

# **Ezekiel 36:28-38—The New Covenant For God’s Land And People - Part 3**

## **Memory Verse**

Ezekiel 36:26-27 NKJV

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

## **Introduction**

It is important to remember that the New Covenant includes both physical and spiritual promises. The physical promises are exclusive to the nation of Israel, while the spiritual blessings (being cleansed, forgiveness, receiving a new heart, and the Holy Spirit living inside of us, etc), were always meant to be for all people—“In your Seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed” (Genesis 22:18). All these promises will come to pass exactly as promised during the Millennial (1,000 year) Reign of Jesus on Earth, which begins after the Second Coming, when Jesus returns to earth at the end of the seven year Tribulation.

The promises associated with the New Covenant that won’t be fulfilled until after the Second Coming of Christ include:

- David will be prince over Israel (Isaiah 55:3-4, Jeremiah 30:9, Ezekiel 34:24, 37:24-25 Hosea 3:5)
- Jesus will be king over all the world, ruling from Jerusalem (e.g. Psalm 2, Isaiah 2:2-3)
- The nation of Israel will dwell safely in the Land of Israel (e.g. Ezekiel 34:27-28)
- There will be no more war; all nations will live in peace with each other (e.g. Isaiah 2:4)
- Israel will have a change of heart and will also partake of the New Covenant by faith

However, some of the physical promises have already begun to be fulfilled in our day—a clear sign that we are living in the last days (after almost 2,000 years of barrenness and exile). They include:

- The regathering of the nation of Israel to the land of Israel
- Israel will become like the garden of Eden

This week we will learn more about God’s glorious future for Israel during the Millennial Reign. We will also see that everything Israel receives is all of grace, as God makes it clear that Israel deserved nothing except more punishment because of their wilful sin.

## **Ezekiel 36:16-38 NKJV**

**Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying: <sup>17</sup> “Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own ways and deeds; to Me their way was like the uncleanness of a woman in her customary impurity. <sup>18</sup> Therefore I poured out My fury on them for the blood they had shed on the land, and for their idols with which they had defiled it. <sup>19</sup> So I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the countries; I judged them according to their ways and their deeds. <sup>20</sup> When they came to the nations, wherever they went, they profaned My holy name—when they said of them, ‘These are the people of the Lord, and yet they have gone out of His land.’ <sup>21</sup> But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went.**

**22** “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name’s sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. **23** And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord,” says the Lord God, “when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. **24** For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. **25** Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. **26** I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. **27** I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. **28** Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. **29** I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. **30** And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. **31** Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. **32** Not for your sake do I do this,” says the Lord God, “let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!”

**33** ‘Thus says the Lord God: “On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. **34** The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. **35** So they will say, ‘This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.’ **36** Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it.”

**37** ‘Thus says the Lord God: “I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will increase their men like a flock. **38** Like a flock offered as holy sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.” ’ ’

### **Ezekiel 36:28-30 NKJV—God promises to bless Israel’s land and agriculture**

**28** Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. **29** I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. **30** And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations.

v **28** Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers: If God’s promise to Israel that they will return to their land sounds familiar, it is. This is the fifth time that God has reiterated this promise in this chapter alone! Let’s review the references to God’s promise to bring back the people of Israel to their own land that we have read so far in chapter 36:

Ezekiel 36:8, 10, 12, 24, and 28 NKJV

<sup>8</sup> But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to **My people Israel**, for they are about to come.

<sup>10</sup> I will multiply men upon you, **all the house of Israel**, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt.

<sup>12</sup> Yes, I will cause men to walk on you, **My people Israel**; they shall take possession of you, and you shall be their inheritance; no more shall you bereave them of children.”

<sup>24</sup> For I will take **you** from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you **into your own land**.

<sup>28</sup> Then **you** shall dwell in the land that **I gave to your fathers**; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

**What is the context of these verses?** The nation of Israel have been exiled from their land because of gross and persistent disobedience. God promised through the prophet Jeremiah, “*For thus says the Lord: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place*” (Jeremiah 29:10). Now here we are in Ezekiel chapter 36 studying the *New Covenant*, and God is repeating and emphasising this promise to bring the nation of Israel back into the land of Israel.

**Who is God speaking to?:** “You”, “My people Israel”, “all the house of Israel”, “I gave to your fathers”, “into your own land”. God is not ambiguous: He does not leave any room for doubt: The people God was addressing were clearly the physical nation of Israel—those physically descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—can you imagine Ezekiel or any of the other Israelites wondering who He was talking to?

