

A Messianic Perspective on the Restoration of David's Tabernacle

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A teaching called 'The Restoration of David's Tabernacle' (*RDT*) is becoming popular among some charismatic streams of the body of Messiah. This teaching focuses on continual (or '24/7') intercessory prayer and prophetic worship in the spirit of King David. God is using this movement to restore ancient weapons of prayer and renewed gifts of prophetic worship to the body worldwide. The Lord Himself is raising up a standard of prayer and praise in response to an encroaching wave of darkness and evil.

Some Messianic Jewish believers, however, are troubled by this new movement's use of the term 'David's Tabernacle'. Whereas the Bible uses the term 'David's Tabernacle' and its restoration in a specific Jewish context, some in the RDT movement (*RDTM*) tend to ignore this context. The result is that some scriptures are being handled incorrectly, and some incorrect foundations are being laid. Though this prayer movement is good and is of God, its misuse of the term 'the restoration of David's Tabernacle' is causing stumbling blocks for the Messianic Jewish community. It is also obscuring a central biblical truth for the whole body of Messiah – the governmental restoration of David's international rule as part of Jewish restoration. In addition, it is using Scriptures in a way commonly associated with Replacement theology.

So this paper is a suggested corrective to the RDTM. It is also an appeal to wider charismatic streams in the body of Messiah to investigate the biblical and contextual use of the term 'David's Tabernacle' in Amos and Acts – a hope umbilically connected to the Jewish people's full physical and spiritual restoration. For how can a Davidic King be restored to the earth without Him reigning over His original Jewish subjects?

I express my appreciation for the many intercessors (prophetic and otherwise) who are laboring with a whole heart for the restoration of prophetic worship and God-breathed intercession in the body of Messiah – in the RDTM and apart from it. Your work is deeply needed and much appreciated. My hope is that leaders in the RDTM will be able to bring biblical correction regarding the misuse of the term 'the restoration of David's tabernacle'. The result would bring greater blessing and clarity to the whole body of Messiah. It would also bring the heart of your movement closer in line with the priority of God's heart – the restoration of "the apple of His eye", Jacob's children (see *Psa.148:14; Zech.2:8; cf., Deut.32:8-11; Rom.1:16; 2:5-11; 3:1-2; 11:11-15*).

I. What's In A Name?

The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew. Though modern translations are highly accurate, sometimes mistranslations and misunderstandings do occur. Occasionally some Bible students draw unusual conclusions and are certain that God backs up their findings, even when the meaning of the original language leads in a different direction. Many such problems can be resolved by consulting the original Hebrew language. The term 'tabernacle of David' is such an example, and this is one controversy that can probably be resolved fairly quickly, and with more light than heat.

There are various words in Hebrew for a religious shrine. *Ohel mo'ed* is one term, meaning a tent of meeting. *Ohel ha'edut* means a tent of testimony. *Mishkan* is another, meaning a dwelling place, where God dwells. *Heichal* is another word, signifying palace or temple. *Mikdash* is a word which means holy place or sanctuary. *Dvir* is a holy innermost room, and *kodesh hakodashim* means the holiest area, the holy of the holies. Interestingly, none of these words is used by Amos (9:11) when he prophesies about the 'tabernacle of David'.

Let's take a look at the word used in Amos 9:11. The Hebrew text reads: "*Bayom hahu akim et sukkat David hanofelet, v'gadarti et pirtzeihen. Vaharisotav akim uv'nitiha k'yemei olam*". The literal translation is as follows: "In that day I will raise up the **sukka** (*feminine*) of David, the fallen one (*feminine, referring to sukka*). I will fence over its broken-through areas. Its destroyed areas I will raise up and I will rebuild her, as in ancient days."

Amos prophesies under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and uses the word **sukka**. This Hebrew word is mistakenly translated as 'tabernacle' in the King James: "In that day I will raise up the **tabernacle** of David which is fallen". The New American translates the word as 'booth', while the New International Version uses the word 'tent'. What does the Hebrew word really mean?

The Hebrew word **sukka** (plural, **sukkot**) comes from the root *s-kh-kh* (*samech, khaf, khaf*) or '*sachach*'. The verb means to weave things together, specifically vegetable matter (like boughs, fronds, willow or palm branches, etc.). It is a rough word, used to describe rude cattle pens in the field as in Gen.33:17: "Jacob, however, went to Sukkot, where he built a place for himself and made shelters (**sukkot**) for his livestock. Therefore he called the name of the place '**Sukkot**'".

The prophet Jonah built himself a *sukka* as he waited for Nineveh to be zapped by God's wrath. "Jonah went out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter (*sukka*), sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city" (*Jonah 4:5*). During the revival under Nehemiah and Ezra, the Jewish people returning from Babylon to Judah heard the scriptures commanding them to dwell in makeshift shanties: "'Go out into the hill country and bring back branches from olive and wild olive tress, and from myrtles, palms and shade trees, to make *sukkot*, as it is written'. So the people went out and brought back branches and built themselves *sukkot* on their own roofs, in their courtyards, in the courts of the house of God and in the square by the Water Gate and the one by the Gate of Ephraim" (*Neh.8:15-16*).

Every Jewish child in Bible days knew what a *sukka* was, just as every Israeli child can immediately recognize a *sukka* today. It is a ramshackle shanty, a temporary shack covered with thatch, thrown together for a few days during the Feast of Booths (*Hag HaSukkot* in Hebrew). It is altogether lacking the mystique, the romance, the incense, the sound of Middle Eastern bells tolling in the background – that the word 'tabernacle' tends to conjure up for some Western ears, and especially for those in the RDTM. So why did Amos use this unrefined word *sukka*?

Before this question can be answered, we need to first lay some historical foundation about God's royal promises to David, and how that dynasty later fell upon hard times.

II. I have sworn to David My servant

When God established His covenant with King David (*2 Sam.7; 1Chron.17; Psa.89*), He promised him many things. Some of these promises have been fulfilled, and some of these promises will be fulfilled in the near future. Though many Christians like to focus exclusively on Messiah Jesus as the only important point of the Davidic covenant, YHVH writes specific Jewish national promises into the clauses of the Davidic covenant. Some of these blessings for the Jewish nation include everlasting peace for the Jewish people, the destruction of all of Israel's enemies, and the exclusive and eternal possession of the entire land of Israel by the people of Israel (see *2 Sam. 7:10; 1Chron.17:9-10*).

The interesting point here is this: God has strategically promised future physical blessings for the nation of Israel in the Davidic covenant. The restoration of the

physical Jewish people is part of the irrevocable gifts and calling listed in Rom. 9:1-5 and 11:28-29. Therefore we Bible believers should be eagerly expecting full national Jewish restoration, especially as some streams in the Body of Messiah get interested in Davidic restoration.

The God of Israel promised three blessings to David personally – a royal house or dynasty of his own (the House of David, Israel’s ongoing Jewish royal family; see *2 Sam.7:11-13*), the international reign of David’s descendants (*Psa.89:20-27*), and the eternal reign of David’s descendants (see *2 Sam. 7:13,16, 19,25-26; Jer.33:17; Psa.89:4,29,34-37*).

Some believers have never considered these aspects of the Davidic covenant. They have been content to simply remember that Jesus is David’s Greater Son. Many Gentile believers have not had much love for or interest in the Jewish people. When these Christians have stumbled over those aspects of the Davidic covenant which concern the Jews, many have been only too happy to look the other way. One of the reasons that God is raising the subject of the Davidic covenant at such a time as this, is to get His Church to wrestle with His heart and their own hearts concerning the Jewish implications and ramifications of Davidic restoration.

III. United we stand, divided we fall

The glory of David’s reign was a high point in Israel’s history. Different psalmists describe the dazzling splendor of the royal palaces in Davidic Jerusalem. These are described in Psalms 48:3,12-13; 122:3,7 and 1 Kings 7:1-12. In King Solomon’s day Jerusalem was world renowned for its riches and wealth (see *1 Kings 4:20-34;10:14-29*). The Queen of Sheba (present day Aden/Yemen/Hadrama’ut) traveled across deserts and mountains to see the glory of the House of David. When Amos 9:11 says that the splendor of David’s House will be restored to what it was “in ancient days”, it is worth it to take a few minutes and read the above descriptions, savoring the beauty and sweetness of the restoration that is to come.

Yet the glory of David’s reign was also marred by personal sin. David’s worship and prayer brought forth many psalms and much impassioned worship, but his lust brought forth murder, breaking down the hedges of protection for his own family. Though YHVH forgave David’s sins (*Psa.32:1-2*), David’s own children engaged in similar sins, whether it was sexual sin (the rape of Tamar) or the shedding of blood (Amnon’s assassination). Even David’s

beloved son Absalom rebelled against his own father, spreading rebellion and bloodshed throughout the land.

David's chosen son Solomon (whose Hebrew name *Sh'lomo* means 'in him is peace'; *1Chron.22:9*) continued his father's rule in great splendor, but gradually turned away from intimacy with God, building a harem of over one thousand sexual partners and constructing pagan shrines to demons (*1Ki.11:1-7*). As a result YHVH became angry with Solomon, and promised to tear most of the kingdom away from Judah. The Lord prophesied that one day ten of the twelve tribes would rebel against Solomon's descendants, though two tribes would remain loyal (see *1Ki. 11:9-13; 11:26-40*). The splendid House of David would soon be struck by rebellion, desertion and limited destruction.

This prophetic word came to pass when Solomon's son Rehoboam ascended to the throne. His arrogant blustering alienated the heart of the Jewish people. Jeroboam son of Nebat led the ten tribes of Israel in revolt against the Davidic dynasty with the following declaration: "What share do we have in David, and what part in Jesse's son? To your tents, O Israel! Look after your own house, O David! . . . So Israel has been in rebellion against the House of David to this day" (*1Ki.12:16,19*).

It is essential to note that, when Messiah Yeshua was rejected by the leaders of Israel, these leaders were following in the footsteps of their ancestors. Jewish people who had rebelled against David's dynasty in 1 Kings 12 had given birth to subsequent generations – who were now rebelling against Messiah Son of David in the flesh! One of the keys to the true restoration of the tabernacle/*sukka* of David, is for the Church to intercede for Israel – that the Jewish leadership and nation will repent for the sins of previous generations, and turn away from their rebellion against the House of David and Yeshua the Messiah of Israel. The following scriptures can be of help in guiding intercession for this burden: *Zech.12:7-13:1; Hos.3:4-5; Ezek.20: 32-44; Matt.23:37-39*.

