

## Isaiah 14:1-2

### Proselytes and a reference to Purim in this prophecy.

**Isaiah 14:1-2** - "For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.

"And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors."

"take them captives" - The true meaning is that Jewish ideas will penetrate and subdue the nations generally, and among them those with whom Israel had dwelt as captives. The Jews did become very powerful and numerous both in Assyria and Babylonia about the first century after Christ, and Christian Churches were early formed in Mesopotamia, Adiabene, and even Babylon. — Pulpit Commentary

On the surface, this passage initially refers to Cyrus king of Persia, who provided for the Jews to return to their homeland, with officials even escorting them in a friendly spirit to their borders (**Ezra 1:1-4**).

This emphasizes the uniqueness and dominance of Abraham's descendants Isaac and Jacob, in contrast to his other offspring from Keturah and Ishmael - listed in this chapter of Genesis - who were "sent to the east."

The promise God gave to Abraham only flows through Isaac - the child of the promise - and his son Jacob. (Next week we find out that Esau, the rightful heir, sold his birthright to Jacob).

In later Hebrew the same words came to be applied to the proselytes who are conspicuous in the apostolic age (**Acts 2:10; Acts 6:5**). The prophesy is ultimately fulfilled in the admission of Gentiles into the kingdom of God.

Israel was the name God gave to Jacob, as a mark of his favor. It is chiefly made use of by the prophets when they deliver some gracious promise, or announce some blessing from the mouth of God, especially such a one as concerns the twelve tribes, all equally descended from Jacob. — Benson Commentary

**Re: Purim** - This passage could also refer to Gentiles who joined with Israel in Persia. If it is asked what "evidence" there is that any considerable number of the people of Chaldea became Jewish proselytes, that is expressly stated in **Esther 8:17** : "And many of the people of the land became Jews, for the fear of the Jews fell upon them." - Barnes Notes

Other, later peoples also became proselytes. The Roman historian Tacitus, speaking of his own time, says that "every abandoned man, despising the religion of his country, bears tribute and revenue to Jerusalem, whence it happens that the number of the Jews is greatly increased." - ("Hist." v. 5.)

- Barnes Notes

But Jewish attitudes toward proselytes were often mixed. Because from the word translated "cleave" is derived another, which signifies a scab, the Jews have a saying, "proselytes are grievous to Israel as a scab." (T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 47. 2. & Kiddushin, fol. 70. 2.)

Jewish commentators Kimchi and Ben Melech apply all this to the Times of the Messiah; and Jarchi to the time to come, when Israel should be redeemed with a perfect redemption.

Compare Isaiah 14:1-2 with **Isaiah 60:14** - "The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel."