



# *Understanding* **ISRAEL**

*“For I do not desire,  
brethren, that you  
should be ignorant  
of this mystery...”  
(Romans 11:25)*

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**KAY-CHONG YEO**



TEACHING SERIES  
FORERUNNER RESOURCE



# Understanding Israel

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

**Kay-Chong Yeo**  
**2020**

**Understanding Israel**

by Kay-Chong Yeo

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# Part I

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# The Importance and Necessity of Understanding Romans 11:25

## A. Introduction

1. In Romans 11:25, Paul is talking to a predominantly Gentile audience in the Church of Rome. He has a tremendous pastoral burden for them as a people.
2. Paul is going to bring them into an understanding of some new dimensions of God's purposes.
  - a. He is addressing the importance and necessity of understanding the mystery of Israel.
  - b. The very crux of Rom. 11:20–22 is that their personal faith would be put in jeopardy if they do not have understanding of the dynamics that could happen within their lifetime.
  - c. If the people of God were ignorant of these dimensions of God's purposes, it would lead them into spiritual arrogance and to ultimately resist the truth of God. Paul is warning them that their very faith could be jeopardized because of their ignorance.
3. What is the mystery of God? (Rom. 16:25–26)
  - a. There are mysteries in the Gospel of our LORD Jesus Christ. By His grace, the LORD will release and reveal these mysteries to His people, the Church of Jesus Christ.
  - b. These mysteries of the Gospel are not “new truths” but they are truths that have been hidden. At the right time and season, the Holy Spirit will reveal them to the people of God.

## B. “I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant...” (Rom. 11:25)

1. The verse speaks of Paul's tremendous burden for the Gentile Church to understand the mystery of Israel.
2. If it is important for the Church during Paul's generation to understand this mystery, it is even more crucial for our generation.
  - a. We are the generation in which the LORD will return!
  - b. We are the generation in which Israel has returned to her land!
3. We must develop a sense of urgency to understand this mystery. Many things are bearing witness to the fact that in the next several decades, things would really culminate with the coming of the Lord.
4. We need to ask the LORD for the spirit of the sons of Issachar (1 Chr. 12:32) so that we may understand the times and know what to do.

**C. “...lest you should be wise in your own opinion...” (Rom. 11:25)**

1. Paul's concern for the Roman church in Rom. 11: 20–22 is that this ignorance would actually grow into arrogance. It would end in apostasy before it was over. That is what burdened his heart.
2. Apparently, arrogance and haughtiness were beginning to subtly set in within the Roman Church towards the issue of Israel.
3. Two general attitudes began to develop in the hearts of Gentile believers (Rom. 11:18–22):
  - a. A presumed superiority over the Jewish people due to their rejection of the Gospel;
  - b. A subtle dishonoring of Jewish believers of Jesus (i.e. Messianic believers) in their midst.
4. Paul tells the Gentiles not be ignorant of this mystery as they could end up in trouble.
  - a. Ignorance or the lack of understanding will give rise to arrogance. Arrogance will lead to passive resistance against the truth of God and eventually becomes active resistance against God (i.e. lawlessness). The end result will be apostasy and in this context, anti-Semitism.
  - b. Not everyone's ignorance ends up in arrogance. However, when pressure comes (e.g. during the End of the Age), being ignorant can have serious consequences.
    - i. We cannot afford to be ignorant when the pressure comes. This ignorance, if not dealt with and removed, will continue to grow unperceived under the surface. Eventually, we will have a root system of arrogance that we are not even aware of.
    - ii. A lack of understanding will lead to arrogance, compromise and eventually result in the possibility of the Gentiles denying their faith and thus being cut off by God. This was the chief concern and burden of Paul.
5. Most Gentile believers are significantly unaware of the plan of God as revealed in Rom. 11:18–20, and of the jeopardy they will be in if they do not understand it so as to cooperate fully with the grace of God.
6. The Lord is going to help us to comprehend the mystery of Israel in a complete way. We are going to receive the full weight of Paul's revelation in Rom. 11.
7. It is critical for the Gentile Church to re-connect to the purposes of God for Israel. Only by understanding and contending for God's purposes for Israel would we be entering into God's larger purpose.
8. It is God's plan to unite the two groups in deep, affectionate partnership, humility and agreement. The Jews, according to Paul, had served the Gentiles richly even in their failure (Rom. 11:12).
9. When we come into agreement with God regarding His plan and purposes for Israel:
  - a. We must not give in to unsanctified sympathy and affection for the Jews apart from God's desire and plan.

- b. We must recognize that God desires to bring her into her fullness through great fire and testing (Zech. 13:9).
- c. We are called to be bold in proclaiming God's plan for Israel and to stand with her in prayer for her salvation and destiny while she undergoes testing as part of God's plan for her.

#### **D. Five Dimensions of the Mystery of Israel**

1. Israel's blindness to the Gospel is pre-ordained by God.
 

*"...blindness in part has happened..."* (Rom. 11:25)

  - a. Paul understands that the blindness that has come to his ethnic Israelites is due to the divine and sovereign purpose of God. He also understands that it is neither total nor final. God is not finished with Israel!
  - b. Because of the fall of Israel and her failure to recognize Jesus as her Messiah, the Gospel had come to the Gentiles. This was part of God's divine plan and sovereignty (Rom. 11:7–12).
  - c. To fully comprehend this, we need to develop an understanding of the mystery of God's election (Rom. 9:14–23).
2. Israel's blindness to the Gospel will be lifted.
 

*"...UNTIL the fullness of the Gentiles has come in."* (Rom. 11:25)

  - a. God promises that Israel will receive the Gospel and return to her Messiah when the fullness of the Gentiles has been fulfilled.
  - b. The fullness of Gentiles refers to:
    - i. The preaching of the Gospel to the ends of the earth (Matt. 24:14);
    - ii. The fullness of God's power manifested in the Gentile Church (Joel 2:28–32);
    - iii. The rise of the mature Bride of Christ (Eph. 5:25–27; Rev. 22:17).
3. All Israel will be saved.
 

*"And so all Israel will be saved..."* (Rom. 11:26)

  - a. This is not just a Bible verse; it is a spiritual reality. We cannot enter into this reality except by revelation.
  - b. There will come a time, after the "fullness of Gentiles" has come in, where not only would Israel's blindness be lifted, but her sinful behavior and ungodly idols, patterns and cultural compromises would also be taken away at a national level.
  - c. Three dimensions to the fullness of Israel's salvation:
    - i. Fullness of salvation (Zech. 13:8);
    - ii. Fullness of deliverance from her enemies (Isa. 26);
    - iii. Fullness of cleansing and removal of her sins (Isa. 27; 59; Zech. 13:1–6).

4. Israel is the beloved of God.  
“...but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.” (Rom. 11:28)
- a. Paul tries to connect the Gentile believers with the mindset and emotions of God towards the unbelieving Jews. Even when there is great resistance from the ethnic Jews towards Jesus and the Gospel, God still loves His beloved people.
  - b. What will bolster the heart of Gentile believers in their commitment to Israel in the face of fierce opposition and pressure in the coming days is the delight of Jesus for His people. The Gentile believers need to remain connected to Jesus’ heart for Israel.
  - c. Paul’s reference to the “election” speaks of the Jewish people being chosen by God from among the nations to fulfill His purpose.
    - i. God elected them from among all of the peoples of the earth to be the ones to walk out the eight divine entrustments in Rom. 9:4–5 and to walk out the partial blindness and failures.
    - ii. Most of all, Israel has been elected to express the fullness of a nation that walks in obedience to God before all the peoples of the earth.
  - d. Jesus has great zeal and passion for Israel as He views her not just based on her present reality. He views her according to His covenantal commitments to her fathers (i.e. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David).
  - e. Jesus also views her according to His commitment to her destiny and fullness in the days to come. He views her according to her past heritage and her future obedience and devotion. He is filled with love for her that is both covenantal and prophetic in nature!
5. God’s call for Israel is irrevocable!  
“For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Rom. 11:29)
- a. Though her current condition is discouraging, Jesus has not forgotten her destiny and what she has been chosen for. His covenantal commitment to deliver her from both the nations and her own disobedience will stun the Jews and cause the nations to tremble (Isa. 49:14–16; Ps. 102:12–16).
  - b. His purpose in electing Israel is laid out in detail in Deut. 28:1–4. This is related to their complete and careful obedience that will result in great blessings of the LORD upon her.
  - c. At the End of the Age, upon being provoked to jealousy by the Gentile Church, Israel will in turn provoke the nations of the earth under the leadership of Jesus to walk out the commandments of the LORD. The nations will flock to Israel to learn from her that they might walk in the same blessings and abundance (Isa. 2:2–3).

### **E. Three Litmus Tests of Understanding the Mystery of Israel**

1. We love and pray for Israel (Rom. 9:2–3; 10:1)  
True understanding of the mystery of Israel will cause us to devote a large amount of time to love and pray for Israel.
2. We are awestruck by God (Rom. 11:33–36)
  - a. True understanding of the mystery of Israel will awaken our spirit to be in awe of God: “Oh! The depth of the riches...” in Rom. 11:33. If this does not cause us to be awestruck, then we have not fully understood it.
  - b. Regardless of how much we study this mystery, we have not really touched the essence of this truth yet if it does not awaken our spirit with awe towards God.
  - c. There is no other response that should give us the confidence that we have understood. Unfortunately, so many Gentile believers get caught up with being sentimental towards Israel but they are not awestruck with Jesus and with the plan of God.
3. We will live for God with reckless abandon (Rom. 12:1–2)
  - a. When we understand Romans 11:25, it will awaken awe in us (v.33–36) which will produce this steady abandonment of chapter 12:1. If it does not produce a sense of living with abandon unto the Lord or a desire to be wholly given to God, then we have not understood Romans 11.
  - b. One of the great theological mistakes of history is that the “therefore” in Romans 12 points back to Romans 3 – 8. On the contrary, Romans 12:1 is actually all about Romans 11.
  - c. If you find yourself more reluctant to give your time, money and energy to God, you have not understood Romans 11 even if you have preached on it for years. If you find yourself with greater grace and a greater ease to throw yourself into the fullness of what God is saying and doing, then you have understood the message of Romans 11.

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# A Basic Foundation in Understanding Israel

## A. Introduction — Seeing the Big Picture

1. Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone for all people. There is no separate plan of salvation for Israel (Rom. 4:1–3).
2. God only has one people, one Body, one Bride, and one redemptive plan. The end of that plan is that both Jew and Gentile would be united into one new man (Eph. 2:15).
3. There is no distinction between Jew and Gentile from the standpoint of the Gospel. While God maintains His election of Israel as His redemptive vehicle on the earth, He enforces no distinction between Jew and Gentile. Even from the Old Covenant, God has always desired all nations to enter into that covenant and be grafted into His covenant people (Acts 15:9; Rom. 3:22; 10:12; Col. 3:11; Ex. 12:48; Num. 15:15, 26).
4. Standing with Israel does not mean agreeing with everything they do!  
Very much like parents who will stand by their child to the end (no matter what happens), but will strongly disagree with some of their child's decisions, so we are called to stand (as God Himself does) by Israel's side, even though we might and should disagree with some of her policies.
5. Standing with Israel does not mean adopting Jewish culture.  
Flying the Jewish flag and blowing the shofar does not mean that we are standing with Israel. In like manner, not flying the Jewish flag and not blowing the shofar does not mean that we are not standing with Israel. If you like Jewish culture, enjoy it. If you do not like their culture, there's no need to worry about it. The issue is not their culture.

## B. The Real Issue about Israel

1. The Real Issue — God's Sovereign Election (Rom. 9:11)
  - a. The issue about Israel isn't actually about Israel! It is about God and His sovereign right to elect (choose) a people through whom He would reveal Himself.
  - b. This issue goes back to the Garden of Eden where God elected a tree and demanded that man would honor His election. Man rebelled against this, and we are living the rest of history in the fallen world as a result.
  - c. But God has a plan! God elected and chose to confine Himself to a course of action on the earth. That course of action was to bring Himself forth in the flesh through a woman. That woman would come from a specific lineage that God would choose. The whole of history from Adam through Christ, and even until now, is about God exercising His right to choose (Gen. 3:15).

2. Israel exists because God elected a gentile, pagan, idolatrous Iraqi named Abram (Gen. 18:18)
  - a. God chose him, set him apart, changed his name to Abraham, and made a covenant with him. God did not choose Abraham because he was Jewish, or even righteous.
  - b. Instead, God chose a man through whom He would reveal Himself to the nations of the earth, and set that man apart to be the father of a new nation that was not a nation. God chose that salvation would come through Abraham.
3. God elected Isaac, and not Ishmael. God elected Jacob, and not Esau. It was not because of anything about the individuals, but it was about God choosing a lineage through which salvation would be made available to all who believe. There could only be one line, because Jesus was going to be human (Rom. 9:11).
4. Out of the nations of the earth, God called forth His very own nation. It was never about Israel but was always about God creating a context to be born into and to bring salvation to the nations through. It was about God declaring Himself to the nations.
5. When we speak of Israel, we must understand that we are speaking of God's sovereign election of a people through whom He would bring the light of revelation and eventually the Light of Christ (Rom. 9:20; 11:17–22).
  - a. We must tread with reverence on the holy ground of Israel, knowing that we tread in the realm of God's Right to Choose.
  - b. We must not become arrogant against God and those He has chosen, nor be wise in our own estimation and question God's choice.
  - c. We must have a holy fear regarding the issue of Israel, because we tread in the realm of the kindness and severity of God.

### **C. God is NOT Finished with Israel**

1. God has not rejected Israel (Rom. 11:1–2);
2. Israel's rejection of God in Christ is neither full nor final (Rom. 11:11);
3. Israel has experienced a partial hardening (Rom. 11:25);
4. God's calling is irrevocable (Rom. 11:28–29);
5. ALL Israel will be saved (Rom. 11:26).

### **D. Jesus is returning to Jerusalem to Rule the Earth**

1. We must understand that Jesus is coming back to the earth to rule forever from a throne, and that throne will be in Jerusalem (Acts 1:1–12; Ps. 132:13–14; Jer. 3:17);
2. We must understand that Jesus is returning to the remnant of Israel that survives the Great Tribulation and who then repent and believe in Him. He is not returning to "the Earth" in a vague way, but to Jerusalem specifically. He is not returning to "humans" generally, but specifically to redeem Israel (Zech. 14:4, 16–17; Ps. 110:2; Joel 3:17).

## **E. Israel was and will be God's Vehicle of Salvation**

1. The reason that Israel is "the chosen people" or God's set apart nation is not because they are Israel. Rather, they are Israel because God has chosen them as a people through which salvation would be brought to the ends of the earth.
2. His original plan was to bring "salvation" (justice, righteousness, peace, order) to the earth through Adam and Eve and their descendants. After the fall, God once again set apart a people through Abraham and Sarah, and ordained that salvation would be brought to the Earth through this people.

*"You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews."* (Jn. 4:22);

*"I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous."* (Rom. 11:11);

*"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."* (Gen. 22:18);

*"Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel."* (2 Tim. 2:8);

*"The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh (Jesus) comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples."* (Gen. 49:10);

*"I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob (Jesus), a scepter shall rise from Israel, and shall crush through the forehead of Moab (cf. Gen 3:15), and tear down all the sons of Sheth."* (Num. 24:17).

## **F. Satan has ALWAYS Sought and will CONTINUE to Seek to destroy Israel**

1. Satan has always sought to destroy the Jews. He knows that God has ordained that he be cast into prison and then into the lake of fire for eternity.
  - a. His first desire is to avoid this imprisonment and unbearable eternal punishment.
  - b. From the start, he has set out to destroy Israel because Israel is God's vehicle to restore His divine order to the earth.
2. Satan is seeking to exploit Jesus' "prophetic loophole". Jesus, pronouncing a judgment upon the blind guides of the Jews at the end of His ministry, declared that He would not return for His second coming until the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem welcomes Him back as the Messiah and the Son of God (Matt. 23:39).
3. From Genesis until now, Satan has sought to stop the prophesied "Seed", Jesus, from coming forth. While this battle is inevitably futile, it is still very real (Rev. 12:3–17).
  - a. Throughout history, God has narrowed the way in which He would come, and each time, Satan has set out to destroy the people through whom Jesus would come.

- b. In this prophecy, Jesus gives Satan a clear target. If Satan can destroy all the Jews and Jerusalem from the earth, then there will be no Jewish leadership in Jerusalem to welcome Him back.
  - c. In this way, Satan would be able to accuse God as being a liar.
4. *Satan's rage is working in cooperation with and under the sovereign leadership of God to refine and ultimately redeem Israel* (Zech. 12:2–3; 14:2).