Cracks had appeared in the Davidic skyscraper, and the mighty dynasty of David was now crumbling. The House of David now ruled over only one-sixth of the Jewish people. The psalmist Ethan would write, "You have rejected, You have spurned, You have been very angry with Your anointed one, You ... have defiled his crown in the dust. You have broken through all his walls and reduced his strongholds to ruins . . . You have put an end to his splendor and cast his throne to the ground . . . How long, O Lord? . . . Where is Your former

great love which in Your faithfulness You swore to David?" (*Psa.89:38-40,44,46,49*).

God judged Israel's rebellion against David by exiling them to Assyria, and Judah's apostasy would be judged by exile to Babylon. Even the House of David would be scattered among the nations. The splendid House of David was about to come crashing down.

IV. Sukka - a biblical sign of destruction

We now come back to the question at the end of section two: why did Amos choose the rough word *sukka* to describe the condition of David's House? We turn to Isaiah the prophet to gain depth and insight on this point.

Isaiah prophesied in Isa.1:7-8 that the Jewish people would suffer body blows of invasion and destruction. During the coming Babylonian invasion Jerusalem would be sacked and the Temple of Solomon would be razed to its foundations. Isaiah depicted this destruction in agonizing words: "Your country is desolate, your cities burned with fire. Your fields are being stripped by foreigners right before you, laid waste as when overthrown by strangers. The Daughter of Zion is left like a *sukka* in a vineyard, like a hut in a field of melons, like a city under siege."

Isaiah is saying this: the Jewish people were about to suffer the destruction of their capital city, their Temple and their Davidic king, and they would be left homeless and hopeless. Instead of living in palaces and fancy houses, their condition would be more like that of a poor farmer, who lives in a *sukka* during the days of the grape harvest so that no one will steal his hard-earned crops at night. The nobility of Jerusalem would be transformed into peasants in field shacks – that was Isaiah's prophecy over his beloved Jewish people.

This explanation allows the reader to sense the horror that a native Hebrew speaker would have associated with the way Isaiah used the word *sukka*. It was not a romantic or restorationist word. It was a promise of destruction and humiliation. That is the meaning of this Hebrew term in context. That is also the background to Amos' use of the term in Amos 9:11, as we shall see.

V. The Stump of Hope

Isaiah continues to prophesy about the destruction facing the Jewish people in 5:1-5, comparing Israel to a connoisseur's vineyard about to be laid waste. In Isaiah 6:11-13 the Lord prophesies two things – destruction over the land of Judah and exile for the people themselves. Ruined fields, deserted houses, uninhabited cities – this is what the Jewish people had to look forward to. But then all of a sudden Isaiah offers a gleam of hope. “But like the terebinth tree and the oak which, after being cut down leave stumps, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land” (*verse 13*). Somehow this holy seed will bring light to the exiles' eyes, joy to their hearts, and restoration from destruction.

In chapter 11 Isaiah returns to the vision of the stump and the seed. He prophesies that the stump is the Dynasty of David and the seed is the Messianic King who will rule from Judah over all the nations of the planet. “And a shoot will come out of the stump of Jesse (*ed., David's father*) and a branch will bring forth fruit from those roots ...” (*Isa.11:1*). Isaiah now lets us in on God's end-game strategy in these chapters. Though the Jewish people have been ravaged and the Davidic dynasty has been decimated, God will one day bring double restoration. He will return the Jewish people to their promised land (*n.b.*, not just once, but twice – see *Isa.11:11* and *Jer.31:10*) and He will restore the reign of David's dynasty over the Jewish people and the whole world (see also *Luke 1:32-33*).

Indeed, at the end of days the Jewish people will repent en masse of their rebellion against the House of David: “Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek YHVH their God and David their king, and they will come trembling to YHVH and to His goodness in the last days” (*Hos.3:5*).

The emphasis in the Isaiah 11 prophecy is on future restoration – the restoration of God's sovereign **government** over all the nations through David's dynasty. When Amos 9:11 says that God would restore the **sukka** of David to the glory that it once had “in ancient days”, we need to consider two things – what that ancient glory looked like, and how the prophets describe the restoration of that future glory.

Here are six prophetic passages (of many in the Bible) which help to flesh out this vision. In all of them the emphasis is on the restoration of **governmental** authority to David's Messianic seed and to David's capital city Jerusalem.

Isa. 2:1-4 explains: “This is what Isaiah the son of Amos saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: ‘In the last days, the Mountain of YHVH's House will be

established as head among the mountains. It will be raised above the hills and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the Mountain of YHVH, to the House of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways, so that we may walk in His paths. The teaching will go out from Zion, and the word of YHVH from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples”.

Another passage is Zech.8:20-23: “This is what YHVH of armies says, ‘Many peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will come and the inhabitants of one city will go to another and say, “Let us go at once to entreat YHVH and seek YHVH of armies. I myself am going.” And many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek YHVH of armies and to entreat Him. . . In those days ten men from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the edge of his robe and say, “Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you”’.

