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While anti-Semitism surfaces in America and war rages in Israel, Biblical End Times seem increasingly close at hand. With these four books, you will not only know *what to expect* during the End of Days but also *who to support* in this spiritual war.

CHARISMA 6540

REVISED & UPDATED

How ISRAEL'S PROPHETIC DESTINY Is Being Fulfilled

A look at the nation's past, present and future

BY CURT LANDRY

round 585 B.C., when the Jewish nation was living in Babylonian exile, we read the words of the prophet Ezekiel:

"Thus says the Lord God: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again"" (Ezek. 37:21-22; NKJV, emphasis added).

Thousands of years later, the Jewish

nation declared its statehood in May 1948. And Israel's people began returning in waves, just as the Bible said.

There is much we can learn from the window of time, from Ezekiel's prophetic word to the time of fulfillment. Today we might just read about it as words on a page. In reality, many generations passed and much life transpired.

Perhaps the most obvious takeaway is that God is faithful to His Word even when the manifestation appears delayed. Our God is a God of covenant, and He can be trusted to do what He said He would do. It's the "when" that often gets us in trouble. We often lose hope when we don't see it come to pass quite at the time, place or way we expect.

The nation of Israel is an example that our faith and hope in God should remain steadfast even when the promise seems delayed.

Prophecy of the Land

If we see this fulfillment of Ezekiel 37, we cannot deny that the fulfillment of the



Land Covenant is also at hand. Ezekiel prophesied over the land and its restoration as well:

"Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains, the hills, the rivers and the valleys, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I have spoken in My jealousy and My fury, because you have borne the shame of the nations." Therefore thus says the Lord God: 'I have raised My hand in an oath that surely the nations that are around you shall bear their own shame. But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel, for they are about to come. For indeed I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you

shall be tilled and sown. I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bear young; I will make you inhabited as in former times. and do better for

you than at your beginnings. Then you shall know that I am the Lord. Yes, I will cause men to walk on you, My people Israel; they shall take possession of you, and you shall be their inheritance; no more shall you bereave them of *children*²⁷ (Ezek. 36:6-12).

This image of tremendous prosperity was difficult to envision generations ago, but the land is growing and producing today. What once lay in ruins is being rebuilt and prospering since Israel's return.

This Scripture is part of the passion behind our efforts as a family to see the desert blossom and multiply with promise. We started My Olive Tree in 2008 with a heart to participate in what God was doing in the physical land of Israel. Partnering with prophetic fulfillment in the very soil of the promised land is one of our greatest honors.

I remember standing in David Ben-Gurion's Negev Desert office many years ago. Part of our team began weeping with what I now know was a prophetic unveiling, activation and birthing. We began to see and feel what the first prime minister felt and carried a tremendous vision for the possession of land and the growth of a nation rooted in agricultural development. This moment was a birthing of part of our destiny and one we would help other believers connect with.

With every olive tree planted in the desert by Christians worldwide, we are gifted the holy honor of being a part of prophecy fulfilled. Amos, Isaiah and

Ezekiel all spoke of this generation. When we join forces with what God is doing in Israel, we become an integral part of prophecy fulfilled.

Beyond the tremendous advances in agriculture, Israel is now one of the world's most robust and technologically advanced market economies.

What was once labeled a start-up nation is being rebranded as a scale-up nation. The country continues to lead in the hi-tech sector and areas of great innovation. The following continue to draw on substantial non-Israeli investment:

- » Cybersecurity.
- » Health care.
- » Artificial Intelligence.
- » Fintech.

"When we ioin

forces with what

God is doing in

Israel, we become

an integral part of

prophecy fulfilled."

- » Food tech.
- » Automotive technology.

The words of Ezekiel continue to come to pass. The promises of God to Abraham continue to unfold. Delay does not mean denial.

Fulfillment in Full Swing

As Israel celebrates her 75th anniversary this year, God is fulfilling His promise and blessing His people.

"If any of you are driven out to the farthest *parts* under heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. Then the Lord your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your God with all your heart and

The Western Wall in Jerusalem



"As Abraham's seed by faith, we are called to stand with the nation of Israel with our prayers, actions and our seed."

with all your soul, that you may live" (Deut. 30:4-6).

Israel's first prime minister, Ben-Gurion, once said: "In Israel, in order to be a realist, you must believe in miracles."

And believe in miracles we do!

» May 14, 1948: Israel declared herself independent and, on the same day, was attacked by armies of five countries on every border.

» May 15, 1948: neighboring armies were joined by the major Arab armies of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria in what became known as the War of Independence.

Israel's enemies boasted many advantages, including 270 tanks, 300 aircraft and 150 field guns.

Meanwhile, the Jewish forces had no heavy machine guns, artillery, armored vehicles, anti-tank or anti-aircraft weapons or military aircrafts or tanks at the beginning of the war.

Israel quickly organized 32,000 soldiers (only half of whom had any military training), and the Israeli Defense Force was officially established on May 31, 1948. This group of young Zionists would beat the odds and win the war, making history and fulfilling prophecy.

The prophet Isaiah foretold this

miracle when he penned:

"Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, She gave birth to her children'" (Isa. 66:8).

Seventy-five years later, we are still in awe of what God did and celebrating His faithfulness to His Word and His people.

What Is the One New Man?

The United States was the first to officially recognize Israel as independent. President Harry Truman issued a statement of recognition on the same day as Israel's independent proclamation. During the same period, 4,400 volunteer soldiers from 56 countries joined in the fight for Israel's independence. This was an example of Jews and Gentiles working together to further the vision of God.

Ephesians 2:14-16 says: "For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity."

The Complete Jewish Bible says it this way: "He did this in order to create in union with himself from the two groups a single new humanity and thus make *shalom*" (Eph. 2:15).

One can see the story and the power of the One New Man weaving itself throughout Israel's history, even today. The Trump administration moving the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem is a strong statement of support for the Jewish nation.

When Jews and Gentiles work together as One New Humanity, a single unit, we witness miracles happen.

We see it when Chaim Salomon (Haym Salomon), a Sephardic Jew, helped finance George Washington's war efforts during the American Revolution. And we see it again during the 1973 Yom Kippur War as the U.S. military transported weapons and supplies to Israeli airbases, helping Israel regain the battlefield and ultimately win the war.

But the battle for Israel's existence didn't begin in 1948. It has been waged since God promised Abraham and his descendants the inheritance of a homeland. The battle continued when Moses and the Israelites left Egypt for the promised land. Roughly 900 years later the Jewish people survived an attempted annihilation during the Purim story. And the fight for Israel to continue to exist as sovereign in her homeland rages on today. The promise of God to Abraham is still being challenged by Israel's neighbors, yet He is faithful to protect and provide and often uses both Jew and Gentile (One New Man) to do so.

Amos prophesied about these days when he said:

"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, And all the hills shall flow with it. I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, And no longer shall they be pulled up From the land I have given them," Says the Lord your God (Amos 9:13-15; NKJV).

The Gentiles "who do this thing" truly represent the One New Man in action; we represent a new humanity connected to the roots of our faith and our Creator. As Abraham's seed by faith, we are called to stand with the nation of Israel with our prayers, actions and our seed.

3 Ways to Support the Modern-Day Nation of Israel in Her 75th Year

1) Pray.

» Pray for God to continue to pour out His protection, wisdom, revelation, favor, strength and blessing upon Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the current members of the Knesset and the Israeli Security Council as they diligently stand for the truth, peace, security and sovereignty of the nation of Israel.

"He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him" (Dan. 2:21b-22).