#### **G. Israel is God's Litmus Test for the Church and the Nations in the End Times**

1. A litmus test is *a crucial and revealing test in which there is one decisive factor*.
2. God will use Israel as the litmus test to *reveal the truth of the inner nature of both the Church and the remnant of the nations* in the End Times (Matt. 25:31–46).
  - a. After the second coming, all the people of the nations who are not killed and who do not accept the Mark of the Beast will be brought before Jesus and judged by their treatment of the Jews during the Great Tribulation.
  - b. It is not their "works" towards Israel that will gain them merit, or their failure to stand Israel that will condemn them, but rather it is their response to Israel that will reveal the truth of what is deep in their heart.
3. The Church will also be *judged according to her stance towards Israel* (Rom. 11:18–22).
  - a. Paul gave a very dire warning to the Gentile Church in Rome concerning their attitude towards the Jews who were then rejecting Jesus. Paul boldly stated that if these Gentile believers became arrogant towards the unredeemed Jews, they would be in danger of departing from the faith.
  - b. Some Gentile believers arrogantly compare themselves with the Jews who have rejected Christ and think that they are 'better'. In doing so, the Gentile believers are standing before God on the basis of works and no longer on the basis of faith in God's goodness, are no longer in the faith, and hence, no longer saved.
4. The way Nazi Germany treated the Jewish people in World War II was a dress rehearsal for what is coming.
  - a. The Church in Germany, for the most part, failed to stand for the Jews against the Nazis. They preferred their comfort, status, and lives to standing with the Jews. A lack of proper understanding and passion for Israel led them to betray the Jews to death.
  - b. We must cultivate a theological understanding and a passion in our hearts for the Jews, so that we will have an unyielding resolve to stand with them.
5. The Church will *provoke Israel to jealousy through signs, wonders, and the prophetic spirit, as well as through sacrificially standing with them*. Scenarios such as these will take place during the End Times:
  - a. Under the Antichrist's mark-of-the-beast system and persecution, we will take Jews into our homes. They will see our bare cupboards but when we pray to Jesus, God

will provide supernaturally. They will witness us prophesying and praying to begin and to end plagues, and to be protected from plagues.

- b. When they see God answer, this will cause them to think, "This is like Moses and Elijah! This is what Yahweh does!" This will provoke them to jealousy.
- c. We must build a theology and develop a passionate heart NOW concerning Israel so that we can operate in this way in the days to come.

#### **H. Israel is the Litmus Test of the Apostolic Heart**

1. Paul's ministry revolved around his desire to see the Jews come to the saving knowledge of Christ (Rom. 9:3; 10:1; 11:13–14).
2. In this day when we believe and long for the restoration of the Apostolic ministry, let us remember that the heart of Apostolic ministry beats for the salvation of Israel. Paul, a leading authority on the Apostolic ministry, declared this truth in his ministry.
3. Paul went so far as to wish that he himself could be condemned to eternal damnation in the lake of fire if that would bring Israel to salvation.
4. We should evaluate our hearts and ministry by this standard. Do we feel for Israel what God feels for Israel? Do we shape our prayers, our preaching and our ministries around the hope that Israel would be moved to jealousy and be saved?

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# The Mystery of Israel

(Rom. 9 – 11)

## A. The Mysteries of the Gospel (Rom. 16:25–26)

1. There are mysteries in the Gospel of our LORD Jesus Christ. By His grace, the LORD will release and reveal these mysteries to His people — the Church of Jesus Christ.
2. These mysteries of the Gospel are not “new truths” but they are truths that have been hidden. At the right time and season, the Holy Spirit will reveal them to the people of God.
3. Therefore, we need to take heed to what the Spirit is saying to the Church at all times (Rev. 2 – 3).
4. Currently, the Holy Spirit is (at least) revealing and emphasizing two mysteries of the Gospel:
  - a. The destiny and call of the nation of Israel (Rom. 11:25);
  - b. The restoration of the First Commandment (Eph. 5:32).

## B. The Importance of Understanding Israel

1. We need to know God’s heart for Israel (Zech. 13:7–9; Rom. 11:1–2, 11–15, 26 & 29).
2. Israel will play an important role in the End Times and in the Second Coming of Jesus (Zech. 14; Matt. 23:37–39).
3. Israel is God’s litmus test of obedience and faith during the End Times (Isa. 49:17–26; Matt. 25:31–46).

## C. The Mystery of Israel (Rom. 11:25–26)

1. It is vital for prophetic messengers to understand the heart of God concerning Israel, and to effectively equip the Body of Christ with this understanding at the End of the Age.
2. The mystery of Israel was one of the foundational realities that fueled Apostle Paul’s mission to the Gentiles. This vision was rooted in Paul’s *understanding of the heart of God* and not in Paul’s sense of patriotism or an earthbound concern for the state of Israel out of human zeal.
3. In Rom. 11:25–26, Paul exhorted the Gentile believers not to be ignorant of this mystery but to have a correct understanding of the calling and destiny of Israel.

#### **D. God's Sovereign Leadership over Israel (Rom. 9:1–33)**

1. God's zeal and calling for the nation of Israel
  - a. Israel was at the forefront of Paul's mind as an apostle to the Gentiles (v.1–2);
  - b. Paul had a great apostolic burden for Israel (v.3).
2. Israel had been entrusted with these eight-fold divine entrustments (v.4–5):
  - a. The adoption (Ex. 4:22);
  - b. The glory (Ex. 19);
  - c. The covenants — Abrahamic, Davidic, Palestinian, New (Josh. 1, Jer. 31:31–34);
  - d. The giving of the Law (Ex. 20);
  - e. The service of God (temple ministry and the priesthood);
  - f. The promises (Isa. 60 – 66);
  - g. The fathers and the patriarchs (the Old Testament);
  - h. The lineage through which Christ would come.
3. Israel's presumption (v.6–8)

The word of God is true, but not all Israel (natural) is Israel (Messianic, Millennial Israel).
4. God's election of Israel (v.9–13)

God's election of Israel reveals the wisdom and the mercy of God. The purpose hinges on the leadership of God. God brings it about and we are called to cooperate.
5. God is free to choose (v.14–16)
  - a. The glory of God comes to whom He wills since it is His glory.
  - b. His election is about His mercy. His mercy is revealed in Him choosing a people. However, God's choice of Israel did not mean their automatic salvation.
  - c. It meant that Israel was offered a divine mandate of leadership that they would walk in if they said 'yes'. It was to Israel to whom the glory was revealed and to whom He entrusted the glory to in order that others could also enter into this glory.
6. God's mercy to Israel (v.17–29)
  - a. The mystery of God's election (v.17–18);
  - b. Israel as a vessel of wrath (v.19–22);
  - c. God's primary election of the Jews (v.23–29).

7. God's mercy on the Gentiles (v.30–33)

The vessel of mercy is the One New Man of Ephesians 2 and 3 — Jew and Gentile.  
God will have a people for His Son.

**E. We are called to stand with Israel**

Matthew 25:31–46

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## An Outline of Romans 9 – 11

### A. Introduction

1. Romans 9 – 11 give us the basic and foundational doctrines in understanding God's heart and purpose for Israel based on Scripture.
2. This is a passage of Scripture pertaining to the heart and purpose of God for Israel that we must know.
3. This is where we begin as we seek to be "students" of the issue pertaining to Israel.

### B. Simple outline of Romans 9 – 11

1. **Romans 9:** The Divine Election of Israel
  - a. Apostolic zeal and burden for Israel based on the Word of God (v.1–3);
  - b. Eight-fold divine entrustment to Israel (v.4–5);
  - c. The presumption by Israel concerning her divine election (v.6–13)
    - i. Election not based on natural descent but faith in God (v.6–9);
    - ii. Election not based on human merit but the sovereign will of God (v.10–13);
  - d. The mystery of election (v.14–23)
    - i. The election of Israel reveals the righteousness and mercy of God (v.14–16);
    - ii. The election of Israel reveals the sovereignty of God (v.17–21);
    - iii. The election of Israel reveals the justice and glory of God (v.22–23);
  - e. The divine plan of God for the redemption of the world (v.24–26);
  - f. The prophecy pertaining to the remnant of Israel (v.27–29);
  - g. The cause of Israel's stumbling and rejection (v.30–33).
2. **Romans 10:** The Present Rejection of Israel
  - a. The reasons for Israel's present rejection by God (v.1–13):
    - i. Israel did not see a need for salvation (v.1);
    - ii. Israel's misguided zeal for God (v.2);
    - iii. Israel's pride and self-righteousness (v.3);
    - iv. Israel misunderstood the Law of God (v.4–13);

- b. The remedy for Israel's present rejection (v.14–17)
  - c. The results of Israel's present rejection (v.18–21):
    - i. Israel is guilty before God (v.18);
    - ii. The Gospel has to the Gentiles (v.19–20);
    - iii. God still yearns for His people (v.21).
3. **Romans 11:** The Eventual Restoration of Israel
- a. The rejection of Israel is not total (v.1–6);
  - b. The blindness of Israel is partially pre-ordained by God (v.7–10);
  - c. The rejection of Israel is not final (v.11a);
  - d. The fullness of Israel will lead to God's glory filling the Millennial earth (v.11b–15);
  - e. The promise of the future restoration of Israel (v.16–24);
  - f. Five dimensions of the mystery of Israel (v.25–29):
    - i. The blindness of Israel is partially pre-ordained by God (v.25);
    - ii. The fullness of the Gentiles (v.25);
    - iii. All Israel will be saved (v.26);
    - iv. Israel is still the beloved of God (v.28);
    - v. God's call for Israel is irrevocable (v.29).
  - g. Two litmus tests of understanding the mystery of Israel (Rom. 11:33 – 12:1):
    - i. It must awaken awe in us for God and cause us to worship God (Rom. 11:33–36);
    - ii. It must awaken us to live recklessly abandoned lives for Jesus (Rom. 12:1).

IHOP – ONE THING MINISTRIES

# Why We Should Stand with Israel

## A. Introduction

1. It is really important that we understand that Israel's destiny and the Church's destiny are intrinsically linked together not only in this age but for all eternity.
2. Because of this, it is absolutely essential that we have a foundational understanding of Israel's role in the redemptive purposes of God or we will never be motivated to stand with Israel.

## B. Five Reasons Why Believers Should Stand with Israel (Rom. 9:1–3)

1. God has mandated the Church to stand with Israel and undergird her with focused and fervent prayer (Isa. 62:6–7).
  - a. God commands His people to “give Him no rest” until Jerusalem enters into the fullness of her inheritance — unceasing prayer for Israel's fullness is not optional.
  - b. The primary application of these verses is the literal City of Jerusalem. The two primary cities the Church has been instructed to focus our prayers on:
    - i. Our own city; i.e. Singapore if we are part of the Church in Singapore (Jer. 29:7);
    - ii. Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6–9).
2. God is NOT neutral about Israel. In fact, He has great zeal towards her (Zech. 8:2–3).
  - a. Everything God says and does centers around Him fulfilling the promises He has made to Israel (Isa. 62:1).
  - b. The earth will never be filled with God's glory until Israel is saved (Rom. 11:26) and Jesus establishes His Kingdom's headquarters in Jerusalem (Isa. 11:9).
  - c. The salvation of the Jewish people plays a central role in God's overall plan of world redemption. This is why God is not casual about the Jewish people returning to their land and why He has mandated a praying Church to cover them in prayer.
3. Israel was the original recipient of God's everlasting covenants (Gen. 17:7–8; Jer. 32:40; Ezek. 37:26–28).
  - a. When God makes a covenant with anyone, it is a serious undertaking.
  - b. It is serious because when God initiates a covenant, He binds Himself forever to that people. His future now becomes their future and vice versa.
  - c. Note that God is called the “God of Israel” 203 times in scripture. Not once is He identified in specific terms as the God of any other nation.

- d. Four marvels about God and His covenants:
  - i. God would actually commit Himself to a group of people by covenant;
  - ii. God would make a covenant with just one single nation;
  - iii. If He were to pick a single nation, why would he pick the Jews? (1 Cor. 1:26–29)
    - We must understand this: The Jews were not chosen because they are special. They are special BECAUSE they were chosen!
    - God's choice (as with us) was never about what they possessed (Deut. 7:6–7).
  - iv. He not only made a covenant with a single nation (the Jewish people) but also made that covenant an everlasting one. He chose to bind Himself to the Jewish people forever.
- 4. Jerusalem is the focus of God's plan for world redemption.
  - a. The centerpiece of God's eternal purpose is for Jesus to come back to fully establish His Kingdom rule over all the earth as He joins the heavenly and earthly realms together (Eph. 1:9).
  - b. Scripture is clear that Jesus will rule over an earthly kingdom that will consume all other kingdoms (Dan. 2:44).
  - c. The burning question on the hearts of Jesus' disciples was, "Lord, when will You restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6)
  - d. God in His sovereignty has chosen Jerusalem to be the host city for Jesus' global headquarters on the earth — for the Millennium as well as for all eternity (Rev. 21 – 22).
  - e. When Jesus is established as King in Jerusalem, it will become the capital city of the whole earth. It will become the "city set on a hill" that cannot be hidden. It will be the key location from which God's Kingdom will grow to fill the whole earth.
  - f. Jerusalem will be known as the throne of God (Jer. 3:17) and will be the connecting point between the New Jerusalem (heavenly reality) and the Millennial Kingdom (earthly reality).
  - g. If we understand these foundational premises, then it begins to make sense why God has devoted so much time, energy and resources to uphold and maintain His covenants with the Jewish people. Jesus is coming to rule the earth from Jerusalem and His Kingdom will never end.
  - h. God's choice of Jerusalem is a huge stumbling block to many Gentile believers. Ultimately the issue is about the sovereignty of God and the choices He has made to display His glory on the earth (Ps. 132:13–14).

5. Jerusalem will be the focus of Satan's End-Time rage (Zech. 14:1–2)
  - a. There are many references in the Scriptures that identify Jerusalem as the place of the great End-Time drama. All nations will gather to fight against Jerusalem.
  - b. Because Jesus has committed Himself to returning as King of the Jews to rule the earth from Jerusalem (Matt. 23:39), Satan has committed himself to destroying the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem. If Satan can annihilate the Jews, he can prove God to be a liar and ensure his own survival (Rev. 12:1–17).
  - c. Satan will rally the nations of the earth to his cause in the release of an unprecedented wave of global anti-Semitism. It will culminate in every nation of the earth actively seeking the destruction of Jerusalem under the leadership of the Antichrist (Ps. 2; 83:5; Joel 3:11; Zech. 12:2; 14:2; Zeph. 3:8; Matt. 24:21–22).
  - d. Israel's acceptance of Jesus as her Messiah depends on her being provoked to jealousy by a predominantly Gentile Church (Rom. 11:11). The Church becoming a prophetic witness is directly correlated to her stand for Jerusalem in the place of prayer.

IHOP – ONE THING MINISTRIES

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# How We Should Stand with Israel

## A. Introduction

1. OBJECTIVE: To begin a process of discovery that will enable the Church to have a greater understanding of God's End-Time plans for Israel which will ultimately help us have a better understanding of how we should stand with Israel.
2. DEFINITION: The "End Times" — The series of events that will happen in chronological and sequential order as written in the Bible, beginning with "Birth Pangs" (Rom. 8:22) or the "Beginning of Sorrows" (Matt. 24:8), and ending with the New Jerusalem descending from heaven (Rev. 21).
3. Unfortunately, because of poor theological understanding of End-Time subjects in the Body of Christ, many have concluded that these are too complicated and better left to theologians to sort out. This has created much confusion and has left the Church extremely vulnerable at a time in history when it is critical for us to have a clear understanding of the times in which we are living.

## B. Standing with Israel requires a New Paradigm for the End Times

1. END-TIME MINDSET: When thinking about the last days, we should not let ourselves get side-tracked with secondary concerns such as charts/grafs and obscure Bible references. Jesus called this "straining at gnats while swallowing camels" (Matt. 23:24). Many have approached this subject simply from an intellectual perspective leading to these wrong conclusions:
  - a. Passages on the End Times have already been fulfilled historically;
  - b. End-Time passages are interpreted as mostly symbolic and not to be taken literally;
  - c. End-Time events are perceived as totally irrelevant because the Church will be removed prior to the Great Tribulation.

This has done a great disservice to the Body of Christ as it has diminished and distorted the prophetic Word of God and has opened the door for a "spirit of confusion" to create great division in the Church. The end result is a carnal Church that is spiritually unprepared to face the challenges of the most demanding circumstances that the human race will ever experienced.

2. THE RIGHT APPROACH: To see the End-Time chain of events as one that:
  - a. Reveals the manifest beauty of Jesus in an unprecedented fashion;
  - b. Presents a picture of an empowered Church walking in unprecedented dedication because she is operating in a spirit of happy holiness;
  - c. Shows God's passionate heart for the nations as he sends forth laborers to reap the Great End-Time Harvest;
  - d. Exposes the total demise of the enemies of God and those who have fiercely opposed His righteous rule;
  - e. Ushers in Christ's glorious Millennial Kingdom and the privilege of divine partnership with Jesus in resurrected bodies for saints who have faithfully served Him in this age;
  - f. Gives us a glimpse of the ultimate expression of His love when the New Jerusalem is established with a New Heaven and New Earth where the saints of God will dwell with Him in intimate fellowship forever.
3. STRATEGIC PURPOSE: To prepare an End-Time army of saints that is operating with a spirit of prayer and revelation who are fully informed and spiritually equipped to face the most troublesome time in human history (Matt. 24:21–22; Dan. 12:1; Jer. 30:7).
4. Note: Most Bible teachers are currently looking through foggy lenses when it comes to spiritual insight regarding End-Time matters. There is divine information purposefully and strategically being withheld and concealed until the time of His choosing (Dan. 12:4, 9). Therefore all serious students of End-Time prophetic scriptures need to approach the Word of God with a tender and teachable spirit. We need to operate out of three levels of truth on these subjects:
  - a. Biblical conviction;
  - b. Informed opinion;
  - c. Personal conclusion.

**C. Two Significant Hindrances that have caused the Church today to be disinterested and arrogant towards God's purpose for Israel**

1. REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

- a. This view teaches that because of Israel's refusal to walk in God's call and redemptive purposes (i.e. rejection of their Messiah), God decided to cancel all the covenants and promises and has transferred these over to the Gentile Church. Thus the Church has effectively replaced Israel and become the beneficiary of all her promises and blessings.
- b. Much harm has been done directly or indirectly ever since the Church-at-large began subscribing to this false theological view. The attempt to spiritualize scriptures and transfer the covenants to the Church has been disastrous and has

brought great division to the Body of Christ. The Apostle Paul was adamant that God had not replaced Israel (Rom. 11:1–2).