A third passage is Jer.23:5-8: “The days are coming, declares YHVH, when I will raise up to David a Righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In His days Judah shall be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which He shall be called – ‘YHVH our Righteousness’. So the, the days are coming, declares YHVH, when people will no longer say, ‘As surely as YHVH lives, who brought the sons of Israel up out of Egypt’, but they will say, ‘As surely as YHVH lives, who brought the sons of Israel up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where He had banished them’. Then they will live in their own land”.

A fourth passage is Zech.14:16: “Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King YHVH of armies and to celebrate the Feast of *Sukkot*”.

All of the above passages describe the same picture from different angles – David’s restored dynasty reigning in Jerusalem over the whole earth, as the spiritual, judicial and legislative center of the planet. These descriptions are definitely *governmental* descriptions.

According to Isa. 11:3-5 Jesse’s Davidic Son will judge the nations on God’s holy mountain in Jerusalem with justice, righteousness and faithfulness. This is the *government* of God in action.

Isa. 9:6-7 also describes this same Messianic figure in *governmental* terms: “For to us a Child has been born, a Son has been given to us, and the *government* shall be on His shoulder (*ed.* a reference to the key, a symbol of one’s governmental office, which actually was carried over one’s shoulder in public Jewish processions) . . . Of the increase of His *government* there will be no end, and also of His peace. He will sit on the throne of David and reign over his kingdom, establishing it and strengthening it through justice and righteousness from this point until eternity. The fierce zeal of YHVH of the armies will accomplish this!”

The stump of David may have been ravaged, burned with fire and nearly destroyed. But the Lord of the heavenly armies, the God of Israel, promises to revive David’s dynasty and again establish his rule and that of his descendants over the nations from Jerusalem. There are various passages which indicate that not only David himself (resurrected from the dead) but also his physical descendants will rule and reign in Jerusalem alongside and subordinate to the Messiah Yeshua. See the following passages which describe a prophetic future for a resurrected David and for his physical descendants: Jer. 30:9; 33:17, 21-22, 26; Ezek. 34:23-24; Zech.12:7-13:1.

It is God’s divine desire to restore physical Jerusalem and to re-establish the physical rule of David over the entire world. The Bible clearly describes this burning passion as the fierce zeal of the Warrior Lord (*Isa.9:7*). YHVH is serious about the restoration of David’s governmental rule over the planet. It is top priority for Him.

VI. Isn’t ‘911’ an emergency call?

We now turn to consider the context and meaning of Amos 9:11, the only biblical passage where the term ‘the restoration of David’s tabernacle’ is used.

Amos 9 and Isaiah 1-11 focus on the same theme, though Amos wrote probably a century before Isaiah penned his own scroll. The first ten verses of Amos chapter nine describe the judgment YHVH will bring upon the Jewish people. In the middle of the eighth verse Amos begins to prophesy about mercy coming to Israel at the end of days, after judgment. It is true that the Lord may wipe out certain nations for their sins, totally destroying them for rebellion against God. But He will not annihilate the Jewish people. They have a different and enduring destiny in spite of their sins (*verse 8b-9*).

After the day of Israel's physical judgment, Amos prophesies that the day of Israel's physical restoration will also come about. God will restore the ravages of destruction and exile, restoring the Jewish people to the 'West Bank', to the Golan and to Jerusalem (see *Jer.50:4-5,17-20*). There they will rebuild the ruins, replant the vineyards and be planted themselves, eternally and in their own land, by the hand of their own God (*verses 13-15*).

With that context in place (*verses 1-10, 13-15*) we now turn to Amos 9:11-12. Here the God of Israel promises that He will not only restore the people of Israel to the land of Israel. He will also restore Israeli **government** to the people of Israel – the **governmental dynasty** of the king of Israel, King David, over the Jewish nation. And that king will rule over not only the Jewish people, but also over Israel's enemies the Edomites (these are Arabs descended from Esau; see *Gen.25:30; 27:38-40; Psalm 137:7-9; Obadiah 1-21*) and over all the nations of the world. “In that day I will raise up the fallen **sukka** of David. I will fence over its broken-through areas. Its destroyed areas I will raise up and I will rebuild her, as in ancient days – so that they will rule over the remnant of Edom and over all the nations that My name will be called over them,’ declares YHVH who is doing this”.

Once again it is unmistakable that the context here is **governmental** – the Davidic king will rule over all the nations from Jerusalem in Judah. The vision here is the same one as described in Psalm 89:22-27 – a Jewish king descended from David ruling over the entire planet. It is interesting to note that the same Hebrew root words Amos 9:11 uses to describe Davidic restoration – ‘fencing over the broken-through areas’ (*‘gadarti et pirtzeihen’*) – are repeated in Ethan's psalm lamenting the shattering of Davidic **governmental** rule in Jerusalem (*‘paratzta khol gderotav’*, *Psa.89:40*).