» Pray for the nations of the world to hear the truth and begin to rise up in honor, respect and support of the undivided nation of Israel and her undivided capital city—Jerusalem.

"These are the borders by which you shall divide the land as an inheritance" (Ezek. 47:13b).

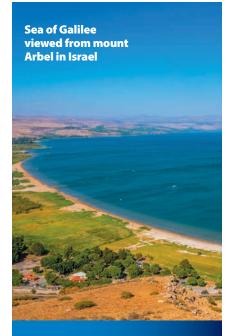
"I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:3).

» Continue to pray for God's wisdom, favor, insight and protection to rest upon the men and women in all departments of Israeli security and defense as they protect the citizens and borders of the nation of Israel.

"For the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel *will be* your rear guard" (Isa. 52:12b).

2) Educate others. We must stress the importance of Israel and standing with her to our family and friends. Open your heart and home for discussion and education. Perhaps you can host your family for a Shabbat meal and share what you have learned about the Jewish roots of our faith and how this has helped shape your spiritual identity.

Education is essential in fighting replacement theology, which was part of the enemy's plan to cause the church to think she has replaced Israel. This has twisted people's views on God, His Word and the nation of Israel, separating them from the richness of our Jewish heritage.



"Seventy-five years later, we are still in awe of what God did and celebrating His faithfulness to His Word and His people."

With education, you can return to your Father's table and empower your identity and purpose.

3) Sow into humanitarian efforts. Genesis 12:3 says that God will bless those who bless Israel. I strongly suggest that families and ministries alike find a way to get monthly financial seed into Israel and align their seed with God's covenant blessing.

In Isaiah 60, it is prophesied that the wealth of the Gentiles will come to the nation of Israel, and the sons of foreigners will rebuild her walls. These ancient prophecies are being fulfilled in modern times through those who understand the importance of standing with and blessing the nation of Israel.

Are you one of the Gentiles? Are you helping rebuild her walls?

You may not be able to join the IDF as a volunteer like the 4,400 in 1948, but you can sow seed into projects supporting her growth and future.

This is where our passion as a ministry lies. We are passionate about connecting families to their true identity in Christ, which creates a true purpose. And our true purpose is the "workmanship that was prepared" beforehand (Eph. 2:10). Part of our workmanship is to care for Holocaust survivors-the foundation modern-day Israel was built upon. We care for Israel's children, from those in the womb whose mothers choose life to 18-24-year-olds who are Israel's future. And we care for the very land of Israel by planting olive trees because, like Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, we believe in the power of agriculture to help create a homeland.

It is wise to love what God loves and to participate in areas we see Him moving in. Seeing God at work and getting involved—this is what we do as a family and as a ministry. I can only encourage you to do the same. Find a way to get involved in what God is doing in Israel *today* and participate in her prophetic destiny.

Happy 75th anniversary to the nation of Israel! <

CURT LANDRY *is the founder of Curt*

Landry Ministries and My Olive Tree. He and his wife, Christie, travel extensively, teaching about the Jewish roots of the Christian faith and the One New Man. Curt is also active in raising support for Israel throughout the evangelical community, as he desires to be a bridge of unity and restoration between Israel and the church. For more information about Curt Landry Ministries or to help support projects in Israel and around the world, please visit www.curtlandry.com.



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TODAY!

Is God Turning His Back on Israel? Paul the apostle was willing to give up his own salvation to see Israel redeemed.

Where does God stand today?

BY MICHAEL L. BROWN, PHD

ore than 2,500 years ago, the Lord said through the prophet Zechariah, "I have a great jealousy for Jerusalem and Zion" (Zech. 1:14b), yet this was not because of His people's righteousness. To the contrary, they had just been exiled for their sin, and they were now being regathered because of God's mercy, not their goodness. Yet His heart still burned with holy jealousy for them.

Even while they were in Babylonian captivity, the prophet said, "for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye" (Zech. 2:8b). This is how deeply He loves His ancient covenant people, even when He rebukes them. As He said through Jeremiah, "Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I spoke against him, I *surely do* remember him *still*; therefore My heart longs for him. I will surely have mercy on him, says the Lord" (Jer. 31:20).

That's why Isaiah cried out, "For the sake of Zion I will not keep silent, and for the sake of Jerusalem I will not rest until her righteousness goes forth as brightness and her salvation as a lamp that burns" (Isa. 62:1). And that's why the Lord Himself said, "I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem, who shall never hold their peace day nor night. You who remind the Lord, do not keep silent; give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a glory in the earth" (Isa. 62:6-7).

God's Heart Still Beats for Israel

Ultimately, Israel's salvation means the redemption of the world (see Rom. 11:11-15), and Yeshua (Jesus) will not return to earth until a Jewish Jerusalem welcomes Him back (see Matt. 23:37-39, Acts 3:19-21, Zech. 12:10-13:1). God's heart still beats for His ancient covenant people, even when they reject His Son and oppose the gospel. As Paul explained to the Romans, "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sake, but as regarding the election, they are beloved for the sake of the patriarchs. For the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom. 11:28-29).

Ironically, many of us charismatics will quote Romans 11:29 in the context of spiritual gifts and callings, like the gift of healing or the calling to preach, pointing out that those gifts and callings are "irrevocable." But when it comes to God's calling of Israel, we somehow think He changed His mind or Israel sinned one too many times or He has replaced Israel with the church. None of these things is true, and even when Israel is alienated from God on a national level, Israel remains called and chosen.

Some of the godliest leaders in church history, including some of the most highly respected English Puritans in the 1600s, had a great heart for Israel. John Owen, who was the greatest of the Puritan theologians, wrote, "The Jews shall be gathered from all parts of the earth where they are scattered, and brought home into their homeland."

As to their importance in God's plan, Owen penned these amazing words: "There is not any promise anywhere of raising up a kingdom unto the Lord Jesus Christ in this world, but it is either expressed, or



"Ultimately, Israel's salvation means the redemption of the world, and Yeshua (Jesus) will not return to earth until a Jewish Jerusalem welcomes Him back."

clearly intimated, that the beginning of it must be with the Jews."

Robert Leighton, a contemporary of Owen, wrote: "They forget a main point for the Church's glory, who pray not daily for the conversion [turning] of the Jews. ... Undoubtedly, that people of the Jews shall once more be commanded to arise and shine, and their return shall be the riches of the Gentiles (Rom. 11:12), and that shall be a more glorious time than ever the Church of God did yet behold."

Were you aware that these men held such views?

Samuel Rutherford, a contemporary of Owen and Leighton, was one of the most spiritually minded Christian leaders of his era, and he longed to see the day Jesus and His Jewish people would embrace.

He wrote, "I could stay out of heaven many years to see that victorious triumphing Lord act that prophesied part of His soul conquering love, in taking into His kingdom the greater sister, that kirk [church] of the Jews. ... Oh, what joy and what glory would I judge it, if my heaven should be suspended till I might have leave to run on foot to be a witness of that marriage-glory, and see Christ put on the glory of His last-married bride, and His last marriage- love on earth; when He shall enlarge His love-bed, and set it upon the top of the mountains, and take in the Elder Sister, the Jews and the fulness of the Gentiles!"

The Israel-Revival Connection

What an incredible picture, and what an incredible description! Rutherford was actually willing to put off going to heaven if he could live to see this moment. How much more does God Himself long to see this happen?