- c. Paul's cry for the Gentile Church to acknowledge Israel's future destiny in God was rooted in strong biblical fact and not just Paul's religious or personal sentiment for the Jewish people. Whenever the word "Israel" is mentioned (2,567 times in the Scriptures), it is referring to the Jewish people.
- d. Replacement Theology does injustice to the Word of God, the Jewish people, Gentile believers and the character of God!

## 2. MISGUIDED BIBLICAL ESCHATOLOGY

- a. Without biblical revelation into End-Time matters, the Church is doomed to neglect her primary mandate to stand with Israel and the Jewish people, and be a godly provoking mechanism (Rom. 11:11).
- b. While many in today's Church are looking to escape the Great Tribulation, the Word of God teaches us to prepare ourselves to go through these turbulent times with faith and confidence in the Lord's desire to refine and purify His people for His redemptive purposes (Matt. 24:31; 1 Cor. 15:51–52; 1 Thes. 4:16–17; Rev. 10:7; 11:15).
- c. The big question is, "How does a pre-tribulation view of the End Times cause people to have a diminished view of our call to stand with Israel?"
  - i. It gives us the false impression that the Church is removed at the most critical hour of human history. This is the very time that the Jewish people need a believing witness and a fiery Prayer Movement to carry and cover them in the grace of God (Isa. 62:6–7).
  - ii. It disconnects us from the reality that we will be standing with the Jewish people during their most horrific trial (Jer. 30:5–7).
  - iii. People prepare differently for war than they do for peace. We will not be concerned about events that we believe to have no impact on our lives or future.

### **D. Essentials in Standing with Israel**

1. Gentile believers need to get serious about their mandate and start acquiring a lifestyle of prayer and fasting (Isa. 56:6–7).
2. God is clearly taking the initiative to gather an army of Gentile Intercessors who will engage in serious non-stop prayer for the Jewish people. Those whom we pray for are those whom we will grow to love (Isa. 62:6–7).
3. Gentile believers are exhorted to make strong prophetic decrees, speaking forth the future destiny of the Jewish people. This is a picture of the End-Time Church walking in the Romans 4:17 reality — by faith, speaking about things that don't currently exist in the natural realm as though they did and operating with bold confidence that what they are speaking forth will surely be brought to pass. God is yearning for a people to

be raised up who would join Him in intimate partnership and pray in accordance to His heart's desire for Israel (Judg. 5:12).

4. We need to understand the sobering reality of not standing with Israel (Matt. 25:31–40).
5. Prayerful consideration: Prayerfully seek the Lord about partnering (in prayer/ finances/ etc.) with a Messianic Ministry that is making an impact in Israel today.
6. Be open to the Holy Spirit's leading to visit a Messianic congregation in your area just to introduce yourself to them as one who is on a journey of discovery and who will pray for them.
7. Share your faith with unbelieving Jewish people.
8. Pursue a clear understanding of End-Time events, as Israel will be in the vortex during those disruptive times.
9. In your quiet time ask God to give you a spirit of revelation about His heart for the Jewish people. A simple but helpful practice is to begin to add the phrase, "and bless the Jewish people today," in your prayers for other subjects. The point is not the quantity or volume but cultivating a heart for her.

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# Israel: God's Litmus Test in the End Times

## A. Introduction — The Necessary Paradigm

1. An essential part of the Second Coming procession emphasizes Jesus, after the Rapture, marching up from Egypt through Assyria back to Israel, killing His enemies, liberating Jewish prisoners in death camps and healing the infirmed, the blind, the lame, etc. (Isa. 35:5–6; 61:1; 42:6–7; Mic. 4:6). Jesus will function as the “greater Moses.” This Biblical message is politically incorrect and unacceptable to all (Jews, Christians, and Muslims).
2. The two primary nations in which this will happen are Egypt and Ancient Assyria (Isa. 11:11, 16; 27:12–13; Hos. 11:10, 11; Mic. 2:12–13; 5:6; 7:12–15; Zech. 10:10–11). God has promised to deliver Israel from captivity (Isa. 42:6–7, 16, 22; 49:9–12, 19–21, 24–25; Jer. 31:1–23; Ezek. 39:25–29; Amos 9:8–15; Zeph. 3:17–20).
3. In the End Times, many Jewish people will be deported out of the land of Israel against their will. Some will flee, others will be deported as captives, while others will stay in Jerusalem. Of those who stay, some will be supernaturally protected and some will join the evil regime of the Antichrist. Still, others will be raised up by God as missionaries or “sent ones” to go to the nations. The people of Israel will respond in different ways to God during this time period.
4. The Old Testament prophecies reveal two extremes:
  - a. Israel is described as being desolate — oppressed, sick, infirmed, in prison camps, and assaulted by foreign armies.
  - b. Jesus will suddenly bring deliverance that reverses all Israel's oppression as He kills her enemies, heals her body and then restores her to the land with God's favor and blessing. Jesus will gather a large number of Jewish prisoners together as He marches with them to Israel (Mic. 2:12–13).
5. Why do we need to understand this?
  - a. One of the most emphasized prominent features in Second Coming passages (in the Old Testament prophets) is that Jews will be in prison camps during the End Times.
    - i. This reveals the nature of Satan's rage against Israel as well as the intense measures that God will use to purify Israel and the Church.
    - ii. God requires the Church to stand with Israel (like Corrie Ten Boom and Bonhoeffer during World War II). The Church is brought to maturity and evaluated based on our response to Jesus' leadership.

- iii. The litmus test of obedience will be in standing with Israel (Matt. 25:31–46). Those that stand with Israel will be persecuted (Dan. 7:21, 25). *The issue of Israel will bring the whole world to full conflict.*
- b. It gives us insight into God's heart to reverse judgment and to restore His people. God pursues atheistic Israel and acts in this same mercy towards all who call on His name.

## **B. Jesus Will Raise a Standard: Israel During Transition into the Millennium**

1. Immediately after His return, Jesus will raise *a standard or make known His decrees about Israel.* He will allow individuals in the nations to obey or disobey Him during this transitional season immediately after His return. Jesus will require that Israel's children be gathered back to the land from the nations (Isa. 49:17–26).
2. Jesus made an oath that He would set up a standard / banner that the nations would recognize as a call to bring the Jewish survivors back to Israel. The leaders of the nations who had attacked Israel will be killed and replaced by kings who will serve and honor her. This will include providing the means for her children to relocate to Israel (Isa. 11:12; 62:10).
3. This oath includes Jesus personally leading captives back to Israel from Egypt and Assyria. He will also send Jews from Israel to lead Jewish survivors back to the land (Isa. 66:19–21) and will command Gentile kings to serve Him in this (Isa. 11:11–16; 49:22–23; 60:3, 4, 9).
4. *Jesus will display His sovereignty and His covenant-keeping faithfulness to Israel by this sudden reversal that begins when He wins the Battle of Jerusalem. He will then reverse the way the Jews are treated in all the nations through international decrees.* Israel's restoration process will occur over many stages just as the global restoration process will. It will take years to complete this process.
5. *The great reversal: God promised that Gentiles would serve Israel.* God gave details of His promises to restore Israel after her destruction during the Tribulation. Jesus will fully reverse this crisis (Isa. 49:19–21).
6. In Isa. 60, Isaiah described a dramatic and radical reversal of the attitudes and actions of the kings of the earth. God promised that He would raise up a Jewish Messiah who would cause this to happen as a show of His sovereignty over the nations and His tender affections towards Israel. The kings will give extravagantly to pay for the Jews to return to Israel, and to rebuild the cities of Israel and the Jerusalem Temple (in place of the Antichrist's temple). This will be a statement of their repentance towards Jesus.
7. Jesus will command the top leadership of the Gentile nations to provide for Jewish survivors to return to Israel (Isa. 11:11–16; 49:22–23; 60:3–4,9). As a result, many kings will help the Jews return to Israel (Isa. 49:17–26; 60:1–22) and pay for all their necessary expenses. Some Gentile kings will bring them back personally. Nations will be held responsible to obey Jesus in this issue of helping Jewish people return to Israel immediately after the devastation of the Great Tribulation and the Armageddon campaign. The most natural thing would be to attend to national needs only.

8. Jesus will evaluate the nations to determine which ones will survive based on their repentance after the Second Coming. They will not fully understand all that will happen, but will repent and begin a process of re-education. Many kings will function in the role of King Cyrus: they will fund the re-gathering of the Jews to Israel and the rebuilding of the cities of Israel (Zech. 14:16–18).
9. Kings will also extravagantly serve Jewish people who are in their nation. They shall “bow down” as they become conscious of their guilt. They will humble themselves before Israel as part of their humbling before God for personal and national restoration.
10. Just before Jesus’ Coming, nations who are mighty and terrible will contend with and oppress Israel. Jesus will reverse this and Israel’s children will return from all the nations in which they were held captive (Isa. 49:24–26).

**C. Biblical Principle: Honor God’s Sovereignty by Blessing Israel**

1. Gen. 12:3 — *“I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you...”*
2. Gen. 27:29 — *“Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you... Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be those who bless you!”*
3. Ps. 122:6 — *“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: may they prosper who love you.”*
4. Num. 24:9 — *“Blessed is he who blesses you, and cursed is he who curses you.”*
5. This principle has been operating throughout all of history since the time of Abraham. It will have great significance during the Great Tribulation and then during the transitional period into the Millennial Kingdom.

**D. Jesus Will Judge the Gentile Nations (Matt. 25:31–46)**

1. This is not a comprehensive criterion by which Jesus will judge every action, but it is one of the primary criteria by which Jesus will judge Gentiles after He returns.
2. People will express their love for Jesus by obeying Him in His sovereign plan to bless Israel. This will be a very big issue in the generation that the Lord returns. It will be the litmus test of faith at that time. To neglect to stand with the Jews means that one has already made many other wrong decisions before that.
3. Jesus emphasized six expressions that will determine obedience to His leadership in the End Times. They all concern how we relate to His brethren when they are hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick and in prison. All six are issues related to being refugees or prisoners in prison camps. The penalty for neglecting these six expressions is condemnation in Hell.
4. In Matt. 25, Jesus does not mention the context of Israel’s plight as refugees and prisoners in the End Times. However, this theme is prominent in the Old Testament prophets. Therefore, we must compare Scripture with Scripture to understand this passage.

5. These are six expressions that will be evidence of one's faith and obedience. They will all be well known because they will be preached for years before and during the Tribulation. Furthermore, Jesus will make them clear after His appearing. This is an important criterion of how God evaluates obedience to His will throughout all history, but particularly during the Great Tribulation and immediately after (Matt. 25:41–46).
6. Thus, this passage does not refer to feeding the poor as a criterion of whether people go to eternal hell, although feeding the poor is an important Biblical principle.

#### E. Who and What Jesus is Speaking About in Matt. 25:31–46

1. The challenge of correctly interpreting this passage is to understand the specific context of His judgment and evaluation of the Gentile nations in this portion of Scripture.
2. What — Is this a judgment of all people throughout history based on how they relate to refugees?  
No, this is only a judgment of the people living on earth as survivors of the Great Tribulation based on how they had related to the Jewish people. The saints are already separated from the unrighteous at the Rapture and not only when Jesus sits on His Throne of Glory in Jerusalem. The saints would already have been evaluated by this time.
3. Where — Is this a judgment in heaven or on earth?  
The people being judged will stand before Jesus' Throne of Glory in Millennial Jerusalem. This is after the Rapture.
4. How long — How much time will the process take?  
This judgment occurs over a process of time in the initial days and months of the Millennial Kingdom. The Matt. 25 judgment will not be completed on the first day after Jesus' Second Coming or on the first day of the Millennium. This judgment could be months after Jesus returns. How did the nations become righteous so soon and why did they miss the Rapture? If this is a progressive judgment that occurs over months and years, then nations will have the opportunity to show forth their righteousness.
5. Who — There are three distinct groups: the righteous and the cursed will be evaluated by how they respond to Jesus' brethren.
  - a. The "sheep" (v.32–33), the "blessed of the Father" (v.34), the "righteous" (v.37, 46) are Gentiles who get converted after the Rapture. These are not saints from all of history.
  - b. The "goats" (v.32–33) who are the "cursed" (v.41) are the reprobate who do not stand with Israel during the Great Tribulation.
  - c. "My brethren" (v.40) are the Jews. The "righteous" are not the same group as His brethren. Paul refers to unsaved Jews as His brethren (Rom. 9:1–3; Acts 28:17).
6. After the Second Coming, the sheep and goats are judged according to how they treated Israel. Jesus evaluates the survivors of the Great Tribulation based on how they treated His brethren Israel during the transitional period. Why would any be goats? It is because they have a reprobate mind filled with bitterness towards God and Israel.

# The Restoration of Israel

## A. Introduction

1. Jeremiah 16:14–15
2. William W. Orr (1948)  
*“There isn’t the slightest doubt that the emergence of the nation Israel among the family of nations is the greatest piece of prophetic news that we have had in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.”*

## B. Scriptures and the Restoration of Israel

1. In spite of Israel’s sin and rebellion, which had resulted in her two exiles (586 BC and AD 70), the Old Testament prophets have predicted restoration and future glory for Israel.  
  
*(Isaiah chapters 1 – 5 lay out the sin and rebellion of Israel that precipitated the judgment of God upon her.)*
2. The “UNTIL” passages in the New Testament:
  - a. The dispersion and unbelief of Israel are prophesied to transpire “UNTIL” certain key historical events take place (Lk. 21:24 and Rom. 11:25–26):
    - i. The end of Gentile domination;
    - ii. The salvation of Gentiles.
  - b. Isaiah 11:11–12 and Jeremiah 30:10–11 also predict the fulfillment of the restoration of Israel.
  - c. Amos 9:15 talks about the final restoration of Israel. This prophecy was fulfilled on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1948!
3. God has a future plan for physical Israel. Her restoration is not a political accident but a divine accomplishment of God (Jer. 31:38–40).
4. There will be political restoration before the spiritual restoration of Israel (Jer. 32:37–39 and Ezek. 36:23–25).
  - a. We can therefore, expect the Holy Spirit to intensify His work of banishing unbelief from Israel in the days ahead (Zech. 12:10).
  - b. We should partner with the Holy Spirit in praying for spiritual revival for Israel (Rom. 10:1).

### **C. Important Historical Events in the Restoration of Israel**

The restoration of Israel is characterized by some startling events. If we are honest and objective, we can clearly detect the hand of God in all of this.

1. **THE FIRST WORLD ZIONIST CONGRESS (1897)**  
The event was called and chaired by Theodor Herzl. By faith, he proclaimed the restoration of the Jewish state in the near future.
2. **BALFOUR DECLARATION (Nov. 1917)**  
The British issued the Balfour Declaration, paving the way for a Jewish homeland to be re-established in Palestine.
3. **LIBERATION OF JERUSALEM (Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>, 1917)**  
General Allenby liberated the city of Jerusalem from Turkish domination. The Jewish people lit their candles to celebrate the Feast of Hanukkah in Jerusalem.
4. **THE BIRTH OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL (May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1948)**  
David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the formation of the state of Israel from Tel Aviv.

Note: *The state of Israel was birthed 50 years after Herzl's prophetic declaration! In the Bible, the 50<sup>th</sup> year is always the year of Jubilee where all properties have to be returned to the original owner.*

5. **RESTORATION OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE (1948)**  
Hebrew, a language that had been dead for almost 2000 years was resurrected and proclaimed as the official language of Israel. Eliezer Ben Yehuda took much pain and effort to revive the language.
6. **CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM (1967)**  
Jerusalem returned to Israel's jurisdiction after the Six Day War.

Note: *The return of Jerusalem was exactly 50 years after the Balfour Declaration!*

### **D. Implications of the Restoration of Israel**

Romans 11:12–15 indicates that we should long and pray for Israel's complete restoration — restoration to the land and restoration to the LORD. This will mean great blessing for Israel. More than that, it will mean great blessing for the Church and for the earth as Israel's fullness will have global repercussions!

1. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus Christ (Ps. 102:16; Matt. 23:29);
2. A new demonstration of Divine Power (Rom. 11:12, 15);
3. A day of exaltation and glory for Israel (Zech.8:3, 22–23; 14:16);
4. A day of universal peace (Ps. 122:6–7; Lk. 19:42).

# The Covenants of Israel

## A. Introduction

1. According to the theological realities in the Holy Scriptures, Israel will be restored. Therefore, we need to be fully acquainted with what the Bible says about her.
2. Israel exists because God exists — God is prepared to honor His Word and His promises to Israel. Such promises were made to Israel in the form of covenants.
3. To adequately understand the present day Middle East conflict, we need to investigate and understand the two covenants that God has made with Israel.

## B. The Abrahamic Covenant

1. The Abrahamic Covenant is mentioned more than once in the book of Genesis (Gen. 12:1–3; 13:4–5; 15:18):
  - a. The Covenant was initiated by God;
  - b. The Covenant is one-sided — God declared the terms and benefits;
  - c. The Covenant is unconditional and everlasting.
2. This Covenant clearly defines certain territories that God will give to Israel as an everlasting possession. The land promised by God is between the Red Sea and the Euphrates River (Ex. 23:31).
3. The implications of this Covenant are clear:
  - a. Regardless of what has happened historically and what will happen in the near future, God is bound and obligated to ensure Israel's security in and possession of this plot of land.
  - b. The Covenant promises Israel a permanent existence as a nation.
  - c. It guarantees the preservation of the nation of Israel. God declares this in Jer. 31:35–37.
4. Final analysis of Abrahamic Covenant:
  - a. The credibility, integrity and revelation of God as a true and faithful God will become suspect if the Abrahamic Covenant fails.