Amos had seen with his own eyes the splendor of the royal palaces in Davidic Jerusalem. Yet God was telling him that this Solomonic splendor would one day be atomized, and the descendants of David would find their shelter in **sukkot** - field huts - instead of in palaces. Only after this humbling of David's line and of David's Jewish people would the restoration come. “In that day (*ed. after the judgment on the Jewish people*) I will raise up the fallen **sukka** of David. I will fence over its broken-through areas. Its destroyed areas I will raise up and I will rebuild her, as in ancient days.”

Amos 9:11 is prophesying the restoration of **governmental authority**, the international sweep of that authority, and the Jewish and Davidic matrix of that

authority. Amos 9:11 is not prophesying about 24-hour intercessory prayer meetings and inspired worship. Though inspired worship will flourish under Davidic rule, that is not what Amos' prophecy is addressing.

All kinds of blessings will come about when Davidic rule is restored in Jerusalem. When the full restoration of David's *governmental* rule comes to pass, some of the future benefits described in Scripture include world peace (*Isa.2:4*), universal justice (*Isa.9:7*), the limiting of the effects of the Fall (*Isa.11:6-9*), the physical presence of YHVH in Jerusalem (*Jer.31:6; Ezek.48:35; Isa.33:21-22*), a Temple on Mount Moriah which will also be a House of Prayer for all nations with a Jewish flavor (*Isa.56:7*), the Negev deserts blossoming like the rose with perennial water sources (*Isa.35:1-10*), and wonderful blessings of rain for Israel and the world (*Joel 2:18-27; Zech.14:17*). The full restoration of David's covenant will bring overflowing physical blessings for Israel and the world (see *Isa.27:6; 55:3,12-13*).

VII. Doesn't prophecy concerning the Jews really refer to the Church?

This is a question often asked by many Gentile believers. There is also a theological claim standing behind that question that some may not realize, so let's follow that question back to its hidden claim.

Part one of the above argument would say that Yeshua (Jesus' original Hebrew name) is David's Greater Son (see *Psalms 110:1; Matthew 22:41-45*) who was to reign over the Jewish people and the whole world. This first statement is biblical and true.

Part two would say that when the majority of the Jewish leaders rejected Messiah, Yeshua then rejected His original promises to the Jewish people (*this is false; see Rom.11:1-2*). When He inaugurated the New Covenant, He forever changed the meaning of all the biblical promises of the Messianic Kingdom (*this is also untrue; see Rom.11:29*). Before the cross, one would have understood those promises as they were stated – a kingdom is coming on this earth, centered in Jerusalem and revolving around the Jewish people. After the cross, they would now mean something else (*this is also incorrect; see Luke 22:29-30*).

Part three would say that all promises of physical Jewish restoration (including restoration of Davidic rule in Jerusalem over all the world) now must be re-interpreted. Instead of referring to Jesus reigning over all the world through the Jewish people, they should be understood to mean that Jesus will reign over all

Christian believers. No Jewish context, no Jewish restoration, no Davidic dynasty. This above theology can be described as an attempt by some to prophetically ‘castrate’ David and his seed.

According to this new view, all the promises are suddenly ‘re-interpreted’ (if your perspective happens to be that of some Gentiles) or stolen (if your perspective happens to be Jewish). Now they are supposed to refer to the primarily Gentile church. This position is known as Replacement theology (‘God has replaced Jews with the Gentiles’) or Supercession theology (‘the Gentiles have superceded the Jews’).

This theology is actually theological robbery masquerading as spirituality. It is the very thing the Apostle Paul warned Gentile believers about in Romans 11: 18, 20 and 25: don’t be arrogant towards the Jewish people, don’t be conceited towards them, and don’t be ignorant about their calling. The calling and the gifts given to the Jewish people by the Messiah of Israel are irrevocable (*Rom.11:29*) – and that includes the physical restoration of David’s dynasty. God will fulfill His good word to Israel, especially when some Gentiles say that YHVH has abandoned the original people to whom He promised the Messianic kingdom (*Jer.30:17; 31:20*).

So the truth is, God does not prefer Gentiles over Jews (as Justin Martyr once said), and He hasn’t rejected His Jewish people or fudged on the promises He made to them (*Rom.11:1-2*). The promise of Jewish physical restoration to the entire land of Israel (*Jer.31;5-6; 50:19*), the spiritual salvation of the entire Jewish nation (*Jer.31:31-34; 50:20*), and governmental restoration of the Davidic dynasty (*Amos 9:11-12; Isa.2:1-5; Jer.33:19-26*) – all will come to pass for Israel, because the zeal of YHVH of armies will perform this.

VIII. Amos 9:11 in the New Testament

In Acts 15:13-18 James the Apostle referred to Amos 9:11, declaring that Gentiles should be fully accepted into the (then) predominantly Jewish body of Messiah – without converting to Judaism. His main argument was threefold: God has recently demonstrated an interest in Gentile salvation; this accords with the Hebrew prophets’ vision of the future; therefore we should make the process as uncomplicated as possible!

James’ quotation of Amos 9:11 most probably comes from a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible called the Septuagint (LXX). It reads the Hebrew text in a

slightly different way than is usual. But this different reading does not change the meaning of the concept ‘David’s tabernacle’ at all. It concerns another word ‘Edomites’, and the question there is, should that word be read as ‘Edomites’ or as ‘the rest of mankind’. This is an interesting discussion for another time, but this is not the focus here.

