

GOD PUNISHES THOSE WHO TRY TO TAKE ISRAEL'S LAND

IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS the Lord promised to give the entire land of Canaan to Abraham's descendents. Now, if God had only mentioned that promise once and never spoke of it again, that would still have been enough to make His will clear. God never goes back on His word; whatever He promises will come to pass. In this case, though, the Lord actually *repeated* this promise on numerous occasions. God wanted to make it absolutely clear, beyond any possibility of doubt, that He was giving the land of Canaan to the Jews.

The first time God made this promise was when Abraham first arrived in Canaan:

Genesis 12:5: “And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

7 And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there

build he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.”

As we can see in verse 7, the Lord promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendents. After God made this promise, a famine arose and Abraham left Canaan and traveled to Egypt. When Abraham left Egypt and returned to Canaan the Lord repeated the promise:

Genesis 13:14: “And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:
15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.”

As He had done before, the Lord promised to give all of the land of Canaan – including all of the land that Abraham could see – to Abraham and to his descendents *forever*. No conditions were placed on this promise; Abraham did not have to do anything in order to keep the land. It was an unconditional promise. God was going to give the land to him *and* to his descendents, and it would belong to them forever. This promise could not be annulled or forfeited.

Some time later, after Abraham defeated the kings that had kidnapped his nephew Lot, the Lord once again repeated this promise:

Genesis 15:18: “In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

This is the third time that God said He was giving the land

of Canaan to Abraham's descendents. However, that is not the last time. Shortly before Isaac was born, God promised the land to Abraham yet again:

Genesis 17:4: “As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger; all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

As you can see, God told Abraham *four times* that He was going to give the land of Canaan to his descendents. The Lord told him on two separate occasions that the land would be theirs **forever**: once in Genesis 13:14, where He said that the land would be theirs “for ever”, and again in Genesis 17:8, where He said the land would be their “everlasting possession”. No conditions were placed on this promise; the Israelites did not have to do anything in order to keep the land. The Lord was giving it to them freely and they could never lose their right to it. It was a permanent, irrevocable gift.

Now, it's true that during the time of Moses the Lord said that if the Israelites disobeyed Him He would evict them from the land:

Deuteronomy 29:24: “Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?

25 Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt:

26 For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them:

27 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book:

28 And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day.”

As you can see, the Lord made it clear that if the Israelites forsook Him He would curse them and root them out of the land. However, the loss of the land would not be permanent. If they repented He would bring them back:

Deuteronomy 30:1: “And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee,

2 And shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

3 That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee.

4 If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:

5 And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers."

While disobedience could get them removed from the land, even *that* would not cause them to lose the land forever. The land still belonged to them, and the Lord would never break His covenant with them or cast them away. We find this in the book of Leviticus:

Leviticus 26:42: "Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.

43 The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.

44 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God.

45 But I will for their sakes remember the

covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD."

The phrase "covenant of their ancestors" is very important. It does *not* refer to the Mosaic Law, since the Lord was currently in the process of giving that Law to Israel. The covenant God is talking about is the covenant He made with their ancestor Abraham – the promise to bless Israel and give them the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. No matter what Israel did, the Lord would never utterly cast them away. He would never abandon them. The Jews would always be His people, just as surely as the sun shines by day and the stars shine by night:

Jeremiah 31:35: "Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name:

36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

37 Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD."

I want to be absolutely clear on this point. God gave the land of Canaan to the nation of Israel, and it is theirs and theirs alone. He gave it to them with no conditions attached; it was to be theirs forever as an everlasting possession. If Israel

abandoned God then He would evict them from the land, but that eviction would not be permanent. God would remember His covenant with Abraham and would bring them back. No matter what, though, the land was theirs and it would always be theirs.

Some might argue that God placed the condition of circumcision on the covenant that He made with Abraham. It is true that He said this:

Genesis 17:11: “And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and you.”

However, note that circumcision was a *token*, or sign of the covenant. Those who did not do this were “cut off” (as it says in verse 14), but it did *not* abrogate the covenant as a whole because *the covenant was unconditional*. No matter what happened, no matter what the Israelites did, “all the land of Canaan” was theirs “for an everlasting possession”.

The reason I am emphasizing this is because many Christians have no idea that Israel has any special significance to God. They think that when the Roman Empire destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD that God was finished with the Jews, and from that point on the Church became God's only special people. (This school of thought is called “replacement theology” and gets its name from the idea that the Church has “replaced” Israel.) They see no significance in the modern nation of Israel and do not believe that Israel has a right to any land in the Middle East. They incorrectly think that God has abandoned Israel forever and that the Jews are no longer God's chosen people.

