

The Tale of Two Jerusalems

Rebuttal

Tim Warner 08-07-2003

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Frost's First Argument - Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled

By showing a couple of Old Testament prophecies applied to New Testament times, Frost wants you to assume that all the prophecies of Israel's restoration refer allegorically to the events of Paul's day through AD70. He boldly proclaims, *"There is no way around this conclusion."* Frost has the Kingdom of God coming in AD70, in some mystical way, and not according to the literal details of the biblical prophecies, with no future for the nation of Israel after AD70.

Frost's Proof Text for a Fulfilled "Restoration of Israel"

Frost cited Isaiah 49:6, quoted by Paul in Acts 13:47, as proof that Israel's restoration was occurring then. He implied that nothing remained to be fulfilled after AD70.

Isaiah 49 was written as though **Jacob** (Israel) was speaking to the Gentile nations. *"Listen, **O isles**, unto me; and hearken, **ye people, from far**; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; And said unto me, **Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.**"* (vss. 1-3). Here, Jacob (Israel) declares to the Gentiles God's purpose for calling him. Jacob continues, *"Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God. And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring **Jacob** again to him, Though **Israel** be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength"* (v. 4-5). This is God's promise of Jacob's ultimate triumph and restoration of his offspring — the twelve tribes.

*"And he said, It is a light thing that thou [Jacob] shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore **the preserved of Israel**: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth"* (vs. 6). Notice the speaker is still Israel. That is, Jacob is speaking of himself and his entire offspring, the whole nation of Israel. Surely Paul's Jewish hearers understood the context. Paul said, *"For so hath **the Lord commanded us** [Israel], saying, 'I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth'"* (Acts 13:47). "Us" is the tribes of Israel, who were supposed to be the light to the Gentiles. But, his Jewish audience wanted no part of the Gospel Israel was supposed to preach to the Gentiles! Paul indicated that he and Barnabas were going to do what God had commanded Israel to do. Paul was placing himself and Barnabas among **"the preserved of Israel"** (a sub group within the nation of Israel) while leaving his unbelieving Jewish hearers outside the preserved remnant of Israel. The *"preserved of*

Israel" are the Messianic Jewish believers who were preserved from Israel's judgment in AD70.

Isaiah continues: *"Thus saith the LORD, In an **acceptable time have I heard thee** [past tense], and in a **day of salvation have I helped thee** [past tense]: and **I will preserve thee** [future tense], and **give thee** [future tense] for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages"* (v. 8). Note the shift in verb tense. The **"day of salvation"** is clearly distinguished in time from Israel's ultimate future destiny by this shift in verb tense. Paul quoted only the first part of the verse, and identified the **"day of salvation"** with his time. Paul wrote, *"For he saith, 'I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the **day of salvation have I succoured thee:**' behold, **now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation**"* (2 Cor. 6:2). Paul applied only the first part of the verse (written in the past tense) to his day. Therefore, the portion of this verse that relates to Israel's future glorious destiny is left by Paul for a future fulfillment.

Isaiah continued by referring to Jerusalem's impending destruction in AD70. *"But Zion [Jerusalem] said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me"* (v. 14). Surely this verse finds its ultimate fulfillment with the Jewish diaspora, and Jerusalem's being trodden down by the Gentiles (Luke 21:24). Yet, God replies to Jerusalem, *"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; **thy walls** are continually before me."* The time of her desolation began in AD70, and continues to this day. But, it will be followed by the nation's total restoration, and realization of the future glorious hope. God has not forgotten her, or the covenant He made with the patriarchs. *"Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee. Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth. For thy waste and thy desolate places, and **the land of thy destruction**, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away"* (vss. 17-18). This refers to the final restoration of Israel AFTER its desolation by the Romans. The same nation that was left desolate, will one day be completely restored. *"But thus saith the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob"* (vss. 25-26). The same Jewish nation, to whom the *"preserved"* remnant belongs, to whom *"the land of thy destruction"* belongs, is the very nation that will ultimately be restored.

Aside from Frost's completely missing Paul's point by citing Isaiah. 49:6, there are several other problems with his overall interpretation.

Problem #1. First Exile & Restoration Gives the Pattern for the Second
The Old Testament prophets spoke of two major exiles and restorations of Israel: after

the Babylonian captivity, and after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. Of the **FIRST exile**, Jeremiah prophesied that Israel would be restored to her land seventy years after being exiled to Babylon. *"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. ... 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."* (Jer. 29:10,14). The literal fulfillment of prophecies about Israel's first exile and restoration prove that "restoration" and "regathering" prophecies were meant to be taken literally.

The **SECOND exile** occurred in AD70 (Isa. 28:13-20, Dan. 9:26, Luke 21:20-24), to be followed by another regathering of Israel **"the second time."** (Isaiah 11:11). Jesus had the SECOND regathering and this very passage in mind in His Olivet Discourse.

