

Is the Current State of Israel the Fulfillment of Biblical Prophecy?

Recently I was asked to be a guest on Dr. Michael Brown's radio show, "The Line of Fire," for "Thoroughly Jewish Thursday." As we discussed the topic of the day, "Why Support Israel?", one of the listeners, a Hasidic Rabbi, called in with some concerns.

Though surprising to some, Rabbi Benjamin's* viewpoint on the modern nation of Israel is one that is commonly held by many in the Ultra-Orthodox Jewish community. As I addressed this rabbi's concerns from the perspective of Scripture, I sought to point him to Israel's only hope in both the present and future: Yeshua the Messiah!

Our discussion went as follows:

Q: Hi Sam, my name is Benjamin* and I'm a Hasidic rabbi. From my understanding of a biblical perspective, today's state of Israel is a bastion of evil; a country filled with immorality. Also, Scripture also tells us not to awaken or arouse love before God desires. I don't believe in Jesus, but I'm waiting for Messiah to come. Until this happens, I see the existence of the state of Israel as being against what the Bible teaches. God sent us into exile to be a light to the nations, not to go and hide in one little part of the world. Israel is the Holy Land, but today it's filled with heresy and wickedness. And even if it wasn't, according to Scripture, it's just not the time yet for this return to the land.

A: Shalom, Rabbi Benjamin. I can certainly understand the point you make. Of course, the critical issue here is going to be Mashiach (Messiah); if what He tells us is true, and if how He interprets Torah is the way it is to be interpreted. In

light of this, we see in Scripture that there is a twofold return of Israel: first, to the land (Ezek. 37), and second, to the Lord.

According to the prophet Daniel, we see that the Jewish people have to return to the land and make a bad deal with the anti-Messiah, a deceiver. Nonetheless, according to prophecy, the Jewish people return to the land prior to their national return to the Lord. Today, we see this falling into place according to prophetic Scripture.

I've been to Israel many times, and I see that the people there are simply sinful people, just like any of us. Certainly, these are ordinary people needing to hear about the extraordinary atonement in the Messiah that makes people right with God. We need to understand the simplicity and purity of faith in what God has done for us in the atonement that Messiah has made for us.

This is how we get right with God so we can then live a life to His honor; not merely a life that reflects the beautiful traditions of our people, but a life that brings God honor through our teshuvah (repentance), meekness, kindness and mercy. The very forgiveness we have received in Messiah, this is what we are called to share with the nations.

In other words, the message that our people were to bring to the nations was the message of Mashiach, the Good News of who Yeshua is and what He has done for us. This is vital for each one of us to deal with! We see the nation of Israel today with its failings and flaws, but none of us can throw the first stone.

All of us need to have sympathy and compassion, realizing that we each need to trust in Messiah individually and then pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

**Name changed to protect privacy of individual*

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