about blessings to the entire world, ultimately culminating in a time when righteousness and peace will prevail globally under the rule of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Description

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Transcript

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 hasTranscript: true oneLinerSummary: "The sermon explores the significance of Israel's reception and restoration, and how it will bring blessings to the nations and result in the conversion of the world."
 sermonType: "expository" topics: - name: "Israel Restoration" slug: "israel-restoration" - name: "Dispensational Theology" slug: "dispensational-theology" bibleRefs: - text: "Isaiah 59:20" bookId: "ISA" chapter: "59" verse: "20" - text: "Zechariah 2:6" bookId: "ZEC" chapter: "2" verse: "6" - text: "Matthew 19:28" bookId: "MAT" chapter: "19" verse: "28" - text: "Acts 15:14" bookId: "ACT" chapter: "15" verse: "14" - text: "Romans 11:29" bookId: "ROM" chapter: "11" verse: "29" outline: - heading: "God's Plan for Israel and the Nations" points: - "Israel's fall and disobedience brought salvation to the Gentiles" - "The Gospel is preached to the Gentiles for the purpose of taking out a people for God's name" - heading: "The 'Much More' of Dispensational Blessing" points: - "Israel's fulness and reception will bring blessings to the nations" - "The result of Israel's reception will be 'life from the dead' for the world" - heading: "The Book of Jonah as a Type of Israel" points: - "Jonah's call and disobedience illustrate Israel's apostasy" - "Jonah's miraculous preservation and repentance illustrate Israel's national resurrection" - heading: "The Significance of 'Life from the Dead'" points: - "It means spiritual and national life for Israel" - "It means a

great change for the world, a 'regeneration'" faq: - q: "What does the phrase 'life from the dead' mean in Romans 11:15?" a: "It means spiritual and national life for Israel, and a great change for the world, a 'regeneration'." - q: "Why did the apostle Paul glorify his ministry as apostle to the nations?" a: "He glorified his ministry to emphasize that his word was meant for those of the Gentiles, and to highlight the importance of the Gentiles in God's plan." - q: "What is the purpose of the Gospel being preached to the Gentiles?" a: "The purpose is to take out a people for God's name, and to bring blessings to the nations." - q: "What is the significance of Israel's conversion and restoration?" a: "It will bring blessings to the nations, and result in the conversion of the nations of the earth." - q: "What does the book of Jonah illustrate?" a: "It illustrates Israel's apostasy, national resurrection, and ultimate repentance and restoration." quotes: - "Their fall was the wealth of the world, their loss the wealth of the nations, and their casting away the world's reconciliation." - "If by any means I shall provoke to jealousy them which are my flesh, and shall save some from among them." - "Their reception shall be life from the dead." applicationPoints: - "We must understand God's plan for Israel and the nations, and not try to do a work that He never intended for this age." - "The Gospel is preached to the Gentiles for the purpose of taking out a people for God's name, and to bring blessings to the nations." - "Israel's conversion and restoration will bring blessings to the nations, and result in the conversion of the world." keywords: - "Israel's apostasy" - "Gentile salvation" - "Dispensational blessing" - "Israel's fulness" - "Life from the dead" - "Book of Jonah" - "Israel's national resurrection" - "Great tribulation" - "Israel's restoration" ---

We reach now a most important climax in this chapter. First the Holy Spirit pointed us to the Apostle Paul as a pattern of what God in His rich mercy will yet do for the people, whom He hath not cast away. Then we learned that Israel's apostasy is neither complete nor final, and in our last meditation the fact was before us that God permitted His people to fall, to be set aside for a time, to bring, by their fall, salvation to the Gentiles, with the purpose in view "to provoke them to jealousy."

We are now led on in the wonderful ways of God. "But if their fall be the world's wealth, and their loss the wealth of the nations, how much more their fulness? For I speak to you, nations, inasmuch as I am Apostle of the nations, I glorify my ministry; if by any means I shall provoke to jealousy them which are my flesh, and shall save some from among them. For if their casting away be the world's reconciliation, what their reception, but life from the dead?" (verses 12-15).

Let us notice that the apostle here glorifies his ministry as apostle of the nations. The whole epistle was addressed to the Romans* mostly believers from the Gentiles, living in Rome, later to become the prison of Paul and at last the seat of Christianity in its apostate and corrupt form. But here the apostle makes still more prominent that his word is meant for those of the Gentiles. He says: "I speak to you the nations." We have, therefore, before us a message, which is of special value and importance to Gentiles. We have learned before that Israel's disobedience and fall brought salvation to the Gentiles.

Thus their fall was the wealth of the world, their loss the wealth of the nations (or Gentiles) and their casting away the world's reconciliation. But this is not all. All this is far from fulfilling that gracious promise made to the father of the nation, Abraham, when God told him "in thy seed all the nations of the earth shall be blest." Israel's fall, the means in God's purpose to bring salvation to the Gentiles, is not the final thing and the blessing the Gentiles received by their fall is not the fullest blessing which God has in store for the nations of the world. There is a "much more" in Romans xi. In turning to the fifth chapter of this epistle we find the same two significant words used by way of contrast. There it is the "much more" of salvation. "For if, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. v:10). Here it is the "much more" of dispensational

blessing.

The Gospel is preached now to the Gentiles for one great purpose. This purpose is not the conversion of the world, but it is to take out of them a people for His name. (Acts xv:14). This people taken out or called out, form the church (ecclesia), the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, to which every true believer belongs. It is, like the human body, composed of so many members, a number, known to God alone. This body will be complete some day and then the preaching of the Gospel of grace must of necessity cease, and the offer of salvation in its present form and under present conditions as made to the Gentiles, will come to an end.

It is all wrong to speak of world conversion in this age, in which the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is being called. There is absolutely not a single promise in the Gospels, nor in the epistles, nor in any part of the New Testament which assures us of world conversion, or gives us a right to pray for, or expect the conversion of the world by present agencies through the church. The world will be converted. Nations will walk in the light of God, and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, the curse of sin will be removed, nations will learn war no more, righteousness and peace shall kiss each other; all this and scores of other blessings will literally come to pass. But all these promises and predictions about subdued nations and a kingdom of peace extending from sea to sea are found exclusively in the Old Testament Scriptures and not in the New.

It is a sad fact that Christendom has erred in the interpretation of these predictions and turned the time and manner of their fulfillment upside down. In this error lies the cause of all the present day confusion and apostasy of the professing church. Israel, which is so prominent on the pages of the Old Testament in connection with these great blessings, has been interpreted to mean "the church." The time in which the blessings are to be realized to be the age now, instead of the age which is to come. The declarations of the Lord about this age and its ending, like the days of Noah and Lot, have been completely ignored, and the same has been done with the statements of the Apostles in the epistles. Nearly the whole of Christendom attends to Israel's earthly calling and, attempting to do a work which God never means to have done in this age, fails most shamefully in it. As one has said, "The spiritualizing of Israel's promises has been the carnalizing of the church."

If we turn to the Old Testament we find, as we have shown in our "Harmony of the Prophetic Word," everything revealed in perfect order. The last event seen in Old Testament prophecy is always the kingdom come, the nations blest and under the rule of Jehovah; peace on earth and the deliverance of groaning creation.

This great and last event of Old Testament prophecy, a subdued earth ruled over by the King of Righteousness and Peace, is preceded by the judgments of God executed in the earth and above all by the spiritual and national restoration of His ancient people, Israel. The fullest blessing for nations and for the earth is altogether conditioned by the conversion of Israel, to become head of the nations, and possessing her God-given inheritance. Israel converted and restored will result in the conversion of the nations of the earth. But Israel's conversion and restoration to the land will not be till the second coming of the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, in great power and glory. Everywhere in the Old Testament we find first of all the visible manifestation of the Lord of Glory, and at the time of His personal, visible and glorious manifestation, His earthly people are delivered and Jerusalem is restored. We have, then, three great events in Old Testament prophecy, still future:

1. The personal, visible and glorious manifestation of the Lord from heaven. This Lord is the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. The conversion and national restoration of Israel.
3. The result of Israel's conversion and restoration, nations blest and going to Jerusalem to worship the Lord of Hosts, etc.