### **Application: The dual fulfilments of the prophecies to both exile and restore Israel**

If Ezekiel chapter 36 is all we had to go on, then we could come to the conclusion that God did keep His promise to bring the people back into the land back in around 538 B.C., but He then rejected them when they rejected Jesus as their Saviour and King. However, the Bible makes it clear that there is a dual fulfilment of this prophecy to regather the nation of Israel, of which the second would be in the end times. Showing this to be true is important, as, if the first regathering of the nation of Israel was literal, then so must the second regathering—which means that God has not rejected the nation of Israel as being his chosen people.

Isaiah 11:11-12 NKJV

“It shall come to pass **in that day** that the Lord shall set His hand again **the second time** to recover the remnant of His people who are left, from Assyria and Egypt, from Pathros and Cush, from Elam and Shinar, from Hamath and the islands of the sea. <sup>12</sup> He will set up a banner for the nations, and will **assemble [gather] the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.**”

Notice that the time frame for God to bring back the nation of Israel to their land “**the second time**” is the end times—“**in that day**”. Also notice where God will bring them back from; God will “**gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.**” Remember that in the Babylonian invasion, they went only to Babylon, and then returned only from Babylon to Israel. In the second regathering of the nation of Israel, of which we have the privilege to witness in our own lifetime, we see that they are indeed being gathered from “**the four corners of the earth**”, meaning from all over the earth.

Just as there are several prophecies that refer to God gathering His chosen people, the people of Israel, from all over the world, and not just from Babylon, there are also prophecies that predict the exile in great detail, but those details were not fulfilled in the first (Babylonian) exile, but were exactly fulfilled in the second (Roman) exile.

Deuteronomy 28:58-59, 64–68 NKJV

<sup>58</sup> “If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, <sup>59</sup> then the Lord will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues—great and prolonged plagues—and serious and prolonged sicknesses.

<sup>64</sup> **“Then the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other,** and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known—wood and stone. <sup>65</sup> And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the Lord will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul. <sup>66</sup> Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. <sup>67</sup> In the morning you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were evening!’ And at evening you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were morning!’ because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.

<sup>68</sup> **“And the Lord will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, ‘You shall never see it again.’ And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you.”**

Again, the second (Roman) exile did indeed result in the Jews being scattered **“among all peoples”**, and also, the Romans did indeed sent them to **“Egypt in ships”**, but because there were so many Jewish prisoners being sold as slaves, there were not enough buyers for them. Also, the description in verses 65-67 of what the Jew’s exile would be like was exactly fulfilled over the last almost 2,000 years—the Jew’s have faced almost non-stop hatred and persecution. God’s word given through Moses was exactly fulfilled around 1,000 years after it was given.

---

v 28 **You shall be My people, and I will be your God:** “This phrase speaks of restored and true relationship between God and His people. The cleansing and transformative work of the new covenant would make a depth and strength of relationship possible for all God’s people that only a select few knew before.” (David Guzik)

v29 **I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses:** This is only possible because of the New Covenant described in verses 25-28. Because of what Jesus accomplished on the cross, the people would receive new hearts and the Holy Spirit inside of them, thus giving them both the desire and power to obey God.

Philippians 2:12-13 NLT

Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. <sup>13</sup> For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

v29 **I will call for the grain and multiply it:** Here and in verse 35 God reiterates His promise in verses 6-12 to change the ecology of the land of Israel and cause food production to dramatically increase. Also see Ezekiel 47:1–12, Isaiah 35:1–2, 55:13, and Zechariah 8:12 for similar passages.

**Ezekiel 36:31-32 NKJV—The correct response to grace—“I am unworthy”**

**Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. <sup>32</sup> Not for your sake do I do this,”** says the Lord God, “let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!”

## **Application: Godly sorrow**

v 31 **Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations:** What happens when God's grace, His unmerited and undeserved favour and kindness, is lavishly and abundantly poured out on us? Remember that we now have a new and soft heart and so have a greater ability to understand God's love, truth, holiness, and righteousness. Does our hatred of sin increase, or decrease? Do we become more ashamed of our sin or less ashamed? Does our conscience become more tender or more calloused? Of course we become more sensitive to sin, hating it more. Also, our new and soft heart breaks because we are now able to see just how much our sin has grieved and hurt the God who loved us so much and has given us so much at such a great cost to Himself—we realise just how ungrateful, unthankful, insensitive, and spiteful we were towards God.

*When someone comes the Lord, a sign of true repentance is sorrow and shame over sins committed in the past, as well as a desire to avoid those same sins in the future.*

Ephesians 4:30-32 NKJV

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. <sup>32</sup> And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Matthew 5:3-4 NKJV

<sup>3</sup> "Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who **mourn**, for they shall be comforted.