- b. Israel is a signpost of God for the nations. God intends to draw the attention of the world to two things (Heb. 6:13–20):
  - i. His Word — God is TRUE  
God is saying to the nations, “The Bible — My Word is true, relevant and up-to-date. Its prophecies are still being fulfilled today with absolute accuracy.”
  - ii. His Covenant — God is FAITHFUL  
God is saying, “I am a God who keeps My Covenant. 4000 years ago, I made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants. I am faithful and will never break the covenant and will cause it to come to pass.”

### **C. The Palestinian or the Mosaic Covenant**

1. The Abrahamic Covenant gave *the everlasting right of ownership of the land* of Palestine to Israel. However, Israel’s obedience to the commands and statutes of God as required by the Mosaic Covenant ensures *the privilege of living in the land* that is rightfully theirs (Deut. 30:1–6).
  - a. Disobedience would not mean the loss of ownership but rather the loss of domicile.
  - b. The Mosaic Covenant is important because it affirms Israel’s everlasting right to the land even if, because of her disobedience and unrighteousness, she is exiled from it (Ezek. 37:21–25).
  - c. God has given the land of Palestine to Israel and this is final and everlasting!
2. Prophet Isaiah clearly spoke of a two-fold dispersion and return of Israel to the land of Palestine (Isa. 11:11–12).
  - a. Israel has been judged by God and exiled twice in her history (586 BC and AD 70). However, she has also returned to the same plot of land twice.
  - b. Israel finally returned to her land again in 1948 and this second return will be her final and her last.

### **D. Fulfillment of Covenant vs. Morality and Righteousness**

1. The return of the Jewish people to Palestine in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century has inflicted hardship and suffering upon the Arab peoples who were living there.
2. This begs the question: “Would God keep His Covenants in such a way that He allows hardship and suffering?”
3. We will not be able to give a satisfactory answer because of the mystery of Israel’s divine election and because God’s way is beyond our human understanding. However, we can apply the follow principles:
  - a. In the restoration of Israel, we must recognize the Divine faithfulness to a Covenant made 4000 years ago with Abraham. This Covenant is eternal and irrevocable (Rom. 11:29).

- b. In the act of restoration, we must also discern the righteous judgment of God upon those nations that have acted wickedly during their occupation of the land belonging to Israel (Gen. 15:13–14; Prov. 14:34).
- c. The mystery of election — as the Sovereign God, God exalts kingdoms and nations and then brings them down as He sees fits (Dan. 2:20–21; Rom. 9:14–21).
- d. As God’s people, we must not seek to further God’s judgment in any way, whether by actively seeking to expel Arabs from Israel, by being supportive of such endeavors if they occur or by maintaining support for Israel that totally ignores sin and unrighteousness on her part in that land.
  - i. We are not to be so supportive of Israel’s restoration that we ignore justice and sin.
  - ii. We must not be silent concerning the suffering of Arab people.
- e. The restoration of Israel does not mean that God loves Jewish people and hates Arabs. We must guard against such thoughts and attitudes. Rather, it simply means that God honors His Covenants and at the same time, He loves all men everywhere.
- f. Be aware of the true facts of the conflict between Israel and the Arab nations
  - i. Israel has never been an aggressor in all the five wars she has fought with the Arab nations. All the wars were out of self-defense.
  - ii. Much of the suffering of Arab people was caused by Arab propaganda.

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# The Sufferings of Israel

## A. Introduction

*“...for they are Your people and Your inheritance, whom You brought out of Egypt, out of the iron furnace...”* (1 Kings 8:51)

1. The sufferings of the Jewish people are inexplicable and will remain a mystery if we do not understand the spiritual issues involved.
2. Israel's sufferings have no earthly or human explanation.
  - a. *Something out of this world* is attempting to destroy the Jewish nation and this “*something*” has sought to influence men and women.
  - b. Only a demon-possessed person like the Nazi's Julius Streicher would state that *“...the Jews are children of the devil and murderers of mankind. Whoever is a murderer deserves to be killed himself...”*
3. If this “*something*” is so desperate to destroy them, then surely it is because Israel holds the vital key to God's plan for the world. This *something* is demonic and it knows that the destruction of the Jewish people would mean the end of God's plan for world redemption.
4. The Bible is more than clear about the real source of Israel's sufferings. It is a demonic one!

## B. The CALLING of Israel

1. God's redemption plan is to choose a nation through which He would bring revelation of His Word and more importantly, through which God would eventually birth a Savior who would redeem the world from sin (Gen. 12:1– 3).
2. The revelation and understanding of God is thus embodied in a nation that would be protected, preserved and given as a light to all generations and nations of the world. This nation is Israel! (Isa. 60:1–3; 49:5–6; 44:23; Rom. 9:1–5).
3. The choice of Israel as God's *servant nation* has two consequences:
  - a. The survival of the human race is bound up with the survival of the Jewish race (Jer. 31:31–34);
  - b. The destruction of Israel would become the devil's highest priority, because if he succeeded in doing so, he would banish the revelation and knowledge of God from the face of the earth (Rev. 12:1–6).

4. Quoting E.A. Josephson,  
“The Jewish people through the centuries have taken the full brunt of Satan’s attacks for our sake.”

### C. The INHERITANCE of Israel

1. The great responsibility that Israel has also means that she will have a great inheritance. Her inheritance can be defined as follows:
  - a. Spiritual inheritance — To her was given the revelation of God’s Word, the Covenants and the Messiah (Rom. 9:1–5; Jn. 4:22).
  - b. Physical inheritance — To her was given the land as an everlasting possession. This was promised through the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants.
  - c. Royal/Kingly inheritance — God has promised to exalt Israel as the chief nation in the earth (Isa. 60:1–3; 2:1–4; Jer. 3:17; Mal. 3:17). However this inheritance is dependent upon two events:
    - i. Physical restoration — Her restoration to the land;
    - ii. Spiritual restoration — Her return to the LORD through Messiah Jesus.
2. The significance of the full restoration of Israel (Acts 3:18–21):
  - a. When these two restorations are achieved, God’s promise is to send Jesus a second time — to establish world peace and exalt Israel as a blessing to the nations.
  - b. The fulfillment of world redemption is dependent upon Israel’s preservation, physical restoration and redemption.

Note: In Acts 3:18–21, Peter was addressing the Jewish people. He clearly stated that Jesus’ Second Coming will be dependent upon the *restoration of all things* — i.e., it is dependent upon Jewish acceptance of Jesus as Messiah!
3. Nobody knows this better than the devil and in order to prevent the Second Coming of Christ, he will constantly endeavor to destroy Israel. If he cannot destroy Israel, he will delay her acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah.

### D. The REBELLION of Israel

1. Israel’s unique standing before God — her responsibility to be the people of God, to reflect Him to the world and to make His name great on earth, is dependent on her faithfulness. Unfaithfulness would mean correction, judgment and chastisement.
2. Israel has been stubborn and unfaithful to God. Thus, God has had to bring judgment and correction upon her. Her two exiles (i.e. 586 BC and AD 70) are to be interpreted in this context.
3. The destruction of the temple prior to both exiles symbolized, as it were, God’s displeasure of her. They both happened exactly on the same day — the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av.

4. Jer. 30:10–11 adequately expresses God’s corrective measures against Israel’s rebellion. Israel’s own sin, disobedience and rebellion have contributed to her own sufferings.
5. However, the nations have sought to further God’s judgment against Israel and for this, they stand condemned before God (Zech. 1:14–15).

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# Understanding What is Happening in the Middle East

## A. Introduction

1. Zechariah 12 – 14 are some of the most dramatic and important prophetic passages regarding Israel. It is a passage that we must know. In it, we see:
  - a. The conclusion of God's mysterious End-Time plan.
  - b. The end of human history which culminates with all nations coming together to make war against Israel, resulting in Jesus' return to deliver Israel and destroy her enemies.
  - c. What is happening in the Middle East from a biblical perspective.
2. Israel's main crisis is not with Islam or other anti-Semitic nations. Her crisis is with God! (Zech. 12:1)
  - a. Her crisis is rooted in the fact that God loves Israel and yet the majority of Israel hates God.
  - b. God will not violate her free will but will use difficulties to humble her and lead her to repentance (Hos. 2:14).
3. God's End-Time message is politically incorrect and will offend Christians, Jews and Arabs.
  - a. Many in Israel will be powerfully converted while others will join the evil regime of the Antichrist and worship him.
  - b. Israel will see both revival and apostasy as the Jews in the land are both gathered to the land and driven from it. Some will be supernaturally protected while others will be killed or put in prison (Zech. 14:2; Isa. 42:7, 22; 49:9, 24–25; Ps. 102:20).
  - c. Zechariah prophesied that two-thirds of the nation would be killed (Zech. 13:8). However, others will function as anointed apostolic believers who will freely go in and out of Israel in the spirit of Isa. 66:19.
4. In the Scriptures, it is clear that Israel's best and worst days are yet ahead. Israel's victory will surpass anything seen in history. At the same time, Israel's judgments will surpass all other times of judgment in history including what happened to her in 70 AD. However, the timing of her victory and the trials that occur between now and then must be acknowledged and proclaimed (Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:7).

5. The Church must boldly and clearly proclaim these themes to believers and unbelievers, and to Jews and Arabs, so that all are well informed about God's plan as set forth in Zech. 12 – 14.
  - a. Many are embarrassed by Jesus being a Judge. It is as if His judgments are too extreme or lacking in love.
  - b. Jesus is zealous to remove all that hinders love. God's End-Time plan is motivated by passion to fill the earth with voluntary lovers of Jesus (Rev. 15:4).
  - c. God's plan is to first produce an entire nation of people (Israel) who will love God first, before leading the whole earth back to God.
  - d. Our message includes telling people that God is unfolding a significant End-Time plan and is fully in control and that all of us have an important role to play.

#### **B. Outline of Zechariah 12 – 14**

1. Israel's sudden military and spiritual victory (Zech. 12:1–13:6)
  - a. All the nations will gather against Jerusalem in a major military and political assault (Zech. 12:1–3);
  - b. Israel's military victory — Israel will be unified and anointed like David (Zech. 12:4–9);
  - c. Israel's national repentance and conversion — the outpouring of the Spirit (Zech. 12:10–14);
  - d. Israel's national cleansing — from sin, idols, false prophets and the unclean spirit (Zech. 13:1–6).
2. Israel's suffering — a remnant will be refined in the fire (Zech. 13:7 – 14:2)
  - a. Israel will pass through much tribulation, which will refine the remnant to be saved (Zech. 13:7–9);
  - b. Jerusalem is temporarily taken and captives are deported (Zech. 14:1–2).
3. Israel's victory when Jesus returns as King of the nations (Zech. 14:3–21)
  - a. Jesus returns as the King of Israel to deliver her from her enemies (Zech. 14:3–5);
  - b. Jesus' Kingship is announced through miracles — unusual light and living water (Zech. 14:6–8);
  - c. Jesus is exalted as King over all the nations (Zech. 14:9);
  - d. Jesus' capital Jerusalem is leveled, exalted and safely inhabited (Zech. 14:10 - 11);
  - e. Jesus will punish all the nations that rebel against His leadership (Zech. 14:12–15, 18–19);

- f. The Gentiles shall be converted and unite with Israel to worship Jesus (Zech. 14:16–19);
- g. Israel will be the first nation to walk holy in every area of life. There will be no mixture in her (Zech. 14:20–21).

**C. Israel’s Military and Spiritual Victory (Zech. 12:1 – 13:6)**

1. The Lord introduces Himself as the One who stretched out the heavens, laid the foundation of the earth and formed the human spirit (Zech. 12:1). He has the wisdom, power and love to execute His remarkable plans that are presented in Zechariah 12 – 14.
2. The two metaphors: *cup of drunkenness* and *a heavy stone* (Zech. 12:2–3)
  - a. God will make Jerusalem like *a cup that makes all the nations drunk*.
    - i. All the nations will hate the Jewish people and therefore, will surround Jerusalem and lay siege to her with zeal to destroy Israel.
    - ii. Jerusalem will be like a cup of drunkenness to the nations. She will be as a cup of strong wine that intoxicates all who drink it. By agreeing with the plan to destroy Israel, the nations are drinking this cup. They will become “drunk” in the process.
    - iii. As a result, they will lose their strength and their ability to think rationally. Their false feeling of invincibility leads them to make very bad decisions. The Lord will defeat them as easily as one pushes a drunken man over.
  - b. God will make Jerusalem *a very heavy stone to all people*.
    - i. Everyone will have to decide whether to stand for God and Jerusalem or against God and Jerusalem. There will be no neutral ground.
    - ii. God will use Jerusalem as “the issue” to separate the righteous from the unrighteous in families, neighborhoods, schools, marketplace, economy etc., both in the Church and in all nations (Joel 3:14).
    - iii. We are now at the early stages of the valley of decision. If we do not now choose to walk close to God with a vibrant spirit, we will not be able to take a stand for the difficult “politically incorrect” truths that God will require of all later.
    - iv. To those who seek to “heave Israel out of the land,” she will be an unmovable rock. The nations will be bolstered in their confidence to come against Israel because all the nations on earth will stand together in this.
3. The Lord is the One who will gather the military forces of all the nations together against Israel. The David and Goliath drama will be re-enacted on the world stage as one little nation, Israel, faces all other nations. The nations’ false confidence is based on not knowing God’s jealousy for Israel (Zech. 8:2; 14:2; Joel 3:2).

4. Zechariah began to reveal this prophecy only at the end of the story — at the point where all the nations have surrounded Jerusalem. He didn't tell us how it happened, but the Lord will put Himself in a position of a "divine checkmate" where it will take God's power to solve Israel's dilemma. This is how God wants it to be.
5. No one has the power to deliver Israel except God. *The ally that Israel most needs is a holy and prophetic Church that fasts and prays.*
6. The Lord will release confusion and a spirit of insanity on the Gentile armies. They will boast of their power, but God will instead use it against them. Their strength will end up being their weakness as they use their military might while under a spirit of madness (Zech. 12:4).
7. This will be the *greatest military victory and reversal in all history* (Zech. 12:9)
  - a. Jesus will anoint Israel so that she will be like a fire pan (vessel used to carry hot coals to ignite other fires).
  - b. Israel's victory in battle will be as fire burns up dry grass — it will be effortless and instantaneous.
8. Israel's national repentance and conversion — the outpouring of the Spirit (Zech. 12:10–14)
  - a. God will pour out the spirit of grace and prayer so that Israel will cry out to Jesus for salvation. The *spirit of grace and supplication refers to the anointing of revelation, power and prayer.* After this great military victory, Israel will have deep humility instead of pride.
  - b. God will deliver Israel in a way that causes them to love Jesus more than the nations that they looked to for help. Ultimately, they will look to Jesus of Nazareth for deliverance. They will understand that He delivers them because He loves them! Then, they will see the tragedy of having hated Jesus for 2,000 years as He has always loved them! The national repentance and mourning of Israel is described very graphically (Zech. 12:11–14).
9. *Israel's national cleansing will be from sin, idols, false prophets and the unclean spirit. God will open a fountain of grace to cleanse Israel of all her national and individual sin* (Zech. 13:1–6).
  - a. The Antichrist would have been worshipped throughout the land of Israel. The False Prophet would have been working with the Antichrist in Israel. They would have had a network of false prophets working under them. The cleansing will put the false prophets to shame (Zech. 13:3–6).
  - b. The pattern that God employs in Israel's salvation reveals the same principles that He will use to cleanse and revive the rest of the nations. God will break the pride of all nations, pour out His Spirit, reveal Jesus and then cleanse the people as they come to Him in deep repentance.

#### **D. Israel's Suffering — The Remnant will be Refined in the Fire (Zech. 13:7 – 14:2)**

1. *Israel will face trials and suffering during the End Times.* God will use the least severe means to bring the greatest number of people to Jesus at the deepest level of love (Zech. 13:7 – 14:2).
2. The remnant of Israel will be refined through the fires of tribulation unto salvation. God now reveals part of His way of bringing about a great spiritual revival to Israel (Zech. 13:7–9).
3. Daniel spoke of persecution and suffering as part of God's End-Time plan to prepare His people to rule the earth with Jesus. God forewarns Israel that her great victory will include pain (Dan. 7:18–27).
4. The Father awakened His sword against His Son at the cross (Zech. 13:7)
  - a. Jesus will oversee the cleansing of End-Time Israel. He is qualified because He is deeply acquainted with suffering for Israel.
  - b. No one will be able to say to Him, "You don't understand the suffering that You are allowing." The sword of God's judgment that struck Jesus is the same sword that will strike End-Time Israel.
  - c. Jesus was innocent but End-Time Israel will be guilty. Jesus understands what Israel will go through since He knows what it means to be struck by the Father's sword. He is able to lead them to salvation.
5. God will turn His hand or sword of judgment against two-thirds of Israel who will be killed. This was not fulfilled in 70 AD. Malachi 3:1–6 develops this same theme of Israel being refined like silver in the End Times.
6. Jerusalem is temporarily taken and captives are deported (Zech. 14:1–2).

#### **E. Israel's Victory when Jesus Returns as King of the World (Zech. 14:3–21)**

1. In Zech. 14:3–21, we see Israel's victory because her King comes to deliver her. He brings great victory that will begin in Israel and spread to the rest of the world (Zech. 9:9–10);
2. Jesus will return as the King of Israel to deliver her from her enemies (Zech. 14:3–5);
3. Jesus' Kingship is announced by miracles — unusual light and living water (Zech. 14:6–8);
4. Jesus will be exalted as King over all the nations (Zech. 14:9);
5. Jesus' capital Jerusalem will be leveled, exalted and then safely inhabited (Zech. 14:10–11);
6. Jesus will punish all nations that rebel against His leadership (Zech. 14:12–15, 18, 19);

7. The Gentiles shall be converted and unite with Israel to worship Jesus (Zech. 14:16–19);
8. Israel will be the first nation to walk holy in every area of life. There will be no mixture in her (Zech. 14:20–21).

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# The Redemptive Role of Israel in the End Times

## A. Introduction

1. The redemptive role of Israel in the End Times cannot be fully understood without seeing God's big picture with regard to the heart of the Gospel in Isaiah 61, God's eternal purpose for human history and the battle of Jerusalem.
2. To fully understand the subject of Israel and the End Times, we need to know that it is about the wisdom, majesty and glorious leadership of Jesus. It is also about the redemption of mankind and restoration of creation. It is not just an event or just about the nation of Israel.

## B. Isaiah 61 — the Gospel of Grace and the Gospel of the Kingdom

1. The primary text that Jesus preached from during His First Coming was Isaiah 61. This is a passage that reveals the very heart of the Gospel.
2. It is interesting to note that in the First Coming when Jesus preached, He ended this text in the middle of verse two (compare Isa. 61:1–2a and Lk. 4:18–19).
3. The Gospel is two-fold:
  - a. Gospel of Grace: the aspect of forgiveness, healing and restoration (Isa. 61:1–2a);
  - b. Gospel of the Kingdom: the aspect of executing judgment, establishing justice, bringing joy to the earth and establishing of the Kingdom of God (i.e. Messianic Kingdom or Millennial Kingdom) on the earth (Isa. 61:2b–7).
4. Jesus concentrated on forgiveness and healing at His First Coming. This is because according to the plan of God, it was the time for Him to be crucified for the atonement and salvation of man.
5. At His Second Coming, He will concentrate on establishing the Kingdom of God. He will appear as a roaring Lion to punish those who have rebelled against God and execute justice.
6. The Messianic Kingdom on earth is connected with the restoration of Israel.
  - a. The restoration of Israel is the overall context for Isaiah 60 – 62.
  - b. When Jesus was raised from the dead, He taught the disciples for forty days about the Kingdom of God. This resulted in their expectation for the restoration of Israel in Acts 1:6.

- c. Jesus did not correct their question for it was not wrong. Instead, He answered that the time for the restoration of Israel would not be until the Gospel is preached to all the nations of the world (Acts 1:7–8).
7. The nation of Israel will play a vital role in the Second Coming of Jesus and the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom of God.
  8. This is what Paul talks about in Romans 11:15 — the restoration of the nation of Israel and her spiritual return to the Messiah will usher in the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom on the earth.

### C. Centerpiece of God’s Eternal Purpose

1. The centerpiece of God’s purpose is for Jesus to establish His Kingdom over all the earth as He joins the heavenly and earthly realms together (Eph. 1:9–10).
  - a. God is a Spiritual Being who created a physical world. It is His desire to bring the two worlds (i.e. spiritual and physical) together.
  - b. The fullness of God happens when the heavenly and earthly realms come together!
  - c. The sin of Adam and the rebellion of Satan caused a split between Heaven and earth.
  - d. Only a Person who is both God and man could bridge the gap between Heaven and earth.
  - e. Jesus will bring Heaven and earth together at His Second Coming when the New Jerusalem descends to earth and establishes a vital connection with earthly Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2, 10).
2. The Person and the Place
  - a. The Messiah is God’s chosen King upon the earth. This Messiah-King is being referred to as God’s Son in Psalm 2:6, 7, 12.
  - b. The Jewish world sees the Messiah as a King but misses Him as God’s Son. The Christian world sees Jesus as God’s Son but misses Him as the King of Israel (Ps. 2:6–7).
  - c. God has determined that He will establish His authority on earth through a certain Person — Jesus Christ. However, He has also chosen a certain place for His throne — Jerusalem. We have to accept God’s chosen Person and His designated place.

“Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion...” (Ps. 2:6)

- d. These two expressions of God’s authority — His chosen Person and His designated Place — constitute a test for all mankind. It is a test of man’s heart to see whether we will submit to the will of God. It is through God’s chosen Person and designated Place that God addresses the root of sin and rebellion in man.

3. Jesus will rule all the nations from His Throne of glory in Jerusalem (Matt. 25:31–32; Jer. 3:17; Ezek. 43:6–7)
  - a. His heavenly Throne is also in New (or heavenly) Jerusalem. It will be a dynamic convergence between the two Jerusalems (Rev. 22:3).
  - b. Jesus rules in heaven as the Son of God (i.e. in the New Jerusalem) and He rules on the earth as the Son of David (earthly Jerusalem). The governments of heaven and of earth will fully come together at the Second Coming. He is the only One who has the authority to bring both realms together.
4. There will be an explosion of God's glory when the government of heaven is joined with together with the government of the earth. This will usher in:
  - a. God's fullness on earth (Hab. 2:14);
  - b. Satan's banishment into prison (Rev. 20:1–3);
  - c. The resurrection of the dead and the created order being delivered from its bondage (Rom. 8:17–23; 11:15; Isa. 11:6–9; 35:1–8; 65:17–25).

#### **D. The Redemptive Role of Israel in the End Times**

1. To invite the King of glory to rule in Jerusalem and to reign over them (Matt. 23:37–39; Ps. 24:7–10; Lk. 19:11–28)
  - a. Jesus will not rule Jerusalem until He is officially invited by the Jewish leadership to be their King.
  - b. Jesus has bound Himself by His own prophecy to only come back to Jerusalem after Israel's leadership asks Him to reign over them out of their own free will.
  - c. Only upon this covenantal invitation from Israel will Jesus establish Himself as King over Jerusalem and Israel. After that, He will expand His government over all the nations (Isa. 2:1–4; Mic. 4:1–5; Jer. 3:17; Ezek. 37:28; 43:4–7).
  - d. Satan understands this truth and therefore, seeks to exploit this "loophole" in God's prophetic plan. His plan is to control Jerusalem and see to it that no Jewish person is alive to invite Jesus back to be King in Jerusalem over Israel.
2. Israel as a prototype of God's holy nation in the Millennium (Isa. 2:2–3; Deut. 28:1–2)
  - a. Having been provoked to jealousy by the Gentile Church at the End of the Age, Israel will in turn provoke the nations of the earth under the leadership of Jesus to walk out the commandments of the Lord (i.e. Torah and the Sermon on the Mount).
  - b. Nations will flock to Israel to learn from her so that they can walk in the same blessings and abundance.

## **E. Battle of Jerusalem: the Vortex of God's End-Time Drama**

1. Satan's rage against the Jewish people — Satan wants to exterminate the Jewish people so that a believing remnant cannot invite Jesus to rule over Israel as her Messiah. Satan seeks to exterminate Israel and the Church that stands with her (Rev. 6:9–11; 7:9–14; 9:21; 11:7; 12:13–17; 13:7–15; 16:5–7; 17:6; 18:24; Dan. 7:21,25; 8:24; 11:33–35; 12:7; Matt. 10:21–22,28; 24:9; Lk. 12:4–7; 21:16–19).
2. The Battle of Jerusalem is the most significant battlefront in the spirit realm today.
  - a. The Battle of Jerusalem is central to the Armageddon Campaign and Jesus' Second Coming to reign as King of the whole earth.
  - b. The Armageddon Campaign is a war for the control of Jerusalem. After Jesus wins this war and is received by Israel in Jerusalem as their King, Satan will be cast into prison (Rev. 20:1–3) and the Kingdom of God will be established on earth.
  - c. Satan knows this truth and is focused on avoiding this prison sentence that will ultimately put him in the Lake of Fire after the Millennium (Rev. 20:10).
    - i. His primary agenda is not to keep people out of heaven but to stay out of prison even though he hates it when people get saved.
3. The call to the Church to engage in the Battle of Jerusalem through:
  - a. Prophetic proclamations to Israel (Isa. 40:1–2);
  - b. Prophetic proclamations to the Gentile nations (Jer. 31:7–10).

# How to Provoke Israel to Jealousy

## A. Understanding the Mystery of Israel (Rom. 11:11–12, 15, 25–26)

1. There was urgency in Paul's heart for the Gentile believers in his day to understand God's plans to bring salvation to the nations. Therefore, in Romans 9 – 11, he gave them details about the timing and means that God would use to release His worldwide salvation purposes.
2. God's plan for Israel is dynamically related to His plan to release a great End-Time revival and to purify the Church.
3. In Rom. 11:11, salvation coming to the Gentiles speaks of much more than individual Gentiles experiencing the new birth. It speaks of God giving the "primary leadership mantle" for the spreading of the gospel to the Gentiles, which has been the case for the last 2,000 years.
4. In Rom. 11, Paul proclaimed *three vital parts of God's mystery* that all believers must understand in order to fully cooperate with His End-Time purposes for the Church, Israel and the Great Harvest.
  - a. *All Israel will be saved* (v.26) and *brought to fullness* (v.12) in context of the Great Tribulation, the Second Coming and the Millennial Kingdom (life from the dead for the whole world; v.15).
    - i. "All Israel being saved" means that 100% of the Jewish people who survive the Great Tribulation will be born-again believers in Jesus. Jewish people are being saved today in record numbers but the full number will not be saved until the Second Coming.
    - ii. Israel's fullness refers to the fullness of her national blessing because of the outpouring of the Spirit (v.12).
  - b. The Jewish people are *temporarily spiritual blind* (v.25). They cannot see Jesus as their Messiah.
    - i. This blindness includes their unique hostility towards Jesus. Yet, it does not mean that Israel has "fallen" from her original national calling to establish God's Kingdom on earth in the Millennium (v.11) through leadership of the nations of the earth.
    - ii. Rom. 11 was written to assure us of Israel's primary leadership role in the future. Israel's rejection of Jesus is neither total (Rom. 11:1–10) nor final (Rom. 11:11–32).
    - iii. If the Church is ignorant of the "supernatural blindness" that is currently upon Israel then we will wrongly conclude that God is finished with them instead of preparing them for the mantle of worldwide leadership.

- c. The fullness of the Gentiles (v.25) will provoke Israel to seek Jesus (v.11).
  - i. The fullness of the Gentiles refers to the Gentiles being effectively used as God's primary instrument to bring His salvation to the nations, which has taken place for the last 2,000 years.
  - ii. Inherent in this concept is God's promise that a "full number" of Gentiles will be saved from every nation (Rev. 7:9) and then walk in the fullness of the Spirit (experiencing His gifts, fruit, wisdom; Eph. 4:11–13; 5:27).
- 5. The fullness of the Gentiles will result from the greatest revival in history that will be released before Jesus returns. This revival will bring forth radical Gentile believers who will also be dynamically used by God in Israel's salvation (v.25–26), which will then result in the glory of God filling the earth in the Millennium (Hab. 2:14).

## **B. Setting the Stage for all Israel to be saved: the Great Tribulation**

1. Something drastic will need to happen to change Israel's hostile view of Jesus and His Church. The unique reality of the Great Tribulation will create the necessary context to radically change Israel's views. It will be the most severe time in history for all — for Israel, the Church and unbelievers (Dan.12:1, 6–7; Matt. 24:21; Jer. 30:7).
2. Satan's strategy is to exploit a "loophole" in God's prophetic plan. Jesus "bound" Himself by His prophecy to only come back to Israel after being invited by Israel's leadership (Matt. 23:39).
3. Satan wants to exterminate the Jewish people so that a believing remnant cannot invite Jesus to rule Israel as her Messiah. Satan seeks to completely destroy Israel (Rev. 12:13–17) and the Church that stands with her (Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:24; 11:33–35; 12:7, 10; Rev. 6:9–11; 7:9, 14; 9:21; 11:7; 13:7, 15; 16:5–7; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2; Matt. 10:21–22, 28; 24:9; Lk. 12:4–7; 21:16–19; Jn. 15:18 – 16:4).
4. Satan's attack on Israel will kill two-thirds of Israel and bring the remaining one-third to salvation (Zech. 13:8).
5. God requires the Church to stand together with Israel in the pressures of the Great Tribulation. Scriptures outline seven different ways in which God will minister grace towards Israel's salvation:
  - a. The Gentile believers will provoke Israel to jealousy (Rom. 11:11);
  - b. God will show mercy to Israel (Rom. 11:30–32);
  - c. The ministry of the Two Witnesses (Rev. 11);
  - d. The "144,000" Jewish and Gentile believers (Rev. 7:1–8);
  - e. Israel's experience of grace in the wilderness (Jer. 31:2);

- f. Insight gained from God's judgments (Isa. 26:9);
  - g. Jesus' Second Coming (Zech. 12:10).
6. Paul focused on the two avenues of grace (provocation and mercy) that emphasized the responsibility that Gentile believers have towards Israel (Rom. 10:19; 11:11, 14, 31).
  7. That the Gentiles will provoke Israel to jealousy is one of the most surprising and remarkable dimensions of God's End-Time plan. To be provoked to godly jealousy means that Israel will deeply desire what Gentile believers have spiritually. This is in contrast to how Israel has been repulsed by the Church for 2,000 years and not provoked by her.
  8. Israel will receive mercy directly from God but also from the grateful Gentile believers who have themselves freely received mercy from Israel (Rom. 11:31).
  9. The kindness (mercy) shown by the Church to Jewish people in context of the Great Tribulation will be God's gift of love to Israel and one of His means of unifying the Jews and Gentiles as One New Man (Eph. 2:14–16; 3:1–10).
  10. This unity will be fully manifested in the Millennium. God is the great social architect who leads history to fulfill His purpose of unifying Jews and Gentiles. He will create the necessary social dynamics for this without violating man's free will (Eph. 2:15; Jn. 17:21).
  11. The Church will be brought to maturity and evaluated based on our response to Jesus' requirement for us to stand with Israel (Matt. 25:31–46). This will purify the Church. Some who profess faith in Jesus will fall away at this time (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Thes. 2:3).

### **C. Provoking Israel to Jealousy: Five Practical Ways**

1. Providing refuge: Jewish people will flee as they are hunted by the nations. Those who provide refuge to fleeing Jews will risk their lives and the lives of their loved ones (like Corrie Ten Boom's family). The Antichrist's laws will require (as did the Nazis') the reporting of Jewish people in hiding and in flight. Refusal to do so will be viewed as being an accomplice to them and will be deemed a state crime.
2. Performing Miracles like Elijah: These miracles include the multiplication of food, healing of the sick and receiving prophetic direction by visions and dreams as promised in Acts 2:17; Jer. 31:9.
3. Godly living: This refers to living in "bright righteousness and humility" as the darkness in the world grows deeper as the world embraces immorality and the occult, etc. (Rev. 9:21; Isa. 60:1).
4. Proclaiming God's purposes for Israel: This is best outlined in Jer. 31:7–10 as prophetic declaration, intercession (Isa. 62:6; Ps. 122:6), celebration, and bringing comfort to Israel (Isa. 40:1–2).

5. Living a “transcendent” lifestyle: This refers to walking and living with a revelation of eternity, which will result in the Gentile church being fearless in the face of death.

**D. Paul’s Urgency that All Understand and not be Ignorant (Rom. 11:25)**

1. The challenge the Church faces today is passive indifference. It is based on ignorance and the lack of information. Ignorance often leads to arrogance against God. The arrogant will refuse to stand with Israel in times of pressure. This can be dangerous because through this, some will deny their faith and be cut off by God.
2. The progression from ignorance to being cut off: **ignorance** can become **arrogance**, which can become **passive resistance** (refusing to help Israel by remaining silent), then **active resistance** (helping those who persecute Israel) which will then lead to being **cut off by God** (Rom. 11:22). The urgency in Paul’s message is that we not be ignorant of this mystery so that Gentile believers would be equipped with revelation to stand firm in the face of unique End-Time pressures. The Church will either be a people with “anointed action” or “ignorant arrogance.”
3. To boast against Israel is to be arrogant before God and to be against His plan for Israel instead of being awestruck by His plan (v.33). It is arrogance to see our personal ministries as superior in importance to God’s bigger purposes. There is a special blessing that comes with standing with Israel (Ps. 122:6; Gen. 12:3).

IHOP – ONE THING MINISTRIES

# God's Plan to Transform Israel

(Dan. 9:24–27)

## A. Introduction

1. The book of Daniel records four visions that Daniel had: Dan. 7:1–28; 8:1–27; 9:24–27; 10:4 – 12:13.
2. Dan. 9:24–27 records his third vision. It is a short vision about God's plans to transform the entire earth and fill it with the knowledge of the glory of God (Hab. 2:14). In this great plan, God chooses Israel to lead all the nations of the earth to God (Isa. 2:1–4; Mic. 4:1–4).
3. God sent the angel Gabriel to give Daniel this great vision that would cover Israel's most significant historical events over the next 2,500 years. Gabriel spoke in an abbreviated way and used only short phrases to describe Israel's future. However, each phrase has massive implications (Dan. 9:21–23).
4. Gabriel urged Daniel to consider the vision so as to understand it. Gabriel later exhorted the saints to know and understand this vision (Dan. 9:23–25).
5. Similarly, an angel told Daniel that in the End Times, God would raise up "people of understanding" (Dan. 11:33–35).
6. Daniel 9:24–27 prophesies of the difficulties that Israel would endure for approximately 2,500 years (from Daniel's generation until Jesus' return). She would suffer under God's judgment for her persistent rebellion against Him.
  - a. Refusing to give up on Israel, God set into motion a grand plan to bring Israel to national repentance so that she will be able to lead all the nations into God's ways.
  - b. Israel's world leadership begins when Jesus returns and continues through the Millennial Kingdom.
  - c. This vision that spans four verses predicts significant details related to Jesus' first and second comings.