Isaiah	Jesus
<p><i>"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again <u>the second time</u> 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. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and <u>gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth</u>" (Isaiah 11:11-12).</i></p>	<p><i>"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall <u>gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven</u>" (Mark 13:24-27).</i></p>

This SECOND regathering to the land God promised Abraham and his seed would be PERMANENT (Isaiah 62, Acts 3:21). **The fulfillment of the first return and restoration establishes how we should interpret prophecies of the second restoration and regathering of Israel – literally.**

Problem #2. Jewish "Enemies" of the Gospel are still "Beloved" and will be Restored

Paul explained, in Romans 11, that most of the branches of the "Olive Tree" (unbelieving Jews) had been broken off from the Abrahamic Covenant. The Gentiles were grafted into the Abrahamic blessing, through their acceptance of the Gospel. Paul wrote that the greater part of Israel was blinded in order for the Gentiles to be saved. Once the "fullness of the Gentiles" have come into the Abrahamic blessing, "all Israel will be saved," and many broken off branches would be grafted back (restoration of Israel). Even though the unbelieving Jewish nation was currently the enemy of the Gospel, the nation was "beloved" for the sake of the patriarchs. That the very same physical nation

of Israel, that rejected the Gospel in Paul's day, will be restored, proves Frost's argument wrong.

Problem #3. Jerusalem's Temporary Desolation

The **temporary** desolation of Jerusalem, and diaspora of the Jewish nation, was prophesied by Jesus in Luke 21:20-24. But, Jesus put a time limit on Jerusalem's second desolation, "**until** the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Christ's Kingdom would come afterwards (vs. 31), (see also Matt. 23:38). Paul had the same interval in mind in Romans 11. Speaking of Israel's temporary blindness, and eventual restoration, Paul quoted Isaiah in his argument for Israel's future national restoration.

Isaiah	Paul
<p><i>And the deliverer shall come for Sion's sake, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And this shall be my covenant with them, said the Lord; [when I shall have taken away his sin*.] My Spirit which is upon thee, and the words which I have put in thy mouth, shall never fail from thy mouth, nor from the mouth of thy seed, for the Lord has spoken it, henceforth and for ever. Be enlightened, be enlightened, O Jerusalem, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. Behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and there shall be gross darkness on the nations: but the Lords shall appear upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And kings shall walk in thy light, and nations in thy brightness. Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold thy children gathered: all thy sons have come from far, and thy daughters shall be borne on men's shoulders. ... The isles have waited for me, and the ships of Tharsis among the first, to bring thy children from afar, and their silver and their gold with them, and that for the sake of the holy name of the Lord, and because the Holy One of Israel is glorified. And strangers shall build thy walls, and their kings shall wait upon thee: for by reason of my wrath I smote thee, and by reason of mercy I loved thee. And thy gates shall be opened continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; to bring in to thee the power of the Gentiles, and their kings as captives. For the nations and the kings which will not serve thee shall perish; and those nations shall be made utterly desolate." (Isaiah 59:20- 60:12, *Isa. 27:6 LXX)</i></p>	<p><i>"For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Rom 11:24-29)</i></p>

According to the context of Paul's quotation of Isaiah, fulfillment of Israel's restoration is after her period of national blindness. While both Paul and his readers knew that Jerusalem's judgment was impending according to Jesus' prophecy as well as Old Testament prophecy, he also knew that this same nation and city were destined for total restoration by God after the "*times of the Gentiles be fulfilled,*" and when the "*fullness of the Gentiles be come in.*" These are the same Jews who were enemies of the Gospel in Paul's day.

Problem #4. Geographical Features

Some prophecies of Israel's second restoration refer to known geographical features. Ezekiel 47 prophesies of a river flowing from beneath the Temple down into the Dead Sea. This water will heal the Dead Sea, except the "marshes." Zechariah 14 indicates that the Mount of Olives will split into two parts when the Lord comes with "*all the saints with Thee.*" "*His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives,*" which will split in two, creating a great valley (Zech. 14:4). This new valley will also form the path for the river to flow from the Temple down to the Dead Sea, currently blocked by the Mount of Olives (cf. Ezek. 47 & Zech. 14:8).

Problem #5. The Inheritance on Earth

The Kingdom, which the saints are to inherit, is the restored earth. (cf. Psalm 37:9,11,18,28-29,34, Dan. 7:18,22, esp. vs. 27). Jesus quoted Psalm. 37:11 in Matt. 5:5, "*the meek shall inherit the earth.*" The Lord's Prayer has in view the coming of the Kingdom to earth with the words, "*thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,*" something not yet realized to this day. The promises in Revelation also entail God's coming to earth to dwell with men. "*And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, **the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God***" (Rev. 21:3).