James’ point was simply this: the apostles knew that toward the End of Days, God would re-establish David’s Messianic kingdom over the entire world. They thought that this would be done immediately after the resurrection of Yeshua (see *Acts 1:6-7*), but Yeshua told them that those exact dates had not yet been revealed to any man. So as the Messianic Jews waited for the full restoration of David’s throne, James says that they should not be surprised that Gentiles would begin to seek the God of Israel and His Messiah. And why is this? Here James calls on the prophetic witness of Amos. Amos prophesied that, at the end of time, a spiritual awakening among the Gentiles would be connected in some fashion to the restoration of David’s dynasty.

It is important to remember that the fullness of David’s throne has not been restored, even in our day (see *Acts 26:6-7; 2 Tim.2:9; Heb.2:8; Matt.19:28/Psa.122:5; Rom. 11:12*). The Bible also teaches that the fullness of Gentile revival has not yet happened (see *Rev. 7:9-14* and *Rom.11:25*). Just as most believers look forward to the fullness of the harvest of the nations (and the Jewish harvest too!), so it is just as biblical to look forward to the fullness of the restoration of the Davidic dynastic reign.

To sum up: James is saying that Amos 9:11 prepares us for the fact that Gentiles would come to faith about the time when the Messianic Son of David would appear. James is saying that a new age has been inaugurated after the cross, a period when many Gentiles would find a personal relationship with the God of Israel through Yeshua the Messiah. James would have been astounded and angry to hear that, a few centuries after his death, some Gentiles would come along with a new and strange teaching – a denial that full Davidic and Jewish restoration will take place. James would said to them, “Can’t you see it, friends? The fact that Amos’ words about Gentile salvation began to come true in my day, means that one day in the future Amos’ words describing the restoration of David’s governmental rule will also come true!”

Over the centuries many Jews and even more Gentiles have believed in Yeshua, but the fullness of David’s kingdom has not yet blossomed. But soon vast

numbers of Gentiles will come to faith, Israel as a nation will be saved through fire, and Yeshua will return to set up David's throne in Jerusalem.

IX. Honor the Jewish people – don't steal their promises!

What's the result when the RDTM teaches that the prophetic restoration of David's tabernacle is fulfilled in the Church's worship and intercession? The result is that many Gentiles have their prophetic discernment blunted. They begin to believe that prophetic promises to the Jewish people are no longer valid, and that the fullness of God's heart is for the predominantly Gentile Church alone. Paul calls this boasting against the branches. It is stealing – pilfering the promises made to the Jewish people. It is also very bad manners.

Another part of the problem here is that the Scriptures mandate a curse on those who curse the Jewish people (*Gen.12:3*) – a further aspect of what some would call the 'Israel mandate'. To rob the Jewish people of their prophetic future, to confuse the Church regarding Yeshua's present and future Davidic rank, and to be silent about the Church's priority need to intercede for Israel's restoration – these acts and attitudes can bring about a spiritual curse upon sectors of the Church of Messiah Jesus.

God intends for His body to be edified and encouraged through prophetic worship. He wants to accomplish His heart purposes on the earth in cooperation with intercessory prayers. He also wants His Gentile children to honor and give priority to Israel, YHVH's first-born among the nations (*see Exod.4:22-23; Deut.21:15-17; Rom.1:16; 2:5-11; 3:1-2; 9:1-5*). This means that the RDTM should stop defining the restoration of David's tabernacle primarily in terms of its own praise and prayer activities. The real Davidic restoration belongs to King Yeshua alone and it will be powerfully fulfilled in Jerusalem when He ascends His throne to exercise governmental rule over His own Jewish people and the entire world.

As Messianic Jewish believers, we plead with Gentile believers: after you use our 'toys' (the Messianic promises given to the Jewish people, some of which you share in), please don't steal them! Put them back neatly on the shelf, for the love of God and of Israel! Our people need those promises – for our very survival, our salvation and our own national revival. And we need you to pray for us – for our protection, our salvation and the fulfilling of our calling to bring revival to the nations (*see Rom.11:15*)!

And please pray with us for the very Jewish House Of Prayer that God promises to establish in the heart of Jerusalem (Isa.56:3-8). We bless God for how revelation about worship and intercession is going forth from many places. Remember with us that one day God's own teaching will go forth from Zion, and the pure extract of the Lord's word will shine forth from Jerusalem (see *Micah 4:1-5*). Even now, begin to live in the presence of the future!

X. A Heart Like David's

The heart of the RDTM is good. Most of its adherents love the Lord in good faith, and minister to Him in openhearted worship and sensitive intercession. We can all draw strength from this movement's positive aspects.

The RDTM focuses on David's heart for worship, drawing on the Hebrew Scriptures' description of David as a man after God's own heart. The life and heart of David is a wonderful model to follow. As long as the movement focuses on David as a model, describes their activities by saying 'we want to worship like David did' and 'in the spirit of David', they are on safe ground. Their teaching and equipping will benefit millions. It is worth remembering here that the original prophetic word given to Mike Bickle of IHOP carefully made that distinction: "In 1983, the Lord prophesied that He would release a 24-hour a day, citywide ministry to the Lord *in the spirit of* the Tabernacle of David" (*ed. emphases mine*). The Holy Spirit referred to worship and intercession as "a restoration in the spirit of David's tabernacle" – and not that worship and intercession is the restoration of David's tabernacle!