This is a very great error. As we saw in Jeremiah 31, God has made it clear that there is *nothing* Israel can do to get Him to abandon them. Since His covenant with Abraham was unconditional, they will always be His people.

It is true that after the Romans destroyed Jerusalem the

nation of Israel was exiled for a long time, but that long exile actually fulfills an Old Testament prophecy. In fact, not only does the Bible predict a long exile, but it even foretells the date when Israel would become a nation again. We can find all of this in Ezekiel 4:

Ezekiel 4:1: “Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and portray upon it the city, even Jerusalem:

2 And lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set battering rams against it round about.

3 Moreover take thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.

4 Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity.

5 For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.

6 And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.

7 Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and thine arm shall be uncovered, and thou shalt prophesy against it.

...

13 And the Lord said, Even thus shall the

children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I will drive them."

Here we find that God is using Ezekiel as an object lesson. The Lord was going to punish Israel for 430 years (390 years + 40 years), and to illustrate this God commanded Ezekiel to lie on his side for 430 days. This was done as a sign to the house of Israel, but the Israelites paid no attention to the warning. Instead of repenting they hardened their hearts, and God's judgment came upon them – exactly as Moses had forewarned in the book of Deuteronomy. Since Israel abandoned God, He removed them from the land. They were carried into captivity by the Babylonians and spent the next 70 years in exile.

Back in Deuteronomy God said that if He exiled the Israelites *and they repented* then He would regather them to the land. After the 70 years were over God kept His promise and returned Israel to the land. However, Israel still refused to repent. Because of this the Lord allowed only a small remnant of the Jews to return to Israel in 536 BC. The rest of the nation remained scattered abroad, as the Lord had threatened in verse 13.

When the Jews returned home only 70 of the appointed 430 years had taken place, which still left 360 years of punishment. However, the fact that the Israelites did not learn their lesson during the first 70 years activated this provision of the Mosaic Law:

Leviticus 26:23: "And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;

24 Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins."

This says that if God punished the Israelites and they

refused to repent, God would multiply their punishment by seven. $360 \text{ years} \times 7 = 2520 \text{ years}$. Since the Bible uses 360-year days in its prophecies, that would equal 2,483.8 of our calendar years. (The math: $2520 \text{ years} \times 360 \text{ days} = 907,200 \text{ days}$. $907,200 \text{ days} / 365.25 \text{ days per year} = 2,484 \text{ years}$.) So, if you add 2,484 years to the spring of 536 BC (keeping into account there was no year 0, only 1 BC and then 1 AD), you get 1948. (Math: $1948 + 536 = 2484$.)

When did Israel become a nation again? On May 14, 1948. This time, however, more than just a small remnant returned to the land; there are now millions of Jews living in Israel, and more continue to move there as time goes on. This process will only accelerate as the time of Christ's return draws near. The Lord is calling His people back to their promised land.

On top of this, Israel became a nation in a *single day*, just as the Lord foretold through Isaiah:

Isaiah 66:7: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

8 Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? Saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? Saith thy God."

It seemed very unlikely that Israel would become a nation again in a single day, but that is exactly what happened. The modern regathering of the Jews to Israel is not a random historical event; it is the fulfillment of prophecy. In fact, when God said that He would disperse the Jews He also said that He

would regather them a *second time*:

Isaiah 11:11: “And 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, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.”

The Israelites have been dispersed twice: once when they were deported to Babylon and once when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. The first time they were regathered was in 536 BC, after spending 70 years in Babylon; the second time was in the modern era. The modern nation of Israel, therefore, represents the *second time* God has regathered them. God promised to bring His people back to the land and He has done so.

The Bible goes on to say that the nation of Israel will never be destroyed again:

Amos 9:15: “I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.”

The reason God has regathered them is to save them and turn their hearts to Him, and He will accomplish exactly that:

Hosea 3:4: “For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim:

5 Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their

king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness
in the latter days."

Do you see what this is saying? Israel did "abide many days" without a king, or sacrifice, or even a country. Now they have returned "in the latter days". The phrase "David their king" refers to the Messiah. The passage is saying that when Israel is regathered they will seek the Lord, and ultimately the Messiah as well.

What I want to focus on is that the land of Israel belongs to the Israelites. It does *not* belong to anyone else. God made that promise to Abraham and He later confirmed that promise to Jacob – thus making it clear that the land was being given to *the Jews*:

Genesis 35:11: "And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;
12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land."

God was very specific when it came to the ownership of the land. The Arabs are the descendents of Abraham's son Ishmael, but the land was not given to them. The Palestinians are the descendents of Isaac's son Esau, but the land was not given to them. The land was given only to Jacob's offspring, the Jews. Even the city of Jerusalem was given to the Jews:

Zechariah 8:7-8: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I

will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.”