## B. Summary and Outline of Dan. 9:24–27

1. In Dan. 9:24, Gabriel gave Daniel six great promises that would describe the transformation of the whole world, beginning in Jerusalem and with the Jewish people.
2. In Dan. 9:25, he revealed the positive things that would happen in Israel's near future. This verse describes what would occur during the first 69 weeks (483 years), with a positive focus on the restoration of Jerusalem after Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Nehemiah and Ezra and then the coming of Jesus as Israel's Messiah.

3. In Dan. 9:26, he revealed Israel's future sin and trouble related to Jesus' first coming.
  - a. This verse describes the negative things that would occur immediately after the 69th week.
  - b. Gabriel revealed that Israel's Messiah would be "cut off" or killed violently. This would result in God judgment on Israel through the Roman army's destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 AD.
4. In Dan. 9:27, he revealed Israel's End-Time sin and trouble related to Jesus' return.
  - a. Israel will make a covenant with the Antichrist and receive him as their Messiah.
  - b. The Antichrist will betray this covenant by acting in extremely abominable ways that include stopping the religious activities in Israel's rebuilt Temple and bringing desolation to Israel.
  - c. Jesus will destroy the Antichrist by pouring great desolation on him.
  - d. This verse describes the final seven years of natural human history and is referred to as Daniel's 70th week.

**C. God established Seventy weeks (490 years) for Israel's Salvation (Dan. 9:24a, b)**

1. "Seventy weeks are determined" — Gabriel said that God has determined a timeframe of "70 weeks" as necessary in His plan to prepare Israel.
  - a. A "week" to the Hebrew understanding was a period of seven days or seven years (there are two understandings to the meaning of a "week"). Scriptures refer to both types of weeks (Gen. 29:27–28).
  - b. A week of seven years was a well-known term in Daniel's day. All commentators agree that the "week" in Daniel's prophecy is a week of years (490 literal years) not a week of days.
2. God has determined to prepare Israel over a period of 490 years (70 units of 7 years).
  - a. Jeremiah prophesied that Israel would suffer under Gentile oppression for 70 years outside the land (Jer. 29:10, Dan. 9:2).
  - b. Gabriel revealed that they would suffer oppression for seventy weeks in the land (Dan. 9:24–27).

**D. The Millennial Kingdom: Six Great Promises (Dan. 9:24c–h)**

1. Gabriel elaborated on the Millennial Kingdom in Dan. 7:27. He came to give Daniel "skill in understanding."
  - a. The vision was given to assure Daniel that complete restoration would come to Israel (v.24).
  - b. This involved six specific promises, with each one related to the Millennial Kingdom (and the New Earth). Dan. 7:27 will be fulfilled with eternal dimensions.

- c. These six glorious dimensions of world transformation are the fruit of God's seventy-week strategy for Israel and also of the Great Tribulation (v.27).
  - i. The first three promises have to do with God removing sin.
  - ii. The second three promises have to do with the establishment of God's Kingdom by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, as God's people on earth worship Him in spirit and truth.
2. The main purpose of the seventy-week strategy is to deal with the sin problem that humans have had since the Garden of Eden.
  - a. All six promises have been partially fulfilled because of the cross. However, they will only be fully manifested on earth at the Second Coming.
  - b. God would use 490 years to prepare them to lead the world to receive the benefit of these six blessings (Isa. 2:1–4; Mic. 4:1–4). These 490 years occur when Israel is in her land.
3. "To finish the transgression" (v.24c) — to end Israel's national rebellion against God and His Son.
  - a. The Hebrew word transgression has a definite article "the", implying that it refers to a specific transgression.
  - b. It ultimately speaks of Israel's rebellion in their rejection of Jesus throughout history and their acceptance of the Antichrist as their Messiah.
4. "To make an end of sins" (v.24d) — sins in the plural speaks of individual sins in everyday life.
5. "To make reconciliation for iniquity" (v.24e) — through the cross of Jesus, God provided a way to forgive all debts of past national and individual sins.
  - a. To "make reconciliation" is the Hebrew verb "kipper" (meaning "to atone"), which refers to paying the price for former crimes against God's holiness.
  - b. Sins from our past do not go away just because we repent, but they must be paid for. Christ, through His blood, has reconciled the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:19).
6. "To bring in everlasting righteousness" (v.24f) — to establish a new world where righteousness prevails in the people, in social structures and in the land.
  - a. What Jesus accomplished on the cross will be released at the Second Coming and made fully manifest in every dimension of society and life (Rom. 8:19–23).
  - b. The Great Commission will be fulfilled completely. The earth will be filled with righteousness forever — the righteous reign of Jesus' kingdom (Isa. 11:2–5; Jer. 23:5–6; 33:15–18; 2 Pet. 3:13).
7. "To seal up vision and prophecy" (v.24g) — God will fulfill all the prophetic promises that He has given for all individuals, nations and for the earth as a whole.
  - a. He will "seal up" or bring to completion the visions and prophecies that relate to Jesus' First and Second Coming.

- b. "To seal" speaks of closing a document to preserve it after it has been verified (Jer. 32:10).
8. "To anoint the Most Holy" (v.24h) — *the presence of the Holy Spirit will fully rest on Jesus as the King of the whole earth and will be manifested in the Temple that He reigns from.*
- a. To anoint means to consecrate for God's service. Jesus is the "anointed One" or the Messiah. He will be anointed for worldwide Millennial ministry (Isa. 61:1).
  - b. This also refers to God's anointing (Shekinah glory) being made manifest in the Holy of Holies in the new Millennial Temple. God will be fully manifest with us forever in the eternal Holy of Holies in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:3–7).

**E. What happens during the first 69 weeks (or 483 years) (Dan. 9:25)**

1. The going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem (under Nehemiah and Ezra) until Messiah (Jesus' First Coming) will be 69 weeks (units of 7 years or 483 years).
  - a. The 69 weeks or 483 years are separated into 2 parts:
    - i. 7 weeks (49 years);
    - ii. 62 weeks (434 years).
  - b. The 7 weeks (49 years) begins with a command given to Nehemiah (Neh. 2:5) by Artaxerxes to re-build Jerusalem in 445 BC.
  - c. If we add an additional 62 weeks (434 years), we arrive at Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a donkey and subsequent crucifixion in April of AD 32. The first part of the prophecy stopped with the cutting off of the Messiah.
  - d. Note that a Jewish calendar year is 360 days (as opposed to 365 days in the Roman calendar).
2. The 70 weeks (490 years) are divided into 3 parts:
  - i. 7 weeks (49 years);
  - ii. 62 weeks (434 years);
  - iii. 1 week (the final 7 years just before Jesus' return).
  - a. We are currently living in the gap between the first 69 weeks (7 weeks + 62 weeks) and the final 70<sup>th</sup> week. After Jesus was killed in Jerusalem and Israel was driven out of her land in AD 70, God's prophetic clock stopped, and has stopped for over 2,000 years until a time in the near future when Israel makes a covenant with the Antichrist while back in her land (v.27).
  - b. The 70th week (final seven-year period with the Antichrist) is immediately before the Second Coming of Jesus.

**F. What Happens after the 69 Weeks (483 years) (Dan. 9:26)**

1. Daniel prophesied that after the end of the 7 weeks (49 years) plus 62 weeks (434 years) — a total of 483 years (from 445 BC to AD 32) — the Messiah would be cut off or violently killed (v.26a). This happened in April of AD 32.
2. “*The people of the prince who is to come*” refer to the Romans and the Emperor Titus. They destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70.
3. God had determined desolations for Israel until the end of the Roman war against her (v.26d).

**G. What Happens in the 70th week (Dan. 9:27)**

1. After Jesus’ crucifixion (AD 32) and the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans (AD 70), the Antichrist shall confirm a covenant with many (majority in Israel and/or many Gentile nations) for “one week” or for a seven-year period (v.27a). The length of time between v.26 and v.27 has so far been about 2000 years, and based on the signs of the times today and the return of Israel to her land, the start of the “one week” is likely to be in the near future.
2. In the middle of this one week (seven-year period), the Antichrist will bring an end to the sacrifice and offering that he would have originally permitted in the Jerusalem Temple (v.27b).
3. “*On the wing of abominations*” or by using extreme abominations to God, the Antichrist who is the “*one who makes desolate*” will bring desolation to all nations (v.27c).
  - a. Gabriel told Daniel that the Antichrist would operate on the wing (pinnacle or extreme expression) of abominations.
  - b. The “Abomination of Desolation” is directly referred to by name six times in Scripture (Dan. 8:13; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14).
  - c. The “Abomination of Desolation” is the scriptural name for the Antichrist’s image that is placed in the Temple.
4. The Antichrist will continue this desolation until Jesus’ judgments come upon him. God has determined to pour out great judgment on this man who is called “the desolate” (v.27d).

IHOP – ONE THING MINISTRIES

# How to Pray for Israel

## A. Introduction

*Isaiah 62:6–7*

The call for watchmen to intercede for Israel had gone out in Isaiah's time and the Holy Spirit is releasing this strategic call again in the 21<sup>st</sup> century!

## B. Why Should We Pray and Take a Stand for Israel?

1. The Word of God commands us to pray for Israel (Ps. 122.6);
2. Israel is still the apple of God's eye and His inheritance (Deut. 32:9–11; Ps. 148:14; Zech. 2:8);
3. It is time to have compassion for Israel (Ps. 102:13–14);
4. God commands us to give Him and ourselves no rest (Isa. 62:6–7);
5. God desires to work through us for Israel's salvation (Rom. 9:1–2; 10:1);
6. We are debtors to Israel (Rom. 15:27);
7. We are part of Israel (Eph. 2:12–13; Rev. 5:5);
8. We shall prosper if we pray for Israel (Ps. 122:6);
9. Israel's acceptance of Jesus will bring "life" (Rom. 11:15; Isa. 27:6);
10. Jesus linked His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming to Israel's turning to Him (Matt. 23:39; Rom. 11:25).

## C. How Should We Pray for Israel?

1. Our prayers on behalf of Israel are to be *INTELLIGENT* and *SPECIFIC*. In order to pray this way, we need to acquaint ourselves more fully with the facts.
2. The book of Nehemiah, which deals with Israel's restoration seventy years after her exile to Babylon in 586 BC, has much to teach us concerning Israel's present-day restoration after nearly 2000 years of diaspora.
3. In chapter three of the book, specific gates are repaired in the process of restoration and these gates remind us of the work that has yet to be completed in Israel's modern-day restoration.

4. Each gate represents a particular prayer need and since God has called us to be gatekeepers of the nation in the spiritual sense, we can pray with understanding and precision by praying according to these gates.

5. Gates and Prayer Needs of Israel

- a. The Sheep Gate (Neh. 3:1) — Pray for the REGATHERING of the exiles to the land of Israel.

There are approximately 15 million Jews around the world. To date, only 4 to 5 million have returned to their ancient and God-given homeland, Israel.

- b. The Fish Gate (Neh. 3:3) — Pray for the SPIRITUAL RESTORATION of Israel.

The fact that God has restored the nation to the land means that their spiritual restoration is not too far off — and with it the redemption of the world. Only believing prayer will remove the veil of unbelief that is covering the Jewish heart (Ezek. 36:23–25; Rom. 11:25–27).

- c. The Old Gate (Neh. 3:6) — Pray for the REVELATION OF GOD’S LOVE to the Jewish people.

The people of Israel need to rediscover the dynamic message proclaimed by their prophets of old. Unfortunately, their pathway to this discovery has been and is obscured mainly by religious legalism and extremism. For many Israelites, biblical religion is equated with a complicated system of rules, dogma and rituals.

- d. The Valley Gate (Neh. 3:13) — Pray for Israel to rediscover their TRUST in God.

A valley speaks of separation. In this context, it speaks of Israel rediscovering her trust in God who formed her and created her. For too long, Israel has put her trust in men, in her military might and in her own ingenuity.

- e. The Refuse Gate (Neh. 3:14) — Pray for Israel to TURN FROM HER WICKED WAYS and embrace her calling as a righteous nation.

Like the other nations of the world, Israel also has much refuse within her borders. By “refuse”, we mean the types of sin and iniquity that will ultimately attract and invite the judgment of God.

- f. The Fountain Gate (Neh. 3:15) — Pray for the OUTPOURING OF GOD’S SPIRIT upon Israel.

The Fountain Gate speaks of a nation coming under the saturating rain of God’s Spirit. Scripture promises that such a day will surely come (Zech. 13:1).

- g. The Water Gate (Neh. 3:26) — Pray for Israel to REDISCOVER THE POWER OF GOD’S WORD.

Water is a picture of the Word of God in the Bible. Israel needs to rediscover the Word of God. Their discovery of the simple yet powerful Word of God will keep them from trying to be like all other nations of the world.

- h. The Horse Gate (Neh. 3:28) — Pray for the SECURITY, PROTECTION and PHYSICAL WELFARE of Israel.

In Scripture, the horse speaks of war. Israel has fought many battles. Christians must understand that the physical survival of the Jewish people is crucial to God's plan for world redemption. Because of her crucial role, demonic deception will continue to stir up nations against her.

- i. The East Gate (Neh. 3:29) — Pray for the SECOND COMING OF JESUS.

The East Gate refers to the Second Coming of Jesus. We know that the restoration of Israel is closely related to the return of Jesus to this earth. All prayers for Israel should be prayed with the Second Coming of Jesus in mind.

- j. The Inspection Gate (Neh. 3:31) — STAND WITH ISRAEL!

The Inspection Gate speaks of completion or conclusion. There will come a day when all of us will stand before God's great and glorious throne to be inspected (Rom. 14:10). This coming day of inspection will determine the reward that we will receive individually for faithfully serving God on earth (1 Cor. 3:10–15). Our love and support for the Jewish nation is a crucial part of our service for God. Those who recognize this truth will overflow with the heart of God's purpose for the whole world.

IHOP – ONE THING MINISTRIES

# The Political Signs of the Times Pertaining to Israel

## A. Introduction

1. Scripture commands us to know the signs of the times. Many Scriptures emphasize how important prophetic signs are at the End of the Age. In the Scriptures, Jesus taught on, more than any of the apostles, the need to discern the times (Matt. 24:32–44; Lk. 21:28–31).
2. When comparing Matt. 24 with 1 Thes. 5:2–3 we see three distinct prophetic timeframes related to the final seven-year period of this age:
  - a. The beginning of birth pangs (Matt. 24:8);
  - b. A worldwide period of counterfeit peace and safety or increased birth pangs (1 Thes. 5:2–3; Dan. 9:27);
  - c. The Great Tribulation or heavy birth pangs (Matt. 24:21; Jer. 30:5–7).
3. The beginning of birth pangs began in either 1948 (when Israel became a nation) or 1967 (when Jerusalem came under Jewish control). I believe that it should begin in 1948. This is because Israel is the reference point for understanding God's redemptive history (past and future). Israel gives us the prophetic timetable for the unfolding of God's End-Time plans.
4. Five of the most significant prophetic political events since Jesus' ascension that have taken place and will take place are:
  - a. The re-birth of the nation of Israel (May 15, 1948);
  - b. The re-capturing of Jerusalem during the Six Day War (June, 1967);
  - c. Jerusalem at the center of world controversy (Zech. 12:1–3; 14:1–3);
  - d. The establishment of the European Union in the same territory as the ancient Roman Empire (Dan. 2:41–42; 7:7, 20, 24; 9:26–27; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16);
  - e. The emergence of an international leader in the unique position to establish a peace treaty with Israel and the Middle East to bring world peace (Dan. 9:27; 1 Thes. 5:2–3).
5. Four of these have occurred or have begun to occur (Europe soon to be unified). Thus, the most significant political prophetic events as prophesied in the Bible are occurring in our generation.

6. The nation of Israel has always been the primary time indicator for God's prophetic calendar. The entire End-Time scenario in Scripture is given in context of events related to Israel. Dan. 9:24–27 is the most significant prophecy about nations in the End Times. It speaks of Israel being in her land, with a functioning Temple in Jerusalem and in a covenant with the Antichrist.
7. Several prophecies related to Israel are closely linked and interdependent with each other. These include:
  - a. The setting up of the Abomination of Desolation;
  - b. The return of Israel to her land and the re-establishment of the State of Israel;
  - c. Jerusalem returning to Israel's control;
  - d. The rebuilding of the Temple;
  - e. The re-establishment of the Hebrew language and the Sabbath (in their civil law);
  - f. The focusing of world politics onto Israel that will result in worldwide anti-Semitism;
  - g. The gathering of all nations to lay siege against Jerusalem.

#### **B. The Abomination of Desolation: the Primary Sign of the End Times**

1. The sign of the Abomination of Desolation has many significant implications to it (Matt. 24:15–22). The Abomination of Desolation is referred to six times in Scripture — four times by Daniel (Dan. 8:13; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) and two times by Jesus (Matt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14).
2. The Abomination of Desolation will occur when the Antichrist declares himself to be God. Central to this Abomination is the image of the Beast (Antichrist), which will be a statue (image or idol) that is demonically empowered so that it will seem to think, talk, breathe, and make laws. This statue (image) will be the abomination in the Temple. The apostle John made reference to this image ten times (Rev. 13:14, 15; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4).
3. This image will be the greatest abomination to God in all of history because the Antichrist will demand to be worshipped as God. The desolation will occur in two different ways:
  - a. The Antichrist will seek to desolate or destroy any who refuse to worship him;
  - b. God will desolate or destroy in judgment all those who give in to the pressure to worship the Antichrist.
4. After the wound on the Antichrist's head heals, the Abomination of Desolation will be the key to beginning his aggressive plan to rule the whole earth as God. This act of abomination will occur in the middle of the last seven years before Jesus returns.