If the leadership of the RDTM continues to teach that it is prophetically restoring David's tabernacle a la Amos 9:11 by training believers in prophetic worship and intercession, then the spiritual vitality of this lovely stream is in danger, and is running at cross purposes with the Son of David Himself *on this one biblical issue*. Any prophetic teaching which aspires to biblical legitimacy must interpret the Bible the way the Bible interprets itself.

Let us press on to encourage each other in Messiah Son of David, to imitate King David's heart of worship for the Father of Lights, and to hear the Holy Spirit's voice as we wait on Him for intercessory direction. And let us really try to call things by their biblical names, and not be stumbling blocks to the Jewish people, or subvert the clear intercessory calling upon the Church to labor for Zion's sake – for the restoration of the *sukka* of David.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited us and accomplished

redemption for His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the House of David His servant (as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old) salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us; to show mercy toward our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant (the oath which He swore to Abraham our father); to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days” (Luke 1:68-79).

Postscript – David versus Moses?

This last section is a postscript. This is only for those who are aware of RDT theology and who would be willing to reconsider one of the RDTM teachings – the one that says that David’s worship experiences before the Ark of the Covenant were God’s ideal, but that the ongoing Mosaic worship at the Tent of Meeting was legalistic or second best.

Is the contrast that the RDTM is making between ‘legalistic Mosaic’ and ‘anointed Davidic’ worship a true contrast, and can it be biblically sustained? Let’s refresh our memory by consulting the relevant passages.

During the days of Samuel, Eli’s disobedient sons Hophni and Phinehas removed the Ark of the Covenant from the Tent of Meeting in Shiloh and brought it down to the battlefield (*Josh.18:1; 1 Sam.1:9; 2:22; 4:4-5*). This was done to increase the chances of victory in battle, even though YHVH had prophesied that Eli’s disobedience in not disciplining his sons would lead to a great national tragedy (*1Sam.2:27-36; 3:11-18*).

In the Battle of Ebenezer the Ark of the Covenant was seized by the Philistines and taken to their five cities. Shiloh was also attacked by the Philistines, who burned it to the ground (*Jer.7:12-14*). The Tent of Meeting (minus the Ark) was eventually moved to Gibeon, and Philistines finally returned the Ark of the Covenant to the Jewish people, where it sojourned in a small border town, Kiryat Ye’arim, for many years (*1 Sam.6:21-7:1*).

Samuel was a young boy on the day the Ark was taken out of the Tent of Meeting. He lived out the rest of his days without getting to see the Ark returned to its original and God-commanded resting place – the Tent of Meeting (*Exod.25:8-16; 26:30-34; 30:6; 1 Sam.25:1*).

After Samuel died, David became king over Judah and then, seven years later, over all Israel. After he conquered Jerusalem and made it his capital city, King David attempted to move the Ark of the Covenant from Baalah Judah (also known as Kiryat Ye'arim) to the Jerusalem area (*2 Sam.6:1-9; 1 Chron. 13:1-14*).

Evidently David and his advisors did not know the scriptural instructions very well, because they tried to transport the Ark in a different way than how God had commanded Moses – by ox cart and not by pole-bearing Levites (*Exod.25:12-15; 37:3-5; Deut.10:8*). That attempt ended with the untimely death of Uzzah. Later on David was probably informed of the relevant Torah verses, because in *1 Chron.15:2,13,15* he publicly insisted that the biblical pattern for carrying the Ark now needed to be followed as it was returned to Jerusalem.

King David made a decision at that time not to return the Ark to its biblically mandated place, which should have been within the Tent of Meeting (now stationed in Gibeon; *1 Chron.21:29*). Instead, he brought the Ark to a temporary place in the City of David, where he had pitched a tent for the occasion (*1 Chron.15:1*). He appointed some priests and Levites to minister before the Ark in petition, thanksgiving, and musical praise (*1 Chron.16:4-6*).

At the same time he faithfully supported the Gibeon Tent of Meeting in accordance with God's command to Moses (*1 Chron.16:39-42*). Throughout David's life and at the time of his death, the high place in Gibeon was considered the center point of Jewish worship (*1 Ki. 3:4*).

Does the Bible give any clue as to why David didn't restore the Ark to its biblically ordained place at the Tent of Meeting? Are there provisions in the Law of Moses for doing that? Were his actions based on divine revelation?

On all of these questions, the answer is negative. It seems that David based his decision not to bring the Ark to Gibeon on two factors. One, having a heart after God, he wanted to be as close as possible to God (see Psalms 42, 63, 84). As king, he knew that his wish would be his servants' command! The second factor is that David may have already had in his heart the desire to build a magnificent Temple for YHVH. Perhaps he also assumed that YHVH and all Israel would not mind him departing from biblical norms while the transitional planning and construction of that Temple took place.

Let's draw some applications at this point.

While David could dance before the Lord and worship Him in the privacy of his own personal 'Ark chapel', no other Jew could do the same. David's personal worship-chapel was a definite exception to the Torah's God-given order. Its doors were open to one man (David alone) and not to the whole Jewish people. David's model of worship was not a transferable model for all Israel. It was the exception, not the rule.

David's chapel arrangement lasted for perhaps 30 years, until Solomon completed the construction of the Temple. Solomon then consolidated both the Tent of Meeting at Gibeon and the Ark in the City of David into one magnificent shrine built on the threshing floor of Araunah on Mount Moriah (2 *Sam.24:16-24*; 1 *Ki.8:1-9*). God's pleasure at the reuniting of Ark and Tent of Meeting was manifest for all to see, in that the Glory Cloud filled the Temple (1 *Ki.8:10*).

The Bible does not draw much attention to the fact that the Ark was missing from the Tent of Meeting (its biblically mandated spot) during David's reign. It was, after all, a time of intense transition and political ferment. Even prior to David's reign, Samuel the prophet had lived more than 30 years without seeing the Ark returned to its biblically mandated place. As described in the preceding period of the Judges, many people were still doing what seemed right in their own eyes (*Judges 21:25*).

While David was alive, he did not think of his own personal chapel as superior to the Mosaic Tent of Meeting. He knew that his tent was only a temporary phenomenon. King David yearned to build a Temple for YHVH (2 *Sam.7:1-3*) according to Moses' instructions (*Exod.25:8;Heb.8:5*), just as Moses had prophesied would happen (*Deut.12:4-7*). It is not biblically correct to assert, as some do in the RDTM, that "the pattern of King Solomon's temple ... flowed directly from the pattern of King David's Tabernacle" or that "Solomon erected an actual temple building in the pattern of his father David's tabernacle". These assertions are not found in the Bible. The Bible actually says the opposite.

Both David and Solomon followed Moses' instructions to the letter in constructing the Temple; they had learned their lesson back with Uzza on what happens when one ignores Moses. The architectural model followed in the construction of Solomon's Temple was based not on King David's worship

chapel (no such information is given in the Bible) but on Moses' instructions in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

David was overjoyed when the Lord revealed to him the exact spot for the Temple's construction (*1 Chron.21:28-22:1*). He was not heartbroken that his own worship center would now be eclipsed by the establishment of a national Mosaic worship center. He began to make extensive preparations for the building project. He informed Solomon that he, King David, had once received a prophetic word, informing him that Solomon would be the son who would bring David's dream to completion (*1 Chron.22:1-19*). Prophecy was being fulfilled before King David's very eyes, as David's personal worship chapel was being shut down and the Mosaic Temple was being readied.

Here are two suggestions for the RDTM to consider, based on the above.

A. Try not to make the exception into the rule.

We should all aspire to have the maturity of heart and spirit which moves us to delight in following God's rules – while simultaneously appreciating the added insights that are contributed by the rare 'exceptions to the rule'.

The insights we can glean from David's heart of worship and devotion do not stand in opposition to the wonderful worship models exhibited in the Mosaic Tent of Meeting. "Davidic principles" are not "more spiritual", "more anointed" or more "cutting edge prophetic" than "Mosaic principles". They are complementary. Why not teach them as complementary? Don't create tensions between Moses and David when no such tensions exist.

B. Be careful of subtle anti-Semitism, anti-nomianism and spiritual elitism

An intensely focused zealously positive view of "David's Tent" can lead to tunnel vision, especially when it carries along with it a slightly negative view of "Moses' Tent". Extra-biblical elitism and spiritual pride ("our worship is better because it's of David, not of Moses!") could very easily enter into the equation. History also shows us that when Moses is belittled, the belittling of Moses' people is often not far behind. In other words, church history demonstrates that Christian anti-Mosaism often leads to Christian anti-Semitism.

Another point: *anti-nomianism* (an attitude of heart which stresses both opposition to God's rules and independence from following biblical requirements) can creep into the equation here. If (as it is argued) David was

super-blessed only because he was worshipping outside of the Mosaic institution, perhaps (the hidden message seems to be) we should remove ourselves from our usual church framework in order to receive “worship super-blessings”. This could lead to severe fallout in congregational settings.

Why propose a false dichotomy which forces one to choose between the Holy Spirit and the commandments He imparts, between David’s freedom of worship and Moses’ divinely planned Tent of Meeting? This competition is not part of the Bible perspective. The Spirit and the Word are not in competition. It is not biblically accurate to offer a choice between “freedom of worship in David’s tent” or “lifeless worship in Moses’ tent”! We all can benefit by applying the principles of worship demonstrated in both tents. An unbalanced focus on one tent over another tent can lead to a theology which is simply too “in-tents”!

Those whose calling it is to recover spiritual truths for the body of Messiah are often tempted by spiritual elitism. When God graciously grants extraordinary manifestations of worship and the prophetic, those who receive these gracelets can be tempted to see themselves as similarly extraordinary. The desire to be thought of as extraordinary is always seductively attractive. But it is truer, healthier and more biblical for all of us to think of ourselves as plain and normal (*Rom. 12:3, 16*). At the end of the day, wasn’t King David’s heart just that – the heart of an honest and normal person worshipping an amazing and extraordinary God?

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