This order cannot be reversed. It is the divine program. If we were to prove the above statements we could go through every prophetic book of the Old Testament and to the Psalms and point out hundreds of passages, where this is clearly taught. Read, as striking proofs, Zechariah ii:6-13; Isaiah lix:20-21, and read the ix chapter of Isaiah.

"The gifts and calling of God are without repentance," we find later in our chapter. He has undertaken to bless nations and the earth through Israel, His earthly people. When Israel failed and was disobedient, He had another gracious way to reveal. Salvation came to the Gentiles, to take out a people for His name. This is the work in the present age and that is a parenthesis. As soon as this is accomplished He resumes His work with Israel.

And now we are able to understand the "much more" of dispensational truth.

Israel is promised in the Old Testament Scriptures a fulness and a time when they shall be received. This fulness comes when the Lord comes in power and glory as the King. Now, if God brought blessing to the Gentiles by their fall, how much more will He bless the nations when their fulness comes. Through their fulness the whole world will receive the fullest blessing, blessings minutely given in the Old Testament and literally to be fulfilled.

But there is a phrase in the passage before us which claims our special attention. "Their reception shall be life from the dead." What does it mean, "life from the dead?" It is strange that this phrase should be interpreted as meaning a physical resurrection. Upon this passage, as well as the passage "all Israel shall be saved," and a few others, has been founded the evil doctrine, unscriptural throughout, that all Jews who have lived will be raised from the dead, saved and unsaved, and they all will be brought back to the land to enjoy the blessings of the millennial kingdom. It is a larger Jewish Hope --a Jewish restitution of all things and consequently those who hold this doctrine are forced to believe also in a restitution of all things for Gentiles. When we reach the fact that "all Israel shall be saved" we expect to follow this more fully.

Physical resurrection is here not at all in view. Nor is it in many passages in the Old Testament, where physical resurrection is simply used as a type of a great change. It is so in the New Testament. Of the prodigal it is said "for this my son was dead and is come to life." These literalists could not claim that he was physically dead. The vision of the valley full of dry bones is generally used by these men who teach a restitution by resurrection. But the vision is a vision to describe vividly the national resurrection of Israel and not a physical one. The dry bones are the whole house of Israel (Ez. xxxvii:12); but are these dry bones literally dry bones or are they used to typify Israel's death spiritually and nationally? If they are literally dry bones how could they say: "Our bones are dried and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts?" Surely, literal dry bones have no mouth to speak. If we read that they are in graves and the Lord will open their graves, it means that He is bringing His people back from their graves among the nations, where they are buried nationally. Numerous other passages could be cited in which physical resurrection is used to typify the spiritual and national revival of Israel.

"Life from the dead" does not mean a literal resurrection. It has a double meaning. First it means when their reception comes it will be for them, spiritually and nationally, life; they will live spiritually and as a nation.

In the second place the term means that the result of Israel's reception, coming into the place of blessing, will be for the world at large "life from the dead." This is identical with the term, which the Lord uses in Matthew xix:28, "the regeneration" it will be a great change which takes place, in resurrection power.

There is one book which illustrates very blessedly the passage before us. It is the book so much belittled and ridiculed in our day, the Book of Jonah.

Our Lord said to the Pharisees, who demanded a sign from Him that no sign would be given them but the sign of the prophet Jonas. (Matt, xii :38.) He then spoke of His coming resurrection foreshadowed by Jonah's experience. No doubt the proud and learned Pharisees turned away from Him; and with a smile the rationalistic Sadducee may have said, "What nonsense, Jonah never lived, it is all a myth, there is no resurrection." Oh, the adulterous generation! Modern Pharisee-ism and Sadduceeism, Higher Critics, etc., are likewise an adulterous generation. They tell us what a beautiful book the book of Jonah is, what sublime lessons it teaches. But did Jonah ever live? Of course not, they say-- he never lived, his life is a myth--how could a fish swallow a man? etc. Awful consequences! The Lord Jesus used the deliverance of Jonah as a type of His blessed resurrection, the foundation of our holy faith. If He did not know that Jonah lived, if He used a myth to typify His resurrection--well, then, His resurrection may not have been a real one, and how could He be the Son of God?