That's why Rutherford wrote, "O to see the sight, next to Christ's Coming in the clouds, the most joyful! Our elder brethren the Jews and Christ fall upon one another's neck and kiss each other! They have been long asunder; they will be kind to one another when they meet. O day! O longed-for and lovely day, dawn! O sweet Jesus, let me see that sight, which will be as life from the dead, Thee and Thy ancient people in mutual embraces."

Two centuries later, in Scotland, there were godly Presbyterian leaders like Robert Murray M'Cheyne and Andrew and Horatius Bonar whose hearts also beat for Israel's salvation.

These Presbyterians were convinced that, as far as Israel was concerned, "Blessed is he that blesseth thee." So, in 1839, when revival broke out in the Scottish city of Kilsyth through the preaching of William C. Burns, M'Cheyne and his contemporaries felt they knew why.

There had been much prayer, fasting and sacrifice. There had been a powerful proclamation of the cross. But there was something else: 1839 was the year of M'Cheyne's Jewish mission to Palestine! That, they believed, was why special blessing came. That's why the Spirit was poured out.

M'Cheyne was sure this was to be a lasting pattern: The salvation of the Jewish people meant restoration for the church.

According to Andrew Bonar, speaking in 1889, "Israel is the 'everlasting nation' who are to be life from the dead to all nations. And the sure word of prophecy declares, 'He that scattereth Israel shall gather them.' 'I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me for ever.' 'Yea, I will rejoice over them, and will plant them in their own land assuredly, with all My heart, and with all My soul.'"

And he quoted this poem as well: "Crowned with her fairest hope, the Church shall triumph with her Lord, And earth her jubilee shall keep, when Israel is restored."

Five Truths We Must Recognize

We have no way of knowing how these leaders would have responded to the nation of Israel today, since they envisioned the physical regathering of the Jewish people in conjunction with their spiritual regathering. In other words, they did not envision a reconstituted Jewish state outside of Jewish faith in the Messiah and His return to earth. So it would be misleading for me to call them "Christian Zionists."

But we can say for sure that they all recognized that: 1) the Jewish people were still called by God, on a national

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level; 2) the Old Testament promises to Israel were never rescinded; 3) the church had not displaced Israel in God's plan of salvation; 4) there would be a national, Jewish turning to Israel at the end of the age; 5) the Jewish people would be regathered to their ancient homeland and 6) this would be an event of incredible importance for the whole world.

That is saying a lot!

And because these men were near to God's heart, they had an intense love for the Jewish people and prayed regularly for their salvation. They knew how significant this was—to the Lord, to the church and to the nations.

At the least then, even if you have a problem with the modern state of Israel and have a hard time seeing how it fulfills biblical prophecy, by all means ask God for His passionate heart for the Jewish people—for their salvation and redemption. This matters to the Lord, and it should matter to each of us.

Charles Spurgeon also saw the importance of Israel's redemption, including their return to the land. He said, "I think we do not attach sufficient importance to the restoration of the Jews. We do not think enough about it. But certainly, if there is anything promised in the Bible it is this. I imagine that you cannot read the Bible without seeing clearly that there is to be an actual restoration of the children of Israel."

Spurgeon continued, "For when the Jews are restored, the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in; and as soon as they return, then Jesus will come upon Mount Zion with his ancients gloriously, and the halcyon days of the Millennium shall then dawn; we shall then know every man to be a brother and a friend; Christ shall rule with universal sway."

You will be hard-pressed to find a more Jesus-centered preacher than Spurgeon, yet He too saw the importance of Israel's salvation, including their eventual return to the land. Perhaps he understood something many of us do not understand? Perhaps we're looking at things in the natural realm, and God is at work in the spiritual realm?

Again, I'm not making Spurgeon

"The promises are still Israel's promises. They have not been forfeited and they have not been given to someone else."



into a Christian Zionist. I'm simply saying that for him, it was as clear as anything else in the Bible that the Jewish people would be restored to the land and with that, Jesus would return.

One of the greatest preachers of the last century was D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, and he had this to say about Israel's salvation: "It is remarkable that, although they [the Jews] were without their country for so many centuries, and nations did their utmost to destroy them completely, this nation has been preserved. The only real explanation of this is that God has not finished with them and that there is a day coming when this 'fullness of Israel' is going to be brought back to salvation ... and so God's ultimate promise to Abraham is going to receive a wonderful fulfillment."

Lloyd-Jones was not a dispensationalist, and he did not see the modern restoration of the Jewish people to the land of Israel the way many dispensationalists do, as if Israel were on one track and the church on another. But he certainly witnessed God's preservation of the Jewish people through the horrors of the Holocaust, and it was clear to him that "God has not finished with them and that there is a day coming when this 'fullness of Israel' is going to be brought back to salvation."

We could debate the meaning of "the fullness of Israel," but we cannot debate that for Lloyd-Jones, the Jews as a people were still loved by God and kept by Him for an ultimate divine purpose, even if alienated from Him in the present.

God Won't Break His Promise to Israel

There was a reason Paul's heart was continually broken for his people, to the point that he was willing to forfeit his own salvation if that would bring Israel salvation. And note carefully what he wrote to the Romans: "For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brothers, my kinsmen by race, who are Israelites, to whom belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises, to whom belong the patriarchs, and from whom, according to the flesh, is Christ, who is over all, God forever blessed. Amen" (Rom. 9:3-5, emphasis mine).

Did you catch that? The promises are still Israel's promises. They have not been forfeited, and they have not been given to someone else. By the grace and goodness of God, those promises will be fulfilled, and they include a massive turning of the Jewish people to the Messiah and their physical restoration to the land. At that time, God says through Jeremiah, "I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people" (Jer. 31:1b).

What a glorious day that will be! •

MICHAEL L. BROWN, PHD, is host of

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ERUSALEM: CAPITAL CITY

Why the US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital is significant for the Jewish people, the church and the world



BY RON CANTOR

ec. 6, 2017, was a historic day for the nation of Israel. On that day, Donald Trump fulfilled a significant campaign promise he made as a presidential candidate in March 2016 at an AIPAC (The American Israel Public Affairs Committee) conference.

"When I become president, the days of treating Israel like a second-class citizen will end on Day One," Trump said. " ... We will move the American embassy to the eternal capital of the Jewish people, Jerusalem."

And the world went crazy.

What could unite Hamas, the Palestinian Authority, Iran, Hezbollah and even ISIS? What could cause even America's closest allies to turn against the U.S. and Israel? What earth-shaking event could cause the United Nations to bite the hand that feeds it by voting 128-9 to condemn the United States? In a word: Jerusalem!

But how do we as believers respond? Prolific writer Shira Sorko-Ram of Maoz Israel, who is celebrating her 50th year of ministry in the Holy Land, told me, "Christians have the choice of listening to the U.N., the European Union, the mainstream media and almost all of the 193 nations of the world which say Jerusalem does not belong to the Jewish people. Or they can take a leap of faith in the Word of God and say, 'If the Bible says it 170 times, it must be what God meant!'"

Jerusalem's Role in Bible Prophecy

If you need any more proof that the God of the Bible is real, look to Jerusalem. The Old City is no bigger than a large shopping mall and yet remains the center of world uproar 2,500 years after the prophets of Israel predicted its comeback.

Rabbi Jonathan Cahn, author of several best-sellers, including *The Paradigm*, believes this recognition is crucial. "America's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel is monumental and prophetic," Cahn says. "The Scriptures foretell that in the last days, the Jewish people will return to the land of Israel and to the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem will then become the focal point of world controversy."

Cahn is referring to Zechariah 12:2-3 (NIV): "I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. ... On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves."

