

Our Redeemer Comes

Key Verse: *“The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.”*
—Isaiah 59:20

Selected Scripture:
Isaiah 59:15-21

DURING OLD TESTAMENT times, the Scriptures reveal that the nation of Israel was especially favored to receive God’s blessings based upon obedience to his laws. In view of her misconduct and failure to reverence the Heavenly Father, Israel was punished severely, being afflicted by her enemies several times until God raised up judges to deliver her from these adver-

saries. She later experienced subjection to Gentile dominion beginning with Babylon for several centuries.

Finally, the Jewish people were dispersed into foreign lands when Jerusalem was besieged and their Temple destroyed in the first century A.D. God, through the Prophet Amos, had said, “Hear this word that the LORD hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.”—Amos 3:1,2

The Book of Isaiah contains many prophecies detailing God’s judgments upon Israel, but additionally it foretells her repentance and restoration during the future kingdom under the dominion of Jesus Christ, her Messiah. During Isaiah’s ministry, he confessed Israel’s sins as though they were his own, acknowledging the

people's injustice, unrighteousness, blindness, rebellion, and persistent lying. (Isa. 59:9-15) It is well to note that because of sin, that which is true of Israel also applies to the entire human race.—Rom. 3:23

From the divine perspective, there was no sinner on earth who could intercede on Israel's behalf to ransom that nation. Nevertheless, our merciful Heavenly Father provided the means whereby Israel and all of fallen humanity could be recovered from depravity and death. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16

With reference to the mechanism whereby sin and injustice will be removed, the "arm" of God, in the person of Christ Jesus, is pictured as a warrior who will wear "righteousness as a breastplate," a "helmet of salvation," and "garments of vengeance" to eradicate evil prior to the kingdom of blessings and peace during Messiah's reign. Although Israel as a whole rejected Christ during his earthly ministry and has been persecuted by Gentile enemies since that time, the Scriptures give assurance that they will be delivered from peril as a result of repentance and acknowledgement of Christ Jesus as their Savior and Redeemer.—Isa. 59:16-19

Our Key Verse affirms Israel's restoration to God's favor when the New Covenant is in operation and God's Spirit is poured out upon all flesh. Associated with Christ in this work of blessing Israel and other willing and obedient members of the human family will be the church, who will reign with the Lord in establishing a government of righteousness.

What a blessed privilege it is for us as footstep followers of the Master to realize that faithfulness to God during our present Christian sojourn will enable us to participate in this wonderful program of eradicating the evil that has plagued mankind since Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden. ■