Jonah's life is in different respects typical of Christ, but it has still another meaning which makes known the divine wisdom and inspiration. The life of nearly every servant of God in the Old Testament has a twofold typical application--the one, Christ, the Messiah, and the other, Israel, the chosen people of God. Follow out this thought and apply it to Joseph, David, Daniel, the prophets, etc. Jonah is a type of Israel. The whole history of the seed of Abraham, past, present, and future, is contained in a nutshell in that book.

1. Jonah's call. He is sent by Jehovah to preach to Nineveh. He knows God while Nineveh is in darkness. So God prepared Himself Israel a nation to show forth His praises. Salvation is of the Jews. Through them He desires to make known His loving kindness and His redemption. In the seed of Abraham all the nations of the earth are to receive blessing. These are God's gifts and calling. They are without repentance (Rom. xi:29).

2. Jonah is disobedient. He turns his back upon God and flees from His face. He goes on board of a merchantman. He goes in the opposite direction. So Israel became an apostate people, and the Jew turns merchant. Forsook God and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation. Like Jonah, disobedient to the heavenly vision, instead of being a blessing becomes a curse among the nations.

3. Trouble soon comes upon Jonah, the disobedient servant of God. The storm of disaster tosses his ship upon the wild waves of the angry sea. Everything is against him because he rebelled against God. Thus with the Jews. Misfortune after misfortune, storm after storm has broken over them since they rejected God and their King Messiah. They are tossed about by the nations. The sea always represents nations in the Word.

4. Jonah does not deny his God and his nationality. He said, "I am a Hebrew and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which has made the sea and the dry land." So the Jew in his apostasy still professes to be a

believer in God, fears His name and does not deny that he is a Jew.

5. Jonah is cast overboard. He is given up to the angry waves. He is seen struggling in the waves. Typical of the Jew being cast away, though not forever.

6. The men in Jonah's ship when they saw that as soon as Jonah was in the water the waters calmed down, these men, who were all heathen, feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord and made vows. What a wonderful illustration of the very statement in this epistle: "By their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles/" The Gentiles have received salvation when the Jew was set aside nationally.

7. Jonah is miraculously preserved in the belly of a sea monster. (There is nothing in the Hebrew to show that it was a whale.) He is to have his abode there for three days and three nights. He does not lose his life and existence, but he is put into a grave and is there miraculously preserved. The Jew is likewise in his grave among the nations, nationally dead, but still God keeps the Jew as He did Jonah. The Jew is God's standing miracle. No infidel can explain away the Jew and his miraculous existence.

8. Jonah was not digested by the fish. He remained there undigested. The nations have not digested the Jews. This people shall dwell alone and not be reckoned among the nations. The Jew is still a Jew. Assimilation has failed.

9. Jonah at the end of the appointed time commenced to repent in his grave. He cried to God. He wished himself back to His holy temple, and he finished his prayer with the believing shout, "Salvation is of the Lord." The Jews will also repent. There are unmistakable signs of a changed attitude of the Jew noticeable. Still, before that great national repentance comes, there will be likewise first a great tribulation. Like Jonah many are to-day desiring for His holy temple, and they are getting ready to return to the land. At last they will acknowledge that salvation is of the Lord, and welcome their King with the shout "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

10. God made the fish vomit out Jonah. He that scattered Israel will gather them again. They will be brought back to the land and restored. They will build the waste places, the desolations of many generations. The Word of God has hundreds of promises which belong to literal Israel and speak of a literal restoration. If we do not believe that, we might as well close the Bible and become Higher Critics, unbelievers, etc.

11. Jonah is sent the second time, and he follows the command. So Israel is yet to fulfill its grandest mission. Their King, our coming Lord, will commission them again and send them forth to proclaim His salvation. Israel will then follow obediently.

12. The whole city of Nineveh repented after hearing the apostate, the punished, and the restored Jew preach. A whole* city was swept by a revival. The masses were saved. Now is the time for the salvation of individuals. There is no such thing at this present time as saving the masses or converting the world. The masses will be saved and the world converted through the preaching of the Jews when they are converted and restored to the land and Jesus is crowned as their King and sits upon the throne of His Father David.

This then illustrates, at least in part and in a faint way, what their reception is and means, "Life from the dead."

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