5. The image (statue or idol) of the Beast will be set up in the Jerusalem temple. When this happens, the daily sacrifices (according to Mosaic law) that would have been recently restored will be stopped (Dan. 9:27; 12:11).
6. Antiochus Epiphanes (Antiochus IV; 175–164 BC) defiled the Temple in a way that would prophetically foretell how the Antichrist would defile it in the End Times (Dan. 11:31).
7. The Abomination of desolation requires Israel to be in her land with a rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem in order for the Antichrist to be able to set up an idol in it (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 25:15; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 13:5, 15–18).

### **C. The Relationship between the Antichrist's Actions and the Rebuilt Temple**

1. Significant activities related to the Tribulation Temple signal the signs of the End Times. The Abomination of Desolation cannot occur unless Israel rebuilds the Temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (Matt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1–2; 13:12–18; Dan. 9:26, 27; 11:31; 12:11).
2. The Temple does not currently exist, but we know that it must be rebuilt. Even now, plans to rebuild the Third Temple are being pursued aggressively in Israel. The temple may be rebuilt just before the first half of the final seven-year period (often referred to as Daniel's 70th Week).
3. Paul's prophecy about the Tribulation Temple is founded on Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:27). Paul prophesied of the desecration of the Tribulation Temple by the Antichrist (2 Thes. 2:4).
4. For the Antichrist to stop the daily sacrifices in the Temple, the Tribulation Temple must exist (Dan. 12:11; Rev. 11:1–2).
5. The "Third Temple" is NOT the same as the Millennial Temple. There are two distinct Jerusalem Temples prophesied in Scripture:
  - a. The Third Temple, which is the same as the Tribulation Temple, will be built by unbelieving Jews and then desecrated by the Antichrist.
  - b. The Millennial Temple will be built by Jesus upon His return (Isa. 2:3; 60:6, 10, 13; Ezek. 37:26–28; 40–48; Zech. 2:11; 6:12–15; 14:16–21).

### **D. Nations Will Set a Siege against Jerusalem**

1. Jerusalem will become the central focus of world attention (Zech. 12:3; 14:2).
2. By this time, Israel's military forces and strength would have been re-established (Zech. 12:6–8).

#### **E. Israel becomes a nation and gains control over Jerusalem**

1. For the Abomination of Desolation to occur and for Israel to be the center of world attention and attacked, she would have to be in back in her land and be re-established as the State of Israel (Isa. 14:1; 66:7–8; Ezek. 36:22–37:1–2; Zech. 12:1–6; Matt. 24:32–35; Mk. 13:28–30; Lk. 21:29–31).
2. Jewish people must also be re-gathered their land (Deut. 30:1, 5–9; Isa. 11:10–12; Ezek. 37:1–12).
3. Over five million Israelites have returned to their ancient land, making this the largest movement of people to return to Israel in her history (surpassing the Exodus from Egypt over 3,500 years ago).
4. As recent as 100 years ago, it seemed impossible that Israel would become a nation again. The Jewish people were weak and scattered throughout many nations. Suddenly, however, out of the burning ashes of the Holocaust, Israel became a nation again and then as unexpected re-captured Jerusalem from the Arab nations.

#### **F. Israel will establish a Covenant with the Antichrist**

1. The angel Gabriel spoke to the prophet Daniel about the final seven years of this age immediately preceding the Messiah's coming to rule the world from Jerusalem (Dan. 9:24–27).
2. Gabriel spoke of these seven years as a "week". This was a common expression in Israel where they thought of a "week" in terms of years (seven years) or in terms of days (seven days). In Daniel's prophecy, the "week" refers to a period of seven years. Hence, this final seven-year period just before Jesus' return is often referred to as "Daniel's prophetic week" or "Daniel's 70th week" (Dan. 9:24–27).
3. Israel's governmental leaders will make a covenant with the Antichrist (called the "covenant with death and with Sheol" or Hell), and give their authority to him seven years before Jesus' Coming (Isa. 28:14–18; Dan. 9:27; 11:45; Zech. 11:16; Ezek. 38:8–12, 14; 39:26; Jn. 5:43; Lk. 19:11–28; 1 Thes. 5:3).
4. The remnant of Israel will fully resist this decision. At the end of the Tribulation, Israel will reverse her decision by asking Jesus to rule over her, leading to great blessing.
5. This political covenant will include peace treaties and economic deals with many nations, including the Middle Eastern Islamic nations. This covenant will seem to "guarantee" political, economic and spiritual prosperity along with protection for Israel.
6. The Antichrist will win the trust of Israel by establishing peace in the Middle East, by making a way for them to rebuild the Temple and by possibly establishing Jerusalem as one of the main economic centers of the world, thus granting Israel financial security. One of the implications of this covenant or peace treaty will be that Israel will be allowed to offer animal sacrifices (as commanded by Moses) in their Temple through a restored Levitical priesthood.

7. The Antichrist will then break the covenant and stop the grain offerings and animal sacrifices. This gives us insight into the details of this covenant.
8. The Great Tribulation starts when the Antichrist breaks this covenant. When the covenant is first established for a designated period of seven years, counterfeit peace and safety is ushered in. This lasts approximately three-and-a-half years because in the middle of the week (seven-year period), the Antichrist will break the treaty, resulting in the termination of Israel's religious activities in the Temple (1 Thes. 5:3) and the beginning of the Great Tribulation.
9. Twice in 1 Thessalonians 5:3, Paul refers to "they" as those who rejoice in peace and then those who will not escape. This "they" refers to all the unbelieving nations on the earth, including Israel. Those who are deceived will think that the time of peace is God's blessing instead of the work of the Antichrist.
10. Peace and safety will be established by the Antichrist after an escalating "nation against nation" season, which is the beginning of birth pangs. However, this "peace and safety" will be followed by the sudden "coming of destruction" of the day of the Lord. During this period of counterfeit peace and safety, the world will wrongly assume that their problems will be permanently solved by the Antichrist's seemingly skillful leadership.
11. The global pressures produced during the first prophetic timeframe (beginning of birth pangs) will set the stage for the Antichrist to look successful as he appears to be able to solve the world's problems. During this time, he will take control of many governments in order to fix their economy, etc. He will appear to have the answers for this period of time.
12. A man will rise to power and appear to deliver the world from its political, economic, spiritual and military crises. The Antichrist's credibility to establish his worldwide empire will come partially through his ability to establish peace in the Middle East, which will be the most volatile place in history. In the time when nations of the world are rising up against each other in military conflicts, he will be seen as the man who ends this time of international conflict (Matt. 24:7-8; Dan. 8:25; 11:21).
13. The treaty will appear to settle the Middle East crisis by bringing Jews and Muslims together with regard to Jerusalem and its holy sites. A key issue will be Mount Moriah (in Jerusalem), which is holy to both Muslims (current site of the Dome of the Rock which is their third holiest shrine) and Jews (ancient site of Solomon's Temple).
14. No one knows when the final seven-year period of natural human history begins. However, we do know how it will start and end. It will start as a result of the Antichrist making a covenant with Israel and various Middle Eastern nations (Dan. 9:27).
15. The Antichrist will use this covenant to gain a stronghold in the land of Israel. He will plant part of his headquarters in Israel. The "glorious holy mountain" refers to the site of the Temple in Jerusalem (Dan. 11:45).

16. The consequences of this covenant are described in Isaiah 28 as a terrible scourge that will go through the land in a relentless way. The very mention of what happens will cause terror and every attempt to find comfort at that time will be totally frustrated (Isa. 28:14–20).

**G. Other Developments in Israel and related to Israel**

1. The re-establishment of the Hebrew language:  
Some believe that this was prophesied by the prophet Zephaniah in Zeph. 3:9;
2. The re-establishment of the Sabbath in Israel's society and civil law (Matt. 24:15–20);
3. Terrorism and persecution against Israel as prophesied by Jesus:  
The initial fulfillment of this prophecy occurred in the first century at the hands of fellow Jews like Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9), then at the hands of the crusaders throughout the Middle Ages. The most dramatic fulfillment of this prophecy will be in the End Times by Islamic terrorists who will increasingly terrorize and persecute Israel (Ezek. 35:1–36:7; Jn. 16:2).
4. The rapid rise of anti-Semitism around the world:  
Satan is stirring up anti-Semitic sentiments all across nations as he wants to exterminate the Jewish people so that a believing remnant cannot invite Jesus to rule Israel as their Messiah (Rev. 12:13 –17).
5. Israel will face another Holocaust:  
The Jewish people will once again be in prison camps and under assault by foreign armies just before Jesus' Second Coming (Isa. 11:11–16; 27:12–13; 42:6–24; 49:5–25; 61:1–2; Jer. 30:3–24; 31:1–23; Ezek. 20:33–44; 39:25–29; Hos. 11:10–11; Amos 9:8–15; Joel 3:1–2; Zeph. 3:19–20; Zech. 9:10–14).

## Part II

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

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Session 16

# God's End-Time Plan for Israel

## A. Introduction

1. The Book of Zechariah is primarily about God's Plan for Israel and specifically for the city of Jerusalem.
2. Its secondary theme is about praying for God's destiny for Jerusalem — the raising up of a global prayer movement at the End of the Age, specifically in Jerusalem (Isa. 62:6–7).
3. There are five reasons why we should care about Jerusalem:
  - a. Jesus is zealous for Jerusalem and He will dwell in Jerusalem when He returns (Zech. 8:2–3).
  - b. God's End-Time purpose and eternal plan is Jerusalem-centric (Jer. 3:17; Ps. 2:6). Everything is centered around Jerusalem. God's eternal city is Jerusalem and not any other city.
  - c. The issue surrounding Jerusalem is the issue of God's sovereignty and faithfulness. How God deals with Jerusalem is a witness to God's leadership and faithfulness to His Word and to the nations. How God deals with Israel reveals God (Ezek. 36:22–23).
  - d. Jerusalem is an unique model of how God will deal with nations.
    - i. Theologically, God will deal with nations according to the principle of "like kind but lesser degree". This means that the blessings, judgment and glory that God will release to Israel during the Great Tribulation and in the Millennial Kingdom will be released in like kind but to a lesser degree to the Church and the nations.
    - ii. This gives us a powerful picture of what will happen to us!
  - e. Jerusalem is the only city for which God commands us to pray and stand with. It is not an option (Isa. 62:6–7; 66:2; Ps. 122:6).

Note: Jerusalem is mentioned over 800 times in the Bible. Zion is mentioned about 160 times.

## B. Theme and Outline of the Book of Zechariah

1. The theme of the book of Zechariah is God's zeal for Zion. It also provides fuel for Houses of Prayer to pray for Israel (Zech. 1:14–17).
2. The book of Zechariah gives many specific promises concerning God's End-Time plan for Israel. These promises are primarily found in Zech. 9 – 14.

3. The book of Zechariah is divided into two main sections:
  - a. The first section: Chapters 1 – 8 (dated around 520 BC) comprise a series of eight visions together with a message of fasting from chapters 1 – 6, and four messages concerned with encouraging the people to complete the building of the Temple in chapters 7 and 8.
  - b. The second section: Chapters 9 – 14 (undated) are made up of two prophecies that focus, with great detail, on many of the End-Time events surrounding the return of the Messiah and the salvation of Israel.
4. Outline of the Book of Zechariah:
  - a. A call to repentance and to return to God (Zech. 1:1–6);
  - b. Eight prophetic visions concerning Israel and the House of Prayer (Zech. 1:7 – 6:15):
    - i. Vision of the horses (Zech. 1:7–17);
    - ii. Vision of the horns and craftsmen (Zech. 1:8–21);
    - iii. Vision of the measuring line (Zech. 2:1–13);
    - iv. Vision of the high priest (Zech. 3:1–10);
    - v. Vision of the lampstand and olive trees (Zech. 4:1–14);
    - vi. Vision of the flying scroll (Zech. 5:1–4);
    - vii. Vision of a woman in a basket (Zech. 5:5–11);
    - viii. Vision of the four chariots (Zech. 6:1–8).
  - c. The vision of the Millennial Kingdom and the rebuilding of the Millennial Temple (Zech. 6:9–15);
  - d. Four explanatory messages concerning Israel (Zech. 7:1 – 8:23):
    - i. Rebuke (Zech. 7:1–7);
    - ii. Repentance (Zech. 7:8–14);
    - iii. Restoration (Zech. 8:1–17);
    - iv. Rejoice (Zech. 8:18–23).
  - e. Two prophecies concerning Israel (Zech. 9:1 – 14:21):
    - i. Promise of the coming Messiah and His rejection by Israel (9:1 – 11:17);
    - ii. End-Time prophecies concerning Israel (Zech. 12:1 – 14:21).

### C. God's Deliverance of Israel and the Re-gathering of Israel (Zech. 9 – 10)

1. The ultimate fulfillment of the events in chapters 9 and 10 will occur primarily at the Second Coming of Jesus.
  - a. Though there have been partial fulfillments that have already occurred, it is clear that the full fulfillment will only be at the End of the Age.
  - b. "In that day" was mentioned 18 times in chapters 9 – 14, and this indicates the time of the End of the Age.

2. Zechariah received two prophetic oracles (Zech. 9 – 11 and Zech. 12 – 14) that answered a question that arose after the visions in Zech. 1 – 8:
  - a. In Zech. 1 – 8, God revealed that He would discipline Israel as a result of her sin;
  - b. Zech. 9 – 10, God answered the question, “What about the Gentile nations that oppose Israel?”
3. God gave the answer through two oracles / prophecies in Zech. 9 – 11 and Zech. 12 – 14. The Primary Theme of these two oracles is “The Coming of the Messianic King”:
  - a. Zech. 9 – 11
    - i. God will deliver and empower Israel to overcome her enemies;
    - ii. God will re-gather and bless Israel in Jerusalem.
  - b. Zech. 12 – 14
    - i. God will save and refine Israel;
    - ii. God will transform Israel.
4. Both oracles / prophecies begin with the Word “burden”. These burdens are against:
  - a. Nations that will oppose God primarily at the End of the Age (Zech. 9:1);
  - b. Israel who has been in rebellion against God. The issue that Israel faces is not Satan, Antichrist, or anti-semitism, but a God who loves her (Zech. 12:1).
5. Both oracles are set in the context of the global war at the End of the Age:
  - a. Jesus is returning in the context of a war. This is not a new subject. It is mentioned in various passages in Scripture e.g. in the book of Joel and Revelation.
  - b. Zech. 9 – 11 speaks of war between Israel and the Gentile Nations.
  - c. Zech. 12 – 14 speaks of war between Jesus and the Gentile Nations.
6. Both oracles talk about the same theme but approach it from different angles.

#### D. A Simple Outline of Zechariah 9 – 10

Together, Zechariah 9 and 10 convey one message:

1. Zech. 9:1–8 — God will deliver Israel from the surrounding nations;
2. Zech. 9:9–10 — The coming of the Messianic King;
3. Zech. 9:11–17 — Restoration of Jerusalem when Jesus returns;
4. Zech. 10:1–12 — Israel is to be re-gathered and blessed by God.

**E. God will deliver Israel from the surrounding nations (Zech. 9:1–8)**

1. God will deliver Israel from the surrounding nations that oppress her:
  - a. God promised salvation / deliverance for Israel;
  - b. God promised judgment for the Gentile Nations that would come against her.
2. Many things have been prophesied to happen in these eight verses. It is only a snapshot of what will happen.
3. Nine cities from three nations are mentioned — three cities in Syria (Hadrach, Damascus, and Hamath; Zech. 9:1–2a), two in Phoenicia (Tyre and Sidon; Zech. 9:2b–4) and four cities in Philistia, modern-day Palestine (Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and Ashdod; Zech. 9:5–8).
4. These nine cities from three nations prophetically represent the following:
  - a. They are a prototype of nations that will oppose God and Israel at the End of the Age.
  - b. They give a powerful picture of how God will deal with nations in the End Times:
    - i. For those who respond to God — God will humble their pride (v.6a), cleanse their sin (v.7a), offer them salvation (v.7b) and allow them to be a part of His Kingdom (v.7c);
    - ii. For those who resist Him — God’s zeal will be against them (v.3–5).

**F. Fulfillments of the Prophecy in Zechariah 9:1–8**

1. The prophecy in Zechariah 9:1–8 was given 200 years ahead of time before it was partially fulfilled in 330 BC through Alexander the Great. The ultimate fulfillment would only happen at the End of the Age. In 330 BC Alexander the Great was:
  - a. God’s tool of judgment against nations that oppressed Israel;
  - b. A foreshadow of the coming Messianic King who will deliver Israel at the End of the Age.
2. Alexander the Great came with a swift army and conquered the major cities of Syria all the way to Egypt. However, he spared and refused to harm Jerusalem. He bypassed the land because he had a dream from the God of heaven NOT to harm Jerusalem. All this happened 200 years after Zechariah’s prophecy in Zech. 9 – 14.
3. Zech. 9:1–2 speaks of the judgment of God against three cities in Syria and two cities in Phoenicia:

*“The burden of the word of the Lord against the land of Hadrach, and Damascus its resting place (For the eyes of men and all the tribes of Israel are on the Lord); also against Hamath, which borders on it, and against Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.”*

  - a. The judgment of God will rest on these cities until the LORD’s purpose is fully accomplished.