Parallel to the restoration of Israel is the rejection of Jerusalem from the nations. Psalm 2 says the nations will rage against God and His Messiah (vv. 1-2). They will be united against Him. God will laugh at their hubris and then judge them in His anger (vv. 4-5). The issue is over the Messiah and His city, Jerusalem, also known as Zion. The Lord makes it clear that the only opinion on Jerusalem that matters is His: "I have installed My king on Zion, My holy hill" (Ps. 2:6, MEV).

It should be no surprise that Jerusalem is on the front page of every major newspaper. Asher Intrater, one of the founders of Tikkun International, an Israel-based Messianic congregational network, reflected on the president's declaration.

"Political events in the Middle East sometimes reflect spiritual issues behind the scenes," Intrater says. "President Trump's declaration about Jerusalem as Israel's capital and the subsequent U.N. reaction show an ever-increasing focus on this city that plays a central role in biblical prophecies. According to end- times

God's Master Plan for Israel

Jerusalem became Israel's capital when King David decided to unite the tribes of Israel. He left Hebron, deep inside his own tribal land of Judah, and captured the Jebusite stronghold next to Mount Moriah, where Abraham nearly sacrificed Isaac. It borders Benjamin. It was under Jewish rule until the Babylonian exile



prophecies, Jerusalem will be the center of conflict in world politics."

The prophets spoke of her restoration 2,500 years ago, and God has watched over His Word. As kingdoms conquer the city and its Jewish inhabitants were exiled and murdered, God never forgot His promise. This is what the Lord Almighty says: "I am exceedingly jealous for Zion, and with great wrath I am jealous for her. Thus says the Lord: I have returned to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem" (Zech. 8:2b-3a).

Rabbi Cahn sees this as impossible without someone behind the scenes, guiding world history.

"The mere fact that the ancient city still exists and is still in the news is amazing enough," Cahn says. "But that in the 21st century, it is the center of global controversy is beyond amazing and against all odds."

Three thousand years ago, David asked, "Why do the nations rage?" (see Ps. 2:1). And the Arab nations used the same word after the Trump recognition, calling for "days of rage." in 586 B.C. The exiles returned when Cyrus, king of Persia sought to restore Jerusalem.

In the first Jewish revolt, General Titus utterly destroyed Jerusalem and its temple. The historian Josephus reported, "Jerusalem ... was so thoroughly razed to the ground by those that demolished it to its foundations, that nothing was left that could ever persuade visitors that it had once been a place of habitation." This was a far cry from the city's destiny to be "the praise of all the earth" (Isa. 62:7b, NIV).

However, in 130 A.D., Emperor Hadrian decided to rebuild the city and thought it would be a nice gift for the Jewish people. But then he was advised that rebuilding the temple would fuel subversion, and instead, he rebuilt the city as a Roman colony and renamed it after Jupiter—ironically causing the very subversion he feared.

Hadrian crushed the subsequent Jewish revolt and became obsessed with ridding the territory from any Jewish influence. He changed the name of the region from Judea to Palestine. In fact, it should be noted that the word "Palestine" goes back to Rome, not to any Arab entity. There has never been an Arab nation called Palestine, and Jerusalem was never the capital of any Arab nation.

Through Hadrian, the rage of the enemy against the Jewish people was unleashed. Jews were forbidden to enter their holy city under threat of death. They were exiled, and the goal was clear: Destroy the Jewish people completely through assimilation, exile and death.

And if you didn't think God has His hand over history, watch this: The number for life in Hebrew is 18. The time between Hadrian's renaming of Jerusalem until Israel became a nation again was 1,818 years!

Johnny Enlow, author, speaker and co-leader of Restore7, posted a prophetic word more than a year ago that predicted Trump's recognition of Jerusalem.

"There is a reason Jerusalem and its destruction is the desire of every principality," Enlow wrote. "Destruction of Jerusalem destroys the master plan, and it is the master plan of our God that will guarantee Jerusalem's future."

Here we are nearly 2,000 years later, with Israel restored and Jerusalem as her capital. You have to be somewhat blind to believe replacement theology-that God is finished with Israel, and the church has replaced the nation. That would mean that by massive coincidence, Israel was reborn in 1948; Jerusalem was restored through the miraculous victory in the Six-Day War; millions of Jewish exiles came back to Zion just as the prophets predicted; and this all occurred while the most persecuted people in history suffered 52 attempted genocides. No nation has ever lost its geographical homeland for more than a short time and remained an identifiable people. Israel wandered for two millennia and survived! Only God could have done that.

Signpost for the Second Coming

And yet, I've seen many believers fret over President Trump's announcement, saying it is irresponsible, dangerous, racist toward Palestinians, inconsequential or an impediment to



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peace, completely missing its spiritual significance. Intrater points to this in his new book, *Alignment*: "The biblical nickname for Jerusalem is Zion, *Tsiyon*. The word 'Zion' means 'signpost.' A signpost points to something. It is a sign; it has sign-ificance. What is the reestablishment of the Jerusalem pointing to?"

Intrater goes on to state that Jerusalem had to be there for the first coming—Yeshua died and rose from the dead in Jerusalem, and the Holy the ends of the earth'" (Acts 1:7-8).

Yeshua clearly indicates that the Father has set the time and date for Israel's restoration. The issue wasn't if but when. The newly Spirit-filled Peter prophesies that Jesus must remain in heaven "until the time of restoring what God spoke through all His holy prophets" (Acts 3:21b). This was what he didn't understand in Chapter 1. But when it is time for the restoration of all things, Israel will be restored with Jerusalem as her capital. And

"Yeshua clearly indicates that the Father has set the time and date for Israel's restoration. The issue wasn't if but when."

Spirit birthed the first Messianic community there. But for the past 2,000 years, as the gospel spread, there was no need for a specific location.

"The starting line and the finish line is Jerusalem," he writes. Jerusalem's reunification is a signpost (Zion) that the countdown to the Second Coming has begun.

Cahn also sees the significance of Trump's announcement.

"The Trump recognition was another critical step in the unfolding of God's prophetic purposes on the road to the return of the Messiah—in the city of Jerusalem," he says.

Restoration of the Nation

When Yeshua's disciples asked Him after His resurrection, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6b). He did not rebuke them for asking a stupid question. For any student of the prophets, that would have been the most logical thing to ask.

A plethora of passages speak to the restoration of Israel in the Old Covenant, so that would be the first, obvious question from His Jewish disciples. And look at Yeshua's response: "He said to them, 'It is not for you to know the times or the dates, which the Father has fixed by His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to we are the generation that has seen it come to pass.

President Trump's Cyrus Call

Many prophetic voices shared before the election that President Trump was a type of Cyrus. Who was Cyrus? He was the Persian king about whom Isaiah prophesied by name 100 years before Cyrus appeared on the scene. The prophecy, recorded in Isaiah 44-45, says Cyrus will:

» rebuild Jerusalem

(Isa. 44:28, 45:13)

- **»** allow the Jews to return (45:13)
- » not know God at first (45:4)
- **»** eventually come to believe (45:3)

The passage even says the people will argue with God about His choice (Isa. 45:9-10).

At this point, it should be clear that the president is called to be a king like Cyrus. Trump is an unlikely choice, but he has favored Zion more than any other U.S. president. There has been much talk about whether or not he is a born-again believer, but we can all agree that he needs us to pray for him.

Benefits of Blessing Israel

Any student of history can tell you that those who bless Israel will be blessed, even as God told Abraham (Gen. 12:3). Rabbi Jonathan Bernis, the host of *Jewish Voice*, told me, "President Trump's recent decision to honor a 23-year-old commitment made by the U.S. to move our embassy to Jerusalem will result in unprecedented blessings for America. God's decree to bless those who bless Israel is still in force and is true for both individuals and nations. I applaud his bold decision to align our nation with God's Word."

In the aforementioned prophecy from more than a year ago, Enlow declared: "Donald Trump as president will be the best friend to Israel that they have ever had. He will attempt to be fair to the Palestinians and try to negotiate a reasonable peace treaty, and the plight of the Palestinians is very important. However ... he will discover that those who represent the Palestinian people are driven by the unreasonable hatred of a demonic principality and have no real desire for peace or compromise.

"President Trump will then expose their hypocrisy and severely turn on them. ... No country on the earth has been more unfairly and unjustly treated by the nations over the last couple of decades than Israel, and there is a now a larger spiritual bill to pay. The nations that have unjustly judged Israel are presently under limited grace for terrorism and the ones that just voted against Israel have just caused another decrease in grace over their nations."

This is exactly what has happened.

God has a plan for Israel, and we don't want to be on the wrong side. Sorko-Ram has a question for Christians who may be on the fence regarding Jerusalem: "When the Lord returns, the book of Acts says He will touch down on the Mount of Olives. Who is going to meet Jesus there? It is the Jewish people who say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord?' (Matt. 23:39b). He returns to a Jerusalem in Jewish hands. Not to the capital of a Muslim state called Palestine."

RON CANTOR is a leader in the Messianic movement in Israel. He is regional director for GOD TV in Jerusalem and serves Tikkun International, an Israel-based, global family of Messianic ministries, as an evangelist and director of media. Learn more at roncantor.com.

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WAGING SPIRITUAL WARFARF OVER ISRAEL

The battle against the Holy Land is raging as the restoration of all things draws near. Here's why—and how—you should pray

BY JENNIFER LECLAIRE

ran has publicly declared its intent to wipe Israel off the map. Universities, church pension funds and major corporations are divesting rather than investing in Israel. The rise of international anti-Semitism—whether from Islamists or extreme leftists and rightists—reveals dark angelic powers are catalyzing concerted attacks to destroy God's chosen people. At the same time, the ongoing restoration process of the Jewish people to their homeland is a clear end-times marker.



These are a few of the reasons Psalm 122:6 commands us to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." Indeed, if there were ever a time to pray for the peace of Jerusalem—to cry out for the nation of Israel—the time is now. Israel is the apple of God's eye (Zech. 2:8). God blesses those who bless Israel (Gen. 12:2-3). Jesus Himself wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). And a growing number of intercessors are weeping over the Holy Land in these last days.

"Israel's enemies are trying to force it to give up land. According to Joel 3:2, this single sin will usher in judgment on the nations," says Sid Roth, a former account executive for Merrill Lynch who was raised in a Jewish home before accepting Messiah, and host of *It's Supernatural*. "Simultaneously, God is about to pour out His

A Practical Prayer to Obey Psalm 122:6

The Bible commands us to pray for Israel. This intercessoryprayer will help you get started.

Oh, Lord God of Israel, we put our trust in You for the security of the nation of Israel. Your Word declares Mount Zion will not be moved! Israel shall abide forever according to Your Word. Adorn its land with Jerusalem as its undivided capital. Send Your *shalom* down on Israel, on its land and on its people, like a wedding canopy. Surround Jerusalem and Your people with Your mighty warrior angels.

Give supernatural protection within and without Israel's borders. Break the scepter of every wicked ruler who plots evil against the land allotted to the righteous. Cleanse Israel's borders of violence and bloodshed, that those You love may not be tempted to do iniquity. Destroy



the power and plan of every regime that threatens the peace and security of Your inheritance and the possession You have given forever.

As You showed favor to Esther in the evil day, we beseech You, stretch out the scepter of righteousness and justice to bring good to the upright in the land! Lead away all those who have dire plans, plots of terrorism or schemes of destruction against Your people. Break apart any league among Israel's enemies who would force Israel to

compromise its inheritance for the sake of false peace.

Ruler of the Nations, have mercy on America, and remember its alms and past acts of kindness for Israel and the Jewish people. As You have determined to bless those who bless Abraham's seed, be kind to America. Take our nation by the hand, and cause us to walk uprightly toward Your people in our generation. Prevent our leaders or people from putting a hand against Your holy people or coming against Israel. Break the influence of Israel's enemies among our leaders and in our economy.

We cry out for America's destiny in Your good purposes to be utterly fulfilled. We bind America as a friend to Israel and the Jewish people. We pray that America would not be named among those who would heave away Jerusalem for the sake of peace with its enemies. Turn the hearts of all our leaders as water that flows to build up Israel according to Your plan.

Raise up Your tabernacle, which has fallen down. Set Your sanctuary in their midst forever. Let all nations see that You have set Israel apart for Yourself. Helper of Israel, do not allow Israel's foot to be moved. Be Israel's keeper and shade at the nation's right hand, keeping watch over it both day and night! Preserve Israel from evil. Preserve its going out and coming in both now and forever. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen!—*Mahesh and Bonnie Chavda*

Scripture References: *Psalms 121, 122, 125; Genesis 12:1-3; Zechariah 12:2-9; Ezekiel 37; Amos 9; Jeremiah 30:18-21; 2 Kings 6:16-17* Spirit worldwide. The devil wants to abort this great harvest by releasing judgment on the nations too early!"

Exploring the End-Times Connection

Avner Boskey, an Israeli Messianic writer, teacher and theologian, makes a clear end-times connection between the return of our Messiah and the Jewish people.

"The majority of major eschatological events in the Bible are connected to the Jewish people: the Second Coming revealed in Matthew 23:37-39; the restoration of all things and the times of refreshing referenced in Acts 3:19-21; much greater riches for the Gentiles from Romans 11:12 and world revival mentioned in Romans 11:15—a strategic prayer priority as well as a matter very close to God's own heart," says Boskey, executive director of Final Frontier Ministries in Israel and author of *Israel: The Key* to World Revival.

Human rights lawyer Irwin Cotler told the Israeli Knesset, the legislative branch of the Israeli government, that Jewish people are experiencing a "new, escalating, global, sophisticated, virulent and even lethal anti-Semitism" that discriminates against and assaults Israel's right to "live as an equal member of the family of nations, in fact, the right even to live."

Some theologians point to the rise of anti-Semitism as the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy about the end times:

"And at that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who shall be found written in the book. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, but others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine as the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who turn the many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever" (Dan. 12:1-3).

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Jewish scholars believe this "time of trouble" is a last-days oppression of Israel by Ishmael's descendants (read: the Arab terrorist attacks against the nation of Israel). *The Telegraph* highlighted what few in secular media are willing to admit with a headline, "Why is the world ignoring a wave of terror in Israel?" and concluded, "Such acts of pitiless slaughter are the direct result of a pervasive Palestinian infrastructure."

"Anti-Semitism will continue to rise, based on the principle, 'Whatever God chooses to love, Satan chooses to hate,'" Boskey says. "Revelation 12:1, 13 reveals that Satan's Last Days strategies—like in Moses' day in Exodus 1:16-22—involves a targeted genocidal attack against the sons and daughters of Jacob. Hitler's murderous His people, and a pervasiveness of a volatile hatred toward the Jews that can no longer be ignored," Stearns says. "For Christians, our ability to speak accurately to the issues of our day will be connected to how we respond to matters surrounding the Jewish people."

Why More Christians Don't Pray

With so much turmoil in our own nation, most Americans are not praying for the peace of Jerusalem. Even many Christians are not interceding for God's chosen people. Roth points out the blessings of praying for Israel. Genesis 12:3 promises blessings in all areas of life.

"God promises in Psalm 122:6, if we pray for the peace of Jerusalem, we will prosper," Roth says. "The word

"For Christians, our ability to speak accurately to the issues of our day will be connected to how we respond to matters surrounding the Jewish people."

exploits are a precursor to where current events are leading. Surveys and analyses of anti-Semitic attacks across the world show a verifiable increase in such activity. Europe still leads the pack in this regard."

Robert Stearns, founder and executive director of Eagles' Wings—a movement of churches, ministries and leaders—also sees anti-Semitism on the rise at college campuses, in political spheres, in the streets of American cities—and even in our churches.

"We are living in an hour of ideological warfare against the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and against 'prosper' in Hebrew means something money can't buy. It means 'heart peace.' When you pray for the peace of Jerusalem, you are praying for the salvation of Jews and Arabs. It's not an accident that the letters USA are in the center of the name Jerusalem. As long as we are a friend of Israel, the USA will be blessed."

Stearns points to tradition and formalism in the Western church as two reasons more Christians don't commit to standing in the gap for Israel. He also blames biblical illiteracy and a media that propagates social viewpoints promoting anti-Semitism. "The issue of Israel in particular carries with it an especially pronounced vulnerability to misinterpretation, which I believe is connected also to the spiritual battle that is being fought against Israel and the Jewish people since the days of the Old Testament," Stearns says. "That's evidenced by such biblical accounts as Haman's evil plots in the days of Esther."

Releasing Intercession for Israel

So how, then, do we make intercession for Israel? Where do we start? Boskey suggests a three-point prayer request list: (1) physical protection and restoration to the land in light of the rise of anti-Semitism; (2) spiritual revelation among Jewish people about Messiah Yeshua as per Zechariah 12:10; and (3) the Jewish people to enter fully into their prophetic calling as a light and servant to the nations (Is. 49:5-6; Acts 13:47) and a mighty end-times Spirit-filled army (Ezek. 37:9-11; Zech. 12:1-9; Ps. 110:1-3).

"We also must pray against distortion in the media, against radical Islam and jihad, and against anti-Semitism not only in Israel but around the world," Stearns says. "Lastly, we must pray diligently for the peace of Jerusalem. By praying faithfully for Israel, we also receive understanding and insights into what God is doing in the world today, so that we can serve God's purposes with clarity and courage."

Despite the horrific terror attacks and despite the reality that Israel is surrounded by enemies—Roth is convinced that God is about to pour out His Spirit on Israel.

"Pray that many Israelis are saved and discipled," Roth says. "The Jew was called by God to evangelize the world. Watch what happens when Jews are red-hot for Jesus and start evangelizing the nations one more time!" •

JENNIFER LECLAIRE was senior editor of Charisma magazine, is director of the Awakening House of Prayer and author of The Next Great Move of God. Visit her online at jenniferleclaire.org. Her new book, Vindicated: Keys to Seeing God's Justice in Every Area of Your Life, releases in October, and is available now for pre-sale on amazon.com.

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The ongoing DISARRAY throughout the Middle East has set the stage for an ALLIANCE OF NATIONS bent on Israel's TOTAL DESTRUCTION. With God's chosen people IN TARGET 24/7, who will stand with them amid the IMPENDING CRISIS?

BY JACK HAYFORD

side from the hustling crowds and rush-hour traffic jams that define any international metropolis, Jerusalem astounds most of its tourists with how peaceful the city truly is. While the global media assaults readers with reports of nearby suicide bombings and young zealots throwing rocks across Jewish-Palestinian borders, those who live in Israel's capital city know a different story, a different reality. Theirs is one of surprising peace in a nation whose very existence symbolizes the dichotomy of "possessing the land" amid neighbors—both immediate and far away—who would rather see them dead.

To find the violent, conflict-filled story most incorrectly think is Israel's narrative, all you have to do is drive two or three hours toward virtually any nation surrounding the Holy Land today. Because although the West heralded the Arab Spring only three years ago as the dawning of democracy in nations ruled by tyrannous dictators, the fruit of these ongoing political uprisings has been anything but freedom and stability. For Israel, it's simply increased the shared nightmare most Jews live with each day: that they are staring down the barrel of a gun, no matter which direction they turn.

In Iran, anti-Semitic rhetoric flows from the mouths of its top leaders—whether current "moderate" President Hasan Rouhani, ousted madman Mahmoud Ahmadinejad or Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei—as they openly declare Israel to be a "cancerous tumor in the heart of the Islamic world" that "must be cleansed." Who can forget Ahmadinejad's defiant vow to the United Nations' General Assembly in September 2012 that Israel would be "eliminated"?

In Egypt and Iraq, the ongoing instability and influence of the Muslim Brotherhood yes, even after former Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi's ousting—have propelled Salafist jihadist military campaigns, which are also bent on Israel's total destruction, like never before. continued » Meanwhile, the rise of other extremist Islamic forces in Syria, Tunisia, Lebanon, Libya and Yemen merely strengthens what has become a resounding cry to see Israel wiped off the map. And among the few neighboring countries with whom Israel had established peace treaties—namely, Egypt, Jordan and Turkey—these relations have been frayed to a thread.

As Christians, we have a different script to follow—one in which we know who will return to reign physically over this global focal point that has been dominated with strife and violence since the days of Abraham. Why, then, should believers be so concerned over such a tiny speck of land? What does it really matter?

Why Israel Matters So Much

I am convinced one of Satan's greatest tools that keeps the Western church in the dark concerning God's end-time plan for our world is to minimize or negate the role Israel plays today. Tragically, rather than stand up for those whom God has called His people (Joel 2:18; 3:2; Jer. 50:6-7), we'd prefer to argue over the differences between supporting Israel as a state versus supporting the Jewish people.

Some within the church disregard Israel's crisis in favor of the Palestinian plight (whom they argue have equal rights as "sons of Abraham"), while others have gone so far as to adopt a replacement theology perspective that believes the church, through Jesus Christ, has replaced Israel when it comes God's purpose, plan and promises.

All of these viewpoints are not only misguided, they also come at the expense of Israel at a time when the church is called to be her strongest ally amid an emergence of nations possessing a demonically driven desire to see the Jewish people eradicated.

Given this, let's get a few foundational things straight.

Israel is a land about which God says uniquely, prophetically, redemptively and repeatedly in the Bible, "This is Mine" (Joel 1:6; Zech. 2:5-7; Gen. 35:10-15).

God refers to Israel as He does to no other land on earth. Israel was raised up to be a light to the Gentiles.

Perhaps the most pointed statement regarding the importance of the Jews is from the lips of our Lord and Savior Himself. In His conversation with the Samaritan woman, recorded in John 4:1-26, Jesus is very definitive: "Salvation is of the Jews" (v. 22). With these words He categorically points to the pathway by which the entirety of God's program of redemption was brought to earth and now is present in His Person.

One of Satan's greatest tools that keeps the Western church in the dark concerning God's end-time plan for our world is to minimize or negate the role Israel plays today.

Further, the church at its inception was virtually entirely Jewish, and it remained so until the gospel began to spread. Ultimately the gospel spread to Antioch, where the first Gentile congregation began and the base from which the gospel spread into all the world.

In Romans 9-11, the apostle Paul deals specifically with the question of the Jews' role in God's providence and purpose.

