

# A Question to Ponder

## Thought for the Week

Just as He promised to scatter them, He has also promised to re-gather them. Although Israel failed as a nation to perform the stipulations of the covenant, the other partner of the agreement—God—remains faithful to His promises. In the end, He will reverse all of Israel's sorrows on account of His faithfulness, mercy and grace.

## Commentary

*So keep the words of this covenant to do them, that you may prosper in all that you do. (Deuteronomy 29:9)*

All through the book of Deuteronomy, Moses drives home the message: "Keep God's Torah." When Israel failed to keep the Torah, God sent prophets warning them to repent and turn back to Torah. When they repented, they were rewarded and blessed. When they did not, they suffered the maledictions threatened in the Torah. God continuously told His people for 1,400 years to walk in His commandments, keep His Torah and His covenant.

Does it make sense to imagine that after 1,400 years, God suddenly changed His mind? Would it make sense to suppose that after all the pain and suffering of invasion, exile, re-gathering and so on, God would suddenly change the program and announce to His people, "From now on, don't keep the commandments of the Torah," and then punish them when they did?

That could be compared to a father who warned his son not to play ball in the house. Every time the boy played ball in the house, his father would spank him and send him to his room. This went on for three years. Then one day, his father seized him and spanked him. The boy cried out, "Why are you spanking me?" "Because you weren't playing ball in the house," the father explained. "From now on, you must play ball in the house, and if you do not, I will beat you."

We would call a father like that capricious and deranged. Yet many theologians claim that this is what God has done to Israel. For 1,400 years He punished them when they did not keep the Torah. Then when Jesus came, He canceled the Torah and henceforth punished them for keeping it. Obviously God is not a capricious and deranged father. Rather He is the Unchanging One, the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. He has not canceled the words of His Torah. Even today, He longs for His people—all of His people—to repent, turn away from sin and come back to the good and beautiful commandments of His Torah, just as His holy Son, Yeshua, has shown us. In Yeshua His people will find forgiveness for sins, and through His Spirit we find the strength and joy to serve God with gladness.

*For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you would hear His voice. (Psalm 95:7)*