There is one other point that needs to be brought out. The land promise was not the only promise that God made to Abraham; there was something else as well. We can find it in Genesis 12:

Genesis 12:3: “And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

As Christians we know that Jesus is the descendent of Abraham that God used to bless the entire world. In Him all the families of the world are blessed indeed! However, we often overlook the rest of the verse. God was not just talking about Abraham here; He promised to bless those who blessed the Jews *and to curse those who cursed them*. God has some very harsh words for those who would try to harm Israel:

Zechariah 2:8: “For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.”

Later in Zechariah God elaborates on this theme. He makes it clear that He is going to destroy all nations that seek to harm Israel:

Zechariah 12:9: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they

shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

These verses are describing a time when Israel (the “house of David”) will finally realize that Jesus is the Messiah and will repent as a nation. It says they will “look upon me whom they have pierced”, which is a reference to Jesus. We know this day is drawing near because verse 10 says that when this happens the Israelites will possess the city of Jerusalem, and the Jews regained control over Jerusalem in 1967. (The Jews will actually repent at the very end of the Tribulation, but that is a topic for another time.)

The key point that I want to emphasize here is verse 9, where God says that He will seek to destroy “all the nations that come against Jerusalem”. God takes attacks on Israel *personally*.

God makes this even more clear in the book of Joel:

Joel 3:1: “For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

2 I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.”

Here God says that when He has returned Israel to their land and has given Jerusalem back to her, that He would gather all nations and judge them. The reason God is angry with the nations is because they have scattered the Jews and have “parted my land”. In other words, God is angry with the world because they have *taken land away from Israel*. Taking land away from Israel *really* upsets God.

The fulfillment of these verses is not far off. In recent history God did indeed “bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem”. On top of that, over the past few decades the nations of the world have tried very hard to divide Israel (especially Jerusalem!) and take away her land. Things that God foretold centuries *before* the birth of Christ are happening in our lifetime.

Zechariah expounds on this a little further and points out something very important:

Zechariah 14:2: “For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

3 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.”

In verse 2 we see the same language as in Joel 3:2. However, a very important detail is added: on the day that the Lord gathers all nations to Jerusalem so He can judge them, the Lord will fight against them *in person*. Verse 4 says that “his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives”. This event is quite famous; people usually call it the Second Coming. When Jesus Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation, the nations of the world will have gathered around Jerusalem and attacked it. In

response Jesus will come back to Earth, destroy those nations, and put an end to all those who threatened Israel. To put it another way, at the Second Coming Jesus returns *to defend Jerusalem on Israel's behalf*. He comes back so He can (among other things) *personally* kill all those who have dared to come against Israel and take what God has given to her.

God makes one point very clear: the land of Israel belongs to the Jews, and God gets *very upset* when people try to take that land away from her. The Lord said “He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye”, and He meant it. In fact, the day will come when God will get so upset at what people are doing to Israel that He will return *in person* with the armies of Heaven in order to destroy all those that have come against her. (You *know* a nation has crossed the line in a big way when God leaves Heaven so He can *personally* destroy it!)

The point I'm trying to make is that taking land away from Israel is a *really big deal* in God's sight. He hates it. He gave that land to Israel and it belongs to them. Those who try to take it away from her do so at their peril.

This peril is not merely theoretical. I believe that God has actively pursued what He said in Genesis 12:3 throughout history. Those nations that have blessed Israel have been blessed, and those nations that have cursed Israel (or have tried to take away her land) have been cursed.

For example:

October 30, 1991: President Bush announced a new Middle East peace plan, in which Israel would be forced to surrender parts of its land in return for peace – including parts of Jerusalem.

October 30, 1991: A powerful storm suddenly developed off the coast of Nova Scotia, which quickly reached hurricane strength. The next day the storm (which by now was hundreds of miles wide) smashed into New England, then traveled down the East

Coast into the Carolinas. It caused millions of dollars in damage and was nicknamed “The Perfect Storm”. (The storm was so significant that a book and a movie were written about it, both named *The Perfect Storm*.)

President Bush owned a home in Kennebunkport, Maine, that was heavily damaged in the storm. The storm hit his home on the same day that the President initiated the Madrid Peace Conference, in which Israel was pressured to give up land.

August 24, 1992: The Madrid Peace Conference was moved to Washington, D.C., making it the first time that conference was held on American soil. Not only was Israel going to be pressured into giving up more land, but the Palestinians were going to be governing the land that Israel would have to give up.

August 24, 1992: Hurricane Andrew hit Florida and became the worst natural disaster ever hit to America (up to that time). \$30 billion in damage was done. The hurricane struck just a few hours before the Madrid peace conference began.