Problem #6. Relative Timing of Christ's Kingdom

Nebuchadnezzar's dream identifies the time of Christ's coming Kingdom relative to the sequence of Gentile kingdoms, destroying the last kingdom represented by the ten toes. The legs of iron represent the Roman Empire, which was divided into the eastern and western "*legs*" long after the destruction of Jerusalem. Yet, Christ's Kingdom does not come until after the Roman Empire is replaced by the ten King reigning simultaneously. "*In the days of these [10] kings*" the God of heaven will set up His Kingdom (Dan. 2:42-45). Frost's preterist view has the Kingdom of God coming 250 years before the Roman Empire was divided between east and west, nevermind being superseded by the 10 kings.

The Two Jerusalems

Sensing that prophecies of Israel's complete restoration hardly seem fulfilled by its destruction in AD70, Frost calls on Paul to rescue his interpretation. He claims Paul was addressing this very objection in Gal. 4. In Frost's thinking, this passage removes the promises from the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem. But, nothing in the context suggests such a thing. Paul did not intend to transfer the fulfillment of the promises for Jerusalem and the Jewish people to the "*heavenly Jerusalem*" and another entity called

"*spiritual Israel.*" Paul was contrasting ORIGINS, not DESTINIES, in this allegory.

Ishmael	Isaac
Ishmael represents unbelieving Israel, clinging to the Mosaic covenant and rejecting the New Covenant.	Isaac represents the believing Remnant, who received Christ and the New Covenant.
Ishmael was born in the "ordinary way" the son of the slave woman (Hagar). Hagar corresponds to the Jerusalem built by men. Therefore, unbelieving Israel is the son of the natural "Jerusalem" built by men, and under the control of unbelieving men.	Isaac was born in a supernatural way, the son of the free woman (Sarah), according to God's promise. Sarah corresponds to the Jerusalem built by God. Therefore, the believing Remnant is the offspring of the "Jerusalem" of promise, built by God.

Even IF this passage was referring to fulfillment of the promises rather than the origins of two peoples, it does not suggest what Frost claims. The New Jerusalem is coming to EARTH in the age to come (Rev. 21:10). There is no reason to suppose that this allegory overturns the prophecies of Israel's restoration to the land. "*For here have we no continuing city, but **we seek one to come***" (Heb. 13:14).

"Spiritual" Fulfillment

Frost next seeks help from Rom. 15:27, claiming that Israel's blessings are "*spiritual.*" By "*spiritual*" he means they are not tangible. But, "*spiritual*" does not equate with non tangible in the Bible. It merely means things of the Spirit of God as opposed to the things of fallen man. A true believer is called a "*spiritual*" man, yet he does not become a phantom or ghost (1 Cor. 2:15, Gal. 6:1). "*Spiritual*" has nothing to do with being tangible or intangible.

The Hope of the Patriarchs

Next, Frost turns to Hebrews 11, claiming that "*God ... restored Israel and the Gentiles ... to her heavenly land' (Heb 11.16). Abraham was not looking for dirt, but a heavenly country (Heb 11.16).*" But, what land did God really promise Abraham? Was it not the land as far as his eyes could see (Gen. 13:14-17)? Did Abraham view some cosmic dimension when God told him to observe his future inheritance? Hardly! "*By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out **into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance**, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith **he sojourned in the land of promise**, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God*" (Heb. 11:8-10). Notice the nature of Abraham's inheritance! He left Ur, in order to seek out and dwell within his future inheritance as a stranger and pilgrim. Abraham LIVED in the very land that afterward would be the inheritance of his seed forever, even though the land was devoid of that great city, for which Abraham also looked, the city John tells us will come down from God out of heaven. In citing verse 16, Frost uses the term "*a better*

country" referring to something *"better than dirt"* promised Abraham in Genesis, some sort of mystical cosmic reality. But, in the context, *"a better [heavenly] country"* is contrasted with the country Abraham left (Ur), NOT with the land of Canaan where he went to see the location of his future inheritance. The word, *"heavenly"* is not a noun here, but a descriptive adjective, describing the land once the final fulfillment comes. Abraham left Ur at God's command, seeking a better (heavenly) country, and then dwelling in that country as a pilgrim and stranger, looking forward to the time when the city built by God would grace the landscape.

This is the promise all the patriarchs laid hold of by faith, yet they *"did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us"* (Heb. 11:39-40). The patriarchs and the Jewish readers of Hebrews would realize their common hope together. After all, God promised Abraham, ***"For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever"*** (Gen 13:15). How could Abraham enjoy forever that land he saw, unless he was raised to live in it forever? If Frost is correct, God lied to Abraham, and all the patriarchs in vain placed their faith in the promise of God!

Conclusion

To Frost, the destruction of Jerusalem was Israel's *"restoration,"* by bringing an end to the jurisdiction of the Law. But, Paul stated repeatedly that Christ already brought the Law to its intended conclusion. After Christ came, Israel was no longer under the old tutor (Gal. 3:19,24-25). The coming of the New Covenant made the Law of Moses obsolete (Heb. 8:6-13). Suggesting that the Law still had jurisdiction until AD70 greatly diminishes the Gospel.