Within the whole of the Bible, these three chapters virtually stand alone as an elaboration of the theology of God's dealing with Jews.

The Jews were the "firstfruit"—the "first people" (through Abraham) to understand a covenant God. They then relayed the riches of that truth to the world, and through their agency, the Messiah came into the world.

The Word of God calls Jews the "root" and Gentiles the "branches" (Rom. 11:16-27). We're reminded that while "because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith," we are not to become haughty but to fear: "For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either" (vv. 20-21). When the fullness of the Gentiles is completed, "all Israel will be saved" (v. 26)—that is, the present Church Age.

So why stand with Israel today?

"I WILL BLESS THOSE WHO BLESS YOU, AND I WILL CURSE HIM WHO CURSES YOU; AND IN YOU ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED."

★ Genesis 12:3

8 Reasons to Stand With Israel

We are living in a sobering moment in history that calls us, as believers in Jesus Christ, to take a stand with Israel. Given that we live in a miraculous era that has seen the Jewish people regain political control of their own land, which they were without for more than 2,300 years, and once again become an official nation, we could be people of the last hour. Yet we are not to be passive in the face of prophecy; we are called to pray with passion, to intercede and to minister according to the words of the Savior who said it is not our task to speculate when the end will be. It is our responsibility to do "kingdom business" until He comes (Luke 19:13).

This is not about politics; this is about the *Word of God, but the political ramifications are extremely dramatic*. Scripture declares there will come a time when all the nations of the world will turn against Israel (Zech. 12:1-14). Ongoing developments in the Middle East inescapably demonstrate the present moment and make it highly conceivable that this could happen in our time. Accordingly, it is critical that believers understand the specific reasons for why we should stand with Israel today.

1) Divine Order

Every believer is charged to make the Jews a priority in his or her value system. Why? Because God has. As a result, we are to render thanksgiving for God's work via them as a people.

Understanding the basis of the attention we give to the Jews has to do with understanding God's divine order and things He has said. This involves both a people and a land (the latter of which we will cover shortly in another reason).

continued »

Remember, the Lord first selected a people. He began by selecting a man named Abraham. The Lord said that through Abraham's seed (in relationship with his wife, Sarah, giving birth to the promised child, Isaac), all the nations would be blessed. Through this people, every human being would have access to the divine blessing of Almighty God.

In Genesis 12:3, the Lord says in the covenant He makes with Abraham, "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Upon Jesus' return to earth, the Lord will judge nations and deal with them for their decisions, just as He Moses, God offered the revelation of the Law, given as a teaching means to lead us to Christ: redemption through the blood of the Lamb (Gal. 3:19-29).

» *The New Covenant.* In Jeremiah and Ezekiel, God says in words almost parallel: "For the time will come that I will take My Law and I will make a new covenant with you, and I will put My Spirit within you" (Jer. 31:31-33; Ezek. 36:27).

4) The greatest gift: the wonder of the gift of Jesus to mankind. John 3:16 explains that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." He gave Him through the Jews, and He came as a Jew. Jesus Himself, speaking to the woman of Samaria, said, "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22).

God makes a specific promise of judgment — of being either blessed or cursed — related to Abraham's seed.

does individuals. Yet He makes a specific promise of judgment—of being either blessed or cursed—related to Abraham's seed. It's vital that we see this relates not only to a people (Jews), but also to a land (Israel).

In Romans 9:4-5, we find a revealing passage that outlines the Lord's purposes for which He chose this people: "who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen."

God chose the Israelites to be the vessels for four overarching things:

1) **The adoption:** God's divine choice of the seed of Abraham as a people.

2) The glory: the manifest presence of God revealing Himself.

3) The covenants: the commitments that God makes. These are evident in three forms through Scripture:

» The Abrahamic Covenant. In this foundational covenant, God essentially told Abraham, "I will give you a people and a land, and through this seed the nations of the earth will be blessed" (Gen. 17:2-8).

» The Mosaic Covenant. Through

So Scripture speaks to us very clearly: We're dealing with the root of everything that has to do with the revelation of God to humankind. The proof of this today is in the very existence of the Jews as a people and the fact that they've been recovered as a nation (Ezek. 37). And now, the modern-day struggle is over Jerusalem, over Israel and over the presence of Jews and their right to have a land. Almost every nation refuses to make an abiding commitment to stand by the Jews and Israel. Only a few remain, but the Bible says God will honor those who do.

2) Spiritual Link

Our place in God's present order inextricably links us with the Jews as a people, and thereby the land of Israel, according to the Word. When we put our faith in the Redeemer who came through the Jews, we enter into a line of those who have trusted God according to His revealed grace and purpose.

Scripture declares that, spiritually speaking, when you receive the Lord, you become a Jew (Rom. 2:28-29, Gal. 3:26-29). If you are a believer, you cannot be consistent with the whole of Scripture and take a position that is passive toward the Jews and Israel.

3) God's Promises Over the Land

God has made unique declarations regarding the land of Israel that have never been rescinded:

» Leviticus 25:23—The land is the Lord's land, and it is His to assign and dispose of: "The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine."

» Deuteronomy 32:43—"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people ... He will provide atonement for His land and His people."

» 2 Chronicles 7:20—God says, "[If the people violate Me], I will uproot them from My land which I have given them."

» Psalm 85:1-2—"Lord, You have been favorable to Your land; You have brought back the captivity of Jacob. You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people; You have covered all their sin."

» Isaiah 8:8—This land belongs to Father God, and it is the land of His Messiah: "The stretching out of his wings will fill the breadth of Your land, O Immanuel."

» Jeremiah 2:7—The Lord tells the people why there will come the loss the destruction—of the city of Jerusalem: "I brought you into a bountiful country. ... But when you entered, you defiled My land and made My heritage an abomination."

» Ezekiel 38:16—God is speaking to people in the end times who rise up against Israel, and He is speaking of a confrontation that will take place in His land: "You will come up against My people Israel. ... I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you."

» Joel 1:6; 2:18; 3:2—Three times in this book, the land is referred to as belonging to the Lord: "For a nation has come up against My land" (1:6); "Then the Lord will be zealous for His land" (2:18); "I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land" (3:2).

» Hosea 9:3—This refers to the scattering of Israel: "They shall not

Simply Christ Gospel Insight with Keith Surface

Falling Stars

Recently, a minister asked for my thoughts concerning what seems like a continuous stream of well-known ministers being exposed for sinful activity. I had no immediate thoughts, but for the next two days in my spirit I heard the record John gave when the sixth seal was opened, saying, "And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Revelation 6:13. I then understood that a great wind is blowing through the church and casting many religious "stars" to the ground.

None of us are exempt from the words of Jesus, who said, "...*if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.*" John 8:24. This was not spoken to the prostitute or street vandal, but to those who thought they were the elect of God. Although they had climbed to the top of their religious system, all their religious activity and wisdom would end up failing them. Why? The answer is simple. They refused to believe that Jesus was the Christ whom God

promised would come into the world.

These same people had spent their lives looking for one who would fulfill the prophecy of "Messiah the Prince," which was given to the prophet Daniel. At the heart of this prophecy was the declaration that Messiah would come to "...make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting

righteousness... "Daniel 9:24. While the religious leaders of the Jews believed Christ would make an end of sins when he came, they rejected that Jesus of Nazareth was in fact the Christ. In rejecting Jesus, they were rejecting the deliverance God had prepared for them. All their religious efforts and wisdom would change nothing. Their religious devotion could not make them free, so they died in their sin.