September 13, 1993: In Washington, DC Israel signed an agreement with Yasser Arafat, surrendering Gaza, Jericho, and the West Bank to Palestinians.

September 13, 1993: Hurricane Emily hit North Carolina, doing \$1 billion in damage.

January 16, 1994: President Clinton met with Syria's dictator, President Hafez Assad. They talk about making peace with Israel, and the agreement they came up with included Israel surrendering the Golan Heights to Syria.

January 17, 1994: A 6.8 magnitude earthquake hit Los Angeles, causing \$25 billion in damage. This happened less than 24 hours after President Clinton pressured Israel to give up more land.

September 27, 1998: Secretary of State Madeline Albright met with Arafat in New York City, to finalize an agreement in which Israel would surrender 13% of its land in exchange for peace.

September 27, 1998: Hurricane Georges hit the Gulf Coast, doing extensive damage to Mississippi and Florida. The hurricane then stalled, causing severe flooding. The total damage came to \$5.9 billion.

There are many more examples I could give, but in the interest of time I'll limit it to one more. In April 2005 President Bush met with Israeli Prime Minister Sharon in order to set a timetable for Israel's withdrawal from 25 Jewish settlements. The process was started on August 16 and was completed on **August 23, 2005**. Approximately ten thousand Jews were forcibly evicted from their land. The reason this happened is because President Bush put enormous pressure on Israel to evict them and give that land to the Palestinians. In fact, the United States offered to give Israel \$1.2 billion in order to relocate the settlers. (In other words, the United States was actually *paying the bill* to make this happen.) This was the first step in evicting all Jews from Gaza in order to further Bush's plan to establish a Palestinian state.

The eviction of these settlers was not a minor task. Thousands of people lived there. The area was a major agricultural center of Israel and produced about 15% of Israel's vegetables. It took 40,000 troops to force the settlers to leave. After they were evicted the army demolished their homes and destroyed their settlements. The last settler was removed on

August 23, and on that date President Bush praised Prime Minister Sharon for his “courageous decision to withdraw from Gaza and parts of the West Bank.”

One might ask: what else happened on **August 23, 2005**? A tropical depression formed over the Bahamas, which grew into Hurricane Katrina. I don't think I have to tell you what happened when Hurricane Katrina hit the United States. The total damages from that storm came to a staggering \$81 billion.

Some might say that it's just a coincidence that every time America forces Israel to give up her land, something terrible happens. If so, it's really an amazing string of coincidences! This phenomenon doesn't just apply to the United States; it can also be seen in other countries. For example:

March 9, 2011: Japan announces that they are sending the Palestinians millions of dollars so that they can create a state with Jerusalem as its capitol. (To do this, of course, Jerusalem will have to be taken away from the Jews.)

March 11, 2011: Japan is hit by a 9.0 magnitude earthquake – the worst it has ever experienced in its history. The damage from that earthquake was estimated to be \$300 billion.

July 21, 2011: Norway's prime minister goes to an island that is home to a youth camp. He announces that Norway is going to support a Palestinian state and will help the Palestinians take land away from Israel. The youth in the camp are excited about this and shout that they, too, want to help destroy Israel.

July 22, 2011: Anders Breivik just happens to travel to that very same island in Norway and just happens to open fire on those very same young people. 69 people are killed and 110 are

injured. It was the deadliest attack in Norway since World War II. 25% of Norwegians knew someone who was affected by the attacks.

If all of this is just a coincidence then it's the most amazing set of coincidences in history. These things happen like clockwork: whenever a nation decides that it's going to try to take away Israel's land, something bad happens to them. You don't have to take my word for it, though: just wait until the next time the President tries to force Israel to give away her land to her enemies, and see what happens.

I believe that God is fulfilling His promise to trouble those who trouble Israel, and I think this phenomenon will continue to occur. As America and other nations continue to force Israel to give up her land, you can expect even more breathtaking disasters. God is not a respecter of persons.

Now, I am *not* saying that every natural disaster that happens is God's punishment. There are many things that happen simply because we live in a fallen world. However, God has been known to judge nations that have transgressed His laws (remember Sodom and Gomorrah?), and I believe He continues to do so today. After all, *God does not change*. I think it is incredibly foolish to say "Sure, God used to judge nations and destroy them because of their sin, but God's gotten over that. He now gives nations a free pass to do whatever they want. There's no reason to be concerned about judgment or any of that nonsense. God would never punish a nation."

The final judgment, though, is still ahead of us. One day the nations of the world will gather against Jerusalem in order to destroy her and her people. They will think they have won, but Jesus will suddenly return in person and destroy them all. He will put a final end to all those who seek to trouble His people.