These verses in Matthew give us a good understanding of what happens to a person's heart when they are saved. First, they become "**poor in spirit**", meaning that they understand their own spiritual bankruptcy. Through the conviction and illumination of the Holy Spirit, they are finally able to say along with Paul, "And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't" (Romans 7:18 NLT). This then causes them to, by faith, seek forgiveness and Christ's righteousness, which is freely given (see Titus 3:3-7, Ephesians 2:1-10).

Secondly, once they are saved, they **mourn** over their sins because they have received the new and soft heart, and are therefore much more tender and sensitive towards sin. This is a start to helping us understand what the Bible means by "godly sorrow". The following verses will give us much more understanding.

2 Corinthians 7:8-11 NLT

I am not sorry that I sent that severe letter to you, though I was sorry at first, for I know it was painful to you for a little while. <sup>9</sup> Now I am glad I sent it, not because it hurt you, but **because the pain caused you to repent and change your ways.** It was the kind of sorrow God wants his people to have, so you were not harmed by us in any way. <sup>10</sup> **For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation.** There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But *worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance,* results in spiritual death.

<sup>11</sup> **Just see what this godly sorrow produced in you! Such earnestness, such concern to clear yourselves, such indignation, such alarm, such longing to see me, such zeal, and such a readiness to punish wrong.** You showed that you have done everything necessary to make things right.

2 Corinthians 7:10 NKJV

For **godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation**, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

Simply put, when a person is truly saved, they will sorrow or mourn over their sins, both past and present. They will also mourn over any sins they commit in the future as they happen. This mourning over sin produces genuine repentance; in fact it is the only way that we can have genuine repentance. If we change our behaviour without first coming to that place where we have crucified or put to death those sinful desires (see Romans 8:13), by submitting ourselves to God, saying, “not my will but yours be done” (see Matthew 26:39), then it is not genuine repentance: We have only changed our behaviour because of some external reason or motivation: My heart has not changed!

“When some people remember their sins, they enjoy them again in the dirty depths of their imagination. This is evidence that they really haven’t judged them and repented. When true children of God remember their past disobedience, they’re ashamed of themselves and abhor themselves because of what they have done to the Lord, themselves, and others.” (Wiersbe)

---

v 32 **Not for your sake do I do this**: God again repeats Himself (see Ezekiel 36:22–23). Remember that when God repeats Himself it means that we need to pay attention. It’s not for our sakes that God blesses us, meaning that the blessings I receive have nothing to do with me earning or deserving—it’s all grace. Instead of me earning and deserving, it’s only for His name’s sake, His own honour, because God must show that He is faithful to keep His promises and must act according to His character—He is gracious, kind, forgiving, and abounding in mercy (see Exodus 34:6, Psalm 83:15 and 86:5).

**Ezekiel 36:33-36 NKJV—God promises to restore the desolate places**

‘Thus says the Lord God: “On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. <sup>34</sup> The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. <sup>35</sup> So they will say, ‘This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.’ <sup>36</sup> Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it.”

v 36 **On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities**: Here is yet another example of how the New Covenant, for the nation of Israel, is comprised of both physical and spiritual blessings—in particular God gathering Israel back to their land.

Israel will be **enabled** to live in her cities after being cleansed. Given that Israel will only be cleansed once Jesus comes back, this means that they will definitely be in their own land after Jesus comes back. The reason why they couldn’t live in their cities in the 3 1/2 years before Jesus’ return was that the antichrist broke His covenant at the halfway point of the 7 year Tribulation and turned on the Jews, attacking them. Jesus told the Jews that they should run to the hills when they see the abomination of desolation as spoken of by the prophet Daniel (see Matthew 24:15-22). It will only be when Jesus returns to earth at His Second Coming that the Jews will be able to return and dwell in their cities again.

“The repeated promises of the restoration of national and geographical Israel as part of the new covenant show us something important and often neglected. There is no doubt that the work of Jesus on the cross and His victory at the resurrection inaugurated the new covenant (Luke 22:20). Yet, there is a real sense in which the new covenant *is not yet complete* until these promised blessings upon Israel are fulfilled. We may say that the glorious return of Jesus and the millennial kingdom He then establishes will complete all the promises of the new covenant.” (David Guzik)

v 36 **The nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places:** Once again, it’s not for our sake, but for God’s. God will be glorified and honoured by the nations when He fulfils all these promises given to Israel.