Today, there is an equal but opposite condition in the church. Jesus is believed upon and extolled, but the work of deliverance God promised he would accomplish is rejected. Few accept or believe that Jesus died to "*make an end of sin*" in anyone. In fact, the greatest boasting of religious leaders seems to be that we are all sinners and sin every day. It is then no great wonder that these religious "*stars*" end up proving it to us over and over through their shameful deeds.

You do not have to live or die in sin. The Apostle John told us, "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin." I John 3:5. The truth, which Jesus said, "shall make you free" John 8:32 is the knowledge that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, and that on the cross he truly did "...make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness..." This same work is what he will do today in the heart of anyone who will actually believe him.

John the Baptist described Jesus as "*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*." John 1:29. If I offered to take away your money, you would not be confused about what I meant. Yet people twist God's word inside and out seeking to deny that Jesus actually takes sin away. But he does! He takes it out

> of our heart, out of our life, and out of our nature! You will continue to struggle with sin until you believe God's word and trust in Jesus to take it all away. He is the Christ; therefore, this is his purpose; this is his promise; this is what he has done!

> Some may be sincere, but every time a religious "*star*" falls in shame, it is evidence that what they taught and believed has not worked. If it had, they would not be in the darkness of sin. We must remember, however, that for anyone who will believe the truth and trust in Christ, there is a Savior who "*is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy…*" Jude 24.

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dwell in the Lord's land, but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and shall eat unclean things in Assyria."

» Zechariah 9:16—"The Lord their God will save them in that day, as the flock of His people. For they shall be like the jewels of a crown, lifted like a banner over His land."

When we talk about Israel, we are dealing with: 1) a piece of property that God has made pronouncements about and 2) God's people to whom He's given the land. It is a major issue with the Creator of all things, and it is non-negotiable. Things that God has said uniquely about Israel have never been rescinded.

Not only does the land belong to God, but also God has committed the land to Abraham and his offspring via Isaac forever (Gen. 17:7-8). Isaiah 54:8-10 reaffirms this as the Lord said, "With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you. ... My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed."

The loss of governance by Israel through sin and dispersion has not altered God's announced commitment to make it theirs forever. (If you doubt this, read Ezekiel 37.)

4) Media Misrepresentation

Virtually every news report on the conflict involving Israel today presents Israel as the aggressor, notwithstanding the fact that the hostilities were provoked by Palestinian or Hamas shellings or rocket fire, against which the nation had to take action in self-defense. For example, when Israel gave Gaza back as an effort to establish grounds for advancing the "peace process," within months the same area became a staging ground by the Palestinians for new unprovoked attacks on Israel.

This represents the futile efforts Israel has faced at every turn when attempting to negotiate peace, since the media reports consistently assign responsibility to Israel as the initiator of aggression, when in fact the action of the Israel Defense Forces is only to raise a shield of self-defense. Consequently, Israel's present conflict is neither by its initiative nor perpetuated by expansionism or racism on its part. The general attitude of the world today regards the Palestinians as the underdog and the victim, but Israel is defending the land covenanted to them in 1917 and established by the United Nations Assembly in 1948. The Palestinian goal is not to secure a homeland but to drive Israel out altogether. For the sake of mounting public opinion against Israel, surrounding, well-resourced Arab nations have never offered refuge to the Palestinians. The majority of the world doesn't know this, and nobody is bothering to tell them because sympathies are so overridden by other forces.

Remember, this is not about politics, yet the ramifications of this struggle inevitably involve governments, which are intended to represent people groups. And among Christians, this is where we often confuse the matter—which is why it's crucial that we understand ...

5) Arab Rights

To stand with Israel is not to oppose the Arab people as an entity, nor to oppose the rights of Arabs living in Israel to a peaceful, politically secure and prosperous life. God has no disposition against any human being, certainly not Arabs, who are the offspring of Ishmael, the other son of His chosen leader, Abraham. Standing for Israel doesn't require an anti-Arab stance and doesn't require us to be loveless toward other people.

Though the world may not understand this stance, we can defy their logic through Christ. As Jesus said, "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

6) Spiritual Warfare

The relentless animosities of sectors of the Arab world are not merely political causes but are driven by spiritual powers that will not be satisfied until Israel ceases to exist.

Even unbelievers can recognize the uncanny patterns of vehement anti-Semitic rhetoric shared between the likes of Adolf Hitler and modern-day Arab leaders such as Ahmadinejad, Khamenei and their successors. The forces opposed to Israel are not simply those of people who don't like Jews. We are caught in the stream of spiritual forces greater than humanity, forces that cannot be overthrown politically or by the power of persuasion. These forces can only be broken by intercessory prayer where principalities and powers are cast down.

7) Shared Persecution

If we think Israelis are the only ones in the line of fire in this conflict, we're deceived. The same spirit driving these animosities is equally opposed to Christians as to Jews, and in time will eventually bring persecution to both.

Just as Scripture describes two witnesses that will be put to death in Jerusalem at the very end of time (Rev. 11), generally the "two witnesses" that have stood for the living God throughout history have been the Jews and the Christians. The presence of the entire Judeo-Christian ethic, values and testimony is the most assailed religious/ spiritual testimony in today's world and is allowed to be persecuted with impunity. Too often we hear incidents where such "witness" exists where violated rights or outright brutality finds only a silent response from the U.N. or the world press.

The hostilities and animosities are just as leveled at believers as they are at Israel because there is a spirit of the world that is against "all that is called God" (2 Thess. 2:4) and all things testifying to His existence, love, worth and glory.

8) God's Summoning

A biblical assignment and a divine promise summon our stand in faith, our intercession with expectancy and our support with promise (Eph. 6:10-20).

We are called to stand with Israel today because we could be people of the last hour. The Lord has called us to be people with moral and biblical conviction, walking wisely and knowing His Word. He will honor those who make an abiding commitment to stand with the land He's called uniquely His.

JACK HAYFORD was the founding pastor of The Church On The Way in Van Nuys, California, and founder and chancellor of The King's University. Pastor Jack graduated to glory on January 8, 2023, at the age of 88.

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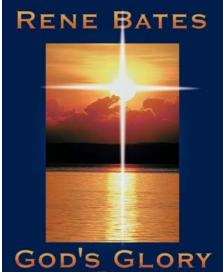
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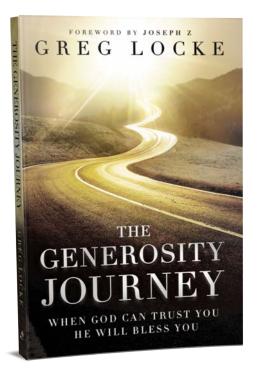
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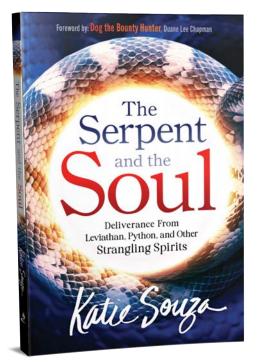
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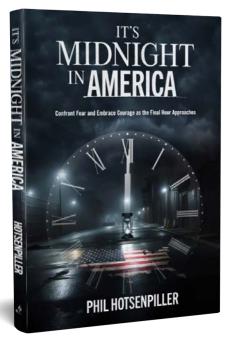
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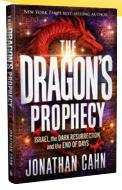
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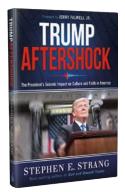
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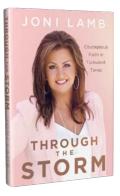
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