

WAITING FOR THE END OF THE SONG

A Devotional Meditation on HA'AZINU (GIVE EAR)

Deuteronomy 32:1-52; Hosea 14:1-9; Joel 2:15-27; Micah 7:18-20;
Isaiah 45:11-13; Daniel 12:5-13; Acts 1:6-8; Revelation 15:2-4

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Have we arrived at the time when we can begin to know the things hidden until the end of days?

Two witnesses in scripture tell us we aren't supposed to know everything about God's final moves to judge evil and establish his Kingdom on earth until a set time. One is Messiah Yeshua. When his disciples asked him just before his ascension whether he would at that time restore the Kingdom to Israel, he told them they didn't need to know that but instead should focus on the task at hand. As he said,



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It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Acts 1:7-8 ESV

The second witness is Daniel. After receiving a vision of the end of days, he was told that the meaning of the vision was sealed until the time of the end. He, like Yeshua's disciples, was told to remain faithful in the work he had been given. That's one way to understand the message Daniel received:

Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. Many shall purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the wicked shall act wickedly. And none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand. . . But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days.

Daniel 12:9-13 ESV

We learn from these witnesses that it's more important to be faithful and obedient to God than to try to figure out what's going to happen beyond the horizon. That doesn't mean we can't ask. That's what we learn from Isaiah:

Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and the one who formed him: "Ask me of things to come; will you command me concerning my children and the work of my hands? I made the earth and created man on it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host. I have stirred him up in righteousness, and I will make all his ways level; he shall build my city and set my exiles free, not for price or reward," says the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 45:11-13 ESV

This describes the story of Job, the righteous man who asserted his authority to question God because of his relationship with the Creator. When God appeared and revealed his glory, Job didn't get all the answers to his questions, but he did get unprecedented understanding about the greatness of the Creator and his own smallness in comparison. He learned what God explained to Isaiah: that God's people have the standing to ask about their future, but he has the final word and will not change his will to fit our preferences.

In the end, God will save his people. In this passage from Isaiah, he is speaking of King Cyrus of Persia, the man who decreed the end of the exile in Babylon for the Jewish remnant of Israel. Cyrus was a type of Messiah in that sense. The Messiah will decree and bring about the end of the exile and the restoration of all Israel, which is what the disciples were hoping Yeshua would do in their day.

What would the Lord say if we ask if he will restore the Kingdom to Israel in our day? Is there a way we can know if the time has come for the meaning of Daniel's vision to be unsealed?

One answer is in the Torah Awakening among Christians. Through that awakening, we now realize that those who pledge allegiance to Israel's Messiah are adopted into God's Covenant Nation of Israel. Instead of replacing the native-born Jewish remnant, we somehow join with them in the promised extension of Israel into all nations. That's how we join the holy people of God.

With that in mind, consider this word given to Daniel about the end of days:

And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream; he raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven and swore by him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be finished.

Daniel 12:7 ESV

This is an echo from the Song of Moses, one of two songs the saints of God are to sing as the final judgments come upon the earth. The climax of that song says:

For the LORD will vindicate his people
and have compassion on his servants,
when he sees that their power is gone
and there is none remaining, bond or free.

Deuteronomy 32:36 ESV

Now that we know Israel's history is our collective history, we can make a few observations. First, the Song of Moses explains how God remains faithful to Israel even though they stray from him and walk out of his Covenant. Second, judgement comes first on the household of God, which not only removes the rebellious elements, but also refines the faithful. And third, we won't see the final redemption until we come to the end of our efforts to live in peace and safety by our own strength and righteousness.

That isn't a bad thing. It's what all creation has been waiting for since the beginning.