“The results of the restoration would be their repentance and the return of all that prosperity which through sin they had forfeited, and, consequently, a renewal of their witness to the nations round about of truth concerning Jehovah.” (Morgan)

“Let her [the Church] also remember that her gifts and calling are not for her sake, but for the honour of the Name; that, being sanctified in her, God may make Himself known to the nations.” (Morgan)

“God has yet to defend His name in this earth. There are a great many people who ridicule the church today and the people who are in it. They blaspheme God because of it. God is going to justify Himself in this earth, and He is going to sanctify His name down here.” (McGee)

v 36 **I, the Lord, have spoken it, and will do it:** Just in case you were wondering if God wasn’t sure, or if He might change His mind, God gives an oath, guaranteeing that this is a promise that He will keep. The more we read these chapters, the more sure we become about God’s plan for His people Israel; with all the repetition and oaths, there should be no doubt as to God’s intentions. To deny that the children of Israel are still God’s chosen nation is to deny His oath to bring them back into the land and bless them spiritually and physically.

“How these prophetic promises will be fulfilled remains an open question. Nevertheless, to reduce these oracles to symbolic language and to restrict their fulfilment to the NT church is to annul the hope that the prophet was attempting to restore.” (Block)

Block makes an important point here. These promises were designed to give hope to the people of Israel while they were already in captivity—they would return to Israel. If they were all allegorical, and therefore not referring to the physical nation of Israel as literally intended and understood, then God would be guilty of giving people false hope and breaking His promises and oaths.

### **Ezekiel 36:37-38 NKJV—*Israel’s relationship with God restored***

**‘Thus says the Lord God: “I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will increase their men like a flock. <sup>38</sup> Like a flock offered as holy sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.” ’ ’**

v 36 **I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me:** There are two things we can learn here. Firstly, because their sin has been removed, they now have access to the throne of grace where they can find help in time of need (Hebrew 4:16). This is a glorious privilege that we as believers under the New Covenant already have. For the Israelites, this represents a renewed relationship with God.

Hebrews 4:16 AMP

Let us then fearlessly and confidently and boldly draw near to the throne of grace (the throne of God's unmerited favour to us sinners), that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find grace to help in good time for every need [appropriate help and well-timed help, coming just when we need it].

### **Application: Depending upon God in prayer**

The second thing that we learn from these verses is that God expects us to ask Him for what we need. Why? Because when we pray, we are demonstrating dependance on God. In contrast, when we don't pray, we are demonstrating that we are independent of God, and living by our own strength. The only reason we have for not asking God for something is because we think that we don't need His help. Throughout their history, Israel has been characterised by living independently of God and not seeking His help. However, in the future, Israel will have a childlike faith. They will look up to their Messiah and fully understand their dependance upon Him, and His care for them.

Matthew 7:7-11 NLT

"Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup> For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

<sup>9</sup> "You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? <sup>10</sup> Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! <sup>11</sup> So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.

v 37-38 **I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will increase their men like a flock. <sup>38</sup> Like a flock offered as holy sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men:** This is the answer to the prayer. This miraculous population increase of the nation of Israel, also promised in verses 10-11, will happen after Jesus comes back and the Israelites finally demonstrate their dependence on Him by praying to Him.

The lesson here is that receiving God's promises are connected to prayer, and therefore, God wants us to pray for what He has already promised to give us. Daniel is a good example of this when he prayed for the return of the Israelites after the 70 year captivity that God had previously promised in Jeremiah (see Daniel 9). In fact, the promise in Jeremiah actually includes a command to pray for the fulfilment of the promise; it also describes the kind of pray that God will answer.

Jeremiah 29:10-14 NKJV

For thus says the Lord: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. <sup>11</sup> For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> **And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.** <sup>14</sup> **I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity;** I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.



Notice the condition that God places on granting His promises to us—**when you search for Me with all your heart.**

“I trust we all feel the missionary spirit; we all long to see the kingdom of the Lord come, and to see the converts in Zion multiplied. But God has appended to the granting of our desire that we should pray for it: we must plead and enquire, or else the increase will be withheld.” (Spurgeon)

---

v 38 **A flock offered as holy sacrifices:** “Literally ‘flock of holy things’ and evidently refers to animals intended for sacrifice. Just as these filled Jerusalem in their thousands (see 2 Chronicles 35:7), so the rebuilt cities of Israel would be filled with throngs of men.” (Taylor)

The picture of **flocks of men** not only speaks of a large number of people, but also of a people dedicated to the Lord. “There is this additional beauty about the promise, that the sheep which were brought to Jerusalem on the solemn feasts were not only numerous, but they were the best sheep in the land, because no animal could be offered to God had any blemish.” (Spurgeon)

Romans 12:1-2 NKJV

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

v 38 **So shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men:** Chapter 36, this glorious chapter that speaks of the New Covenant, ends with God again reiterating His promise to restore national Israel, the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to their own land. What can we learn from this? When God says “I will”, it means that it is a good as done, regardless of my faithfulness or my failures. Remember God’s promise all those years ago to Abraham, “*I will make you a great nation... Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.”*” (Genesis 12:2, 7) God will always complete what He begins (Philippians 1:6).