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- b. Damascus is God's resting place and He will not relent until His purpose is fully accomplished in her.
  - c. *"For the eyes of men and all the tribes of Israel are on the Lord"* refers to those who were aware of Zechariah's prophecy about Alexander the Great as God's instrument of wrath. They looked to God in fear and trembling and turned to the God of Israel.
  - d. Through this verse, God exhorts us today to turn our eyes towards God and put our confidence in Him.
4. The context for Zech. 9:3–4 was that the two cities of Phoenicia — Tyre and Sidon — had built a wall that was 150 feet high around themselves and thought that they would prevail. In fact, Assyria and Babylon had tried to capture these cities for five years and thirteen years respectively but failed. However, Alexander the Great destroyed them swiftly. God was using Alexander as His vehicle of His judgment upon these nations that opposed Israel.
  5. Zech. 9:5–7 speaks of judgment and salvation upon Philistia:
    - a. Out of fear and sorrow they responded to God;
    - b. After seeing what happened to the cities in Syria and Phoenicia, they turned to the Lord;
    - c. This gives us one powerful insight as to why God sends judgment — to awaken salvation in men / nations.
  6. There are four things God will do as a result of their response because of His mercy:
    - a. The Lord will humble the Philistines (v.6);
    - b. God will remove idolatry from them (v.7);
    - c. They will turn to the God of Israel (v.7 — *"shall be for our God"*). This is what Hag. 2:7 speaks about. When God shakes nations, they will turn to the Desire of all nations.
    - d. These cities that turn will be given leadership status in the Millennial Kingdom (v.7 — *"Like a leader in Judah"*). This is the grace and mercy of God through judgment.
  7. Zech. 9:8 is a powerful verse that can be used to comfort Jerusalem:  
*"I will camp around My house because of the army, because of him who passes by and him who returns. No more shall an oppressor pass through them, for now I have seen with My eyes."*
  8. There are two fulfillments to this verse:
    - a. The first fulfillment refers to Alexander the Great bypassing Jerusalem because he received a dream from God not to harm the city.
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- b. The full fulfillment is at Jesus' Second Coming, when Jesus Himself will watch over Jerusalem and cause His angels to encamp around the city during the End-Time conflict.
- c. "No more..." refers to God's promise that He will not allow Jerusalem to be destroyed anymore.

### G. Prophecy of the Coming Messianic King (Zech. 9:9–10)

*"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey..."*

*...I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be 'from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.'" (Zech. 9:9–10)*

1. Jesus is the One who will "camp around Jerusalem" (Zech. 9:8). Zechariah 9 – 10 is about:
  - a. Calling the Jewish people in Jerusalem to rejoice and to see the bigger picture of God;
  - b. Their King who is coming and who will deliver them and restore everything.
2. Verse 9 is fulfilled with Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem in Matt. 21:5 at His First Coming. Its focus is on who God is:
  - a. He is just — Jesus is righteous and just in all His motives, plans and actions. Through Him, perfect justice will fill the earth.
  - b. Having salvation — Jesus will restore everything for Jerusalem spiritually, politically, geographically, etc.
  - c. Lowly — Jesus is humble and meek. He will lead nations on the basis of humility (Ps. 45:5). Only the meek will inherit the eternal leadership of the earth (Matt. 5:5). Everything that He does, including His leadership, is from the place of humility and it seeks to produce humility in others.
3. Verse 10 is about Jesus' Second Coming. Jesus will do the following at His Second Coming:
  - a. "*I will cut off the chariot ...He shall speak peace to the nations*" — Jesus will cause all war to cease when He returns. There will be everlasting peace on earth (Isa. 2:4; 9:5–7).
  - b. "*His dominion shall be...*" — Jesus will be the ultimate and supreme leader over all the nations.
4. Israel's rejection of Jesus at His First Coming exposed her heart:
  - a. She was looking for a "freedom fighter" to liberate the land from Gentile Domination.

- b. However, Jesus came as a Spiritual Reformer seeking to change the heart of Israel and produce humility and righteousness in her.
- c. Israel was not interested and refused to align with God.
- d. The key lesson for us is whether we will align ourselves with God. The question God is asking us is, "Will you agree with Me?" (Ps. 110:3)

#### H. What Jesus will do specifically when He returns (Zech. 9:11–17)

1. When He returns, there are seven things Jesus will do to empower and save Israel in **Zech. 9:11–13**:

- a. "I will set your prisoners free" (v.11)
  - i. Out of His mercy and grace, the Lord will set prisoners free from the "waterless pit".
  - ii. The waterless pit is a dry well with no water. Joseph and Jeremiah were thrown into such pits. They were grateful that there was no water in it or else they would have drowned. Also, with a waterless pit, there was a chance that they could be rescued.
- b. "Prisoners of hope" (v.12)
  - i. The remnant of Israel today are "prisoners of hope" as they set their hope on God. God will deliver them from Gentile Domination.
  - ii. Zech. 9:12 is the only place in the Old Testament where the article is included with the word "hope" in the original Hebrew language, i.e. "prisoners of *the* hope". Thus, this "hope" is the same as "the hope of Israel", which Paul refers to in Acts 26:6 and 28:20, which ultimately refers to salvation for Israel through Jesus.
- c. "Blood of your covenant" (v.11)
  - i. The Lord delivers us on the basis of the blood of the covenant. The expression of "the blood of the covenant" is found in Exo. 24:8.
  - ii. Jesus uses this phrase when speaking of His death for only in Him is our deliverance found and fulfilled (Mk. 14:24).
  - iii. The blood of the covenant is God's pledge of faithfulness to deliver us.
- d. "Restore double" (v.12)
  - i. The Lord promises to restore double of what the enemy has taken from Israel.
  - ii. A double restoration means a complete restoration. Just as the Lord has given Israel double for her sins, He will completely restore her. He will fully restore Israel spiritually to Himself and physically to the land. It will only happen one time in history in its fullness (Isa. 40:2; 51:19; 61:7).

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- e. “Return to the stronghold” (v.12)  
There is a two-fold return of the Jewish people — they will return to the land of Israel (or Jerusalem) and also spiritually to the Lord (Ps. 9:9; 18:2; 31:3; 71:3; 91:2; 94:22; 144:2; Jer. 16:19; Nah. 1:7; Joel 3:16 and Ezek. 36 prophecies).
- f. “I... raised up your sons... like the sword of a mighty man” (v.13)
- i. The Lord promised to raise up sons of Zion as mighty men to overthrow Greek oppression.
  - ii. He will make Judah His bow and Ephraim His arrow. The Lord promised to anoint Jewish soldiers to do battle against oppressors and defend Israel against an attack. However, they will not wage war as aggressors seeking conquest.
- g. “O Greece” (v.13)
- i. The initial fulfillment of Israelites being anointed to fight against the Greeks was when the Jews overthrew the Greeks during the Maccabean revolts in the second century BC.
  - ii. The Maccabean uprising against Greece was only a partial fulfillment of this prophecy.
  - iii. The ultimate fulfillment of this will be in the future battle of Jerusalem (Zech. 10:5–7; 12:3–9).
2. **Zech. 9:14–15** points to what will happen just prior to and at the Second Coming of Jesus. The confrontation between David and Goliath gives us a prophetic picture of what it will be like (1Sam. 17:34).
- a. “The Lord will be seen over them,” (v.14a)  
Jesus Himself prophesied that “all the tribes of the earth...will see” Him at His Second Coming (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7);
  - b. “A trumpet will sound” (v.14c);
  - c. “And go with whirlwinds from the south.” (v.14d) — Jesus will come up from Bozrah and Edom (Isa. 63:1–6):
    - i. Jesus will return as the Greater Moses (Deut. 33:2–5; Judg. 5:4–5; Ps. 68:7–9);
    - ii. Jesus will gather all the Jewish people scattered all over surrounding nations (Isa. 34:6–8; 19:20; Mic. 2:12–13; Hab. 3:3–5);
  - d. He will defend them as the “Greater David” against the “Eschatological Goliath” (v.15). Jesus’ army will be outnumbered and overpowered yet He will overcome His and His people’s enemies.
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**3. Zech. 9:16–17:**

- a. *“The Lord their God will save them in that day...”* (v.16) — Jesus will deliver Israel from her enemies.
- b. *“For they shall be like the jewels of a crown, lifted like a banner over His land...”* (v.16) — God will proclaim how precious and valuable Israel is to Him.
- c. *“...how great is His goodness...how great His beauty!”* (v.17) — Jesus will reveal His goodness and beauty to Israel and to all nations.

**I. Israel Will Be Blessed and Re-gathered (Zech.10:1–12)**

The second part of this oracle is two-fold: Israel will be blessed (Zech. 10:1–7) and Israel will be re-gathered (Zech. 10:8–12).

**1. Israel will be blessed (Zech.10:1–7)**

These seven verses prophesy of the fruit of Jesus’ active leadership over Israel in the End Times in these areas: agricultural (Zech. 10:1); spiritual (Zech. 10:2); governmental (Zech. 10:3–4); military (Zech. 10:5–7).

**a. Israel will be blessed agriculturally (Zech. 10:1)**

*“Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone.”*

- i. Israel still has to “ask” (i.e. pray). More than a prayer for revival, this verse speaks of literal rain. The rain will come in response to obedience and prayer (Deut. 28:12).
- ii. God has promised to send rain to bless the crops. Rain is one of the signs that God is responding to Israel’s prayer (Deut. 11:13–14).
- iii. The autumn or “early” rain usually comes in October/November to prepare the soil for sowing. The period of sowing is usually between October and December.
- iv. The spring or “latter” rain usually comes in March/April to help the harvest. The harvest is usually between March and July. The dry season in Israel is usually from May to September.

**b. Israel will be blessed spiritually as the Lord confronts and removes idolatry from the nation:**

*“For the idols speak delusion; The diviners envision lies, and tell false dreams; They comfort in vain. Therefore the people wend their way like sheep; They are in trouble because there is no shepherd.”* (Zech. 10:2)

- i. *“Tell false dreams”* — The leaders would have been giving flattering dreams to comfort Israel. This is vanity.
- ii. *“In trouble”* — Jesus will look with compassion on the multitudes and see them as troubled sheep without a shepherd.

- c. Israel will be blessed governmentally as God will remove their bad leadership (Zech. 10:3) and raise up leaders as His “royal horses” to provide strong and godly leadership for their society (Zech. 10:4). God’s anger with false shepherds (i.e. civil and political leaders, priests, etc.) is an expression of His zeal (Zech. 1:14; 8:2).

*“My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the goatherds. For the Lord of hosts will visit His flock, the house of Judah, and will make them as His royal horse in the battle. From him comes the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler together.”* (Zech. 10:3–4)

- i. I will punish the goatherds — These herdsmen or shepherds speak of the spiritual leadership in the nation. The spiritual leaders in Zechariah’s time eventually killed Zechariah.
- ii. His royal horse in battle — The Lord will visit leaders by releasing His power through them so that they function as a royal horse that He will “ride,” or use, in the End-Time battles. These strong and godly leaders will be used by the Lord in the End Times (Ps. 20). He will raise them up as the Jeremiah 3:15 shepherds.
- iii. The leadership that God will raise up is “from Him” (i.e. the house of Judah; Zech. 10:4):
- The Lord will raise up leaders to use as His “royal horse” (Zech. 10:3) to provide strong godly leadership for Israel’s society.
  - The strength of a society is built upon the quality of its civil, political, financial, military, and spiritual leadership.
  - These four figures together describe strong, reliable, skilled, and trustworthy leaders:
    - The “*cornerstone*” adjoins two walls at a corner — such a leader brings unity to society;
    - The “*tent peg*” holds a tent in place, even in the midst of a storm. These leaders will strengthen the nation;
    - The “*battle bow*” speaks of military leadership in the End Times (Zech. 9:13; 10:5–7; 12:5–8);
    - The “*ruler*” is a Hebrew word that speaks of a strong, determined and trustworthy leader.
- d. Israel will be blessed militarily (Zech. 10:5–7) and this is also emphasized elsewhere (Zech. 9:13; 10:3; 12:5–8). In Zech. 12:5–8, God promises to be with Israel’s military forces as He was with David and to empower them to resist the Antichrist even before Jesus returns.

*“They shall be like mighty men, who tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle. They shall fight because the LORD is with them...I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph...Those of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man...their children shall see it and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD.” (Zech. 10:5–7)*

## 2. Israel Will Be Re-gathered from All Nations (Zech. 10:8–12)

*“I will whistle for them and gather them, for I will redeem them; and they shall increase as they once increased. I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember Me in far countries; they shall live, together with their children, and they shall return.” (Zech. 10:8–9)*

- a. *I will whistle* — This describes the Lord arresting Israel’s attention in a way that causes them to respond swiftly to Him, even from the distant nations of the earth (Isa. 5:26).
- b. *I will sow* — He will plant Israel as a nation in this earth to reap a harvest (Jer. 31:27; Hos. 2:23).
- c. Zech. 10:10–12 gives details about the End-Time re-gathering of the Jewish people. In particular, they will return from Egypt and Assyria (Zech. 10:10) because of great miracles (Zech. 10:12).

*“I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt, and gather them from Assyria. I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon...”*

- i. From Egypt and Assyria — The Lord will bring the remnant of Israel back from Egypt in the south and from the former region of Assyria (parts of Iraq, Syria, and Jordan) in the north (Isa. 11:11, 16; 27:13; Hos. 11:10–11; Mic. 5:6; 7:12–15; Zech. 10:10–11).

*“He shall pass through the sea with affliction, and strike the waves of the sea: all the depths of the River shall dry up. Then the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart.”*

- ii. Great miracles — The dividing of the Red Sea when Israel was released from captivity in Egypt foreshadows the great miracles in the End Times that will be seen by the nations as God re-gathers Israel.

*“As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders. The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall put their hand over their mouth...They shall be afraid of the LORD our God.” (Mic. 7:15–17)*

*“I will strengthen them in the LORD, and they shall walk up and down in His name.” (Zech. 10:12)*

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

Session 17

# The Judgment and Deception of Israel

(Zech. 11)

## A. Introduction

1. It is vital to understand God's heart and plan for Israel from the Scriptures because:
  - a. God is not neutral towards Israel (Zech. 8:2–3).
  - b. Israel plays a vital role in God's End-Time plan. We will not fully understand the End Times without understanding Israel. We will not fully understand Israel without understanding the End Times.
  - c. It is God's requirement for the Gentile Church to pray for Israel and specifically Jerusalem (Isa. 62:6–7). It is not an option!
2. Zechariah 9 – 14 gives us the clearest summary of God's plan for Israel at the End of the Age. There are two fulfillments — a partial one during the time of ancient Israel and a full one at the End of the Age:
  - a. Zech. 9 – 10: The Deliverance, Blessing and Re-gathering of Israel;
  - b. Zech. 11: The Judgment and Deception of Israel;
  - c. Zech. 12 – 13: The Salvation and Refinement of Israel;
  - d. Zech. 14: The Restoration and Transformation of Israel.
3. Zechariah 11 is a remarkable and intense chapter. It gives us two clear reasons why God judged Israel. We need to grapple with this issue so that we will not be offended.
4. We need to study Zechariah 9, 10 and 11 together as one continuous flow of Scripture to understand why Israel is being judged and deceived. All three chapters reveal the heart of God concerning Israel.
5. Zechariah 9 – 14 centers around two oracles:
  - a. Zech. 9 – 11 is about the Gentile nations' treatment of Jerusalem. God will bring judgment on nations that oppose Jerusalem.
  - b. Zech. 12 – 14 is about Israel and specifically Jerusalem.
6. Zechariah 9 – 10 contains God's promise to deliver, bless and re-gather Jerusalem. This will primarily take place at the Second Coming of Jesus.

7. The core theme of Zech. 9 – 10 is the coming of the Messianic King, Jesus.
  - a. Jesus will come as a humble King who will have dominion over all nations.
  - b. This will happen in close relation to Jerusalem, i.e. the coming of Jesus will be in Jerusalem and through Jerusalem. The primary issue at the End of the Age will be centered around Jerusalem.

#### B. A Brief Overview of Zechariah 11

1. Zechariah 11 was written about 500 years ahead of Jesus' First Coming and reveals Israel's response to His First Coming. Israel wanted a King and thus:
  - a. They did not like the humble One in righteousness;
  - b. They were looking for a "freedom fighter" and not a "Spiritual Reformer".
2. As a result, Israel faced the judgment of God in AD 70 because she rejected the Messiah.
3. Zechariah 11 speaks of a two-fold judgment that Israel will face:
  - a. Zech. 11:1–14 — The judgment through the destruction of the temple in AD 70 by the Roman army led by Emperor Titus.
  - b. Zech. 11:15–17 — The deception of Israel by the Antichrist, who will deceive her into accepting him as their "false shepherd". This is a major subject pertaining to Israel during the End Times. God will allow it to purify, deliver and ultimately establish Israel (Zech. 13).
4. Zechariah 9, 10 and 11 have to be studied together:
  - a. Zechariah 9 and 10 are about God's promise to restore Jerusalem at the End of the Age.
  - b. Zechariah 11 is centered around two "shepherds":
    - i. The shepherd who feeds the flock (v.4,7) — This refers to Jesus at His First Coming whom Israel rejects, resulting in God's judgment on Israel;
    - ii. The "foolish" / "worthless" shepherd (v.15,17) — This refers to the Antichrist whom Israel will accept as their leader at the End of the Age.
5. Zechariah 11 is a dramatic and intense chapter where there are many issues and agendas to grapple with:
  - a. Many in Israel will accept the Antichrist as their leader;
  - b. While not all in Israel will accept Antichrist as their leader, her leadership/ government will do so.
  - c. The Antichrist will deceive them by:
    - i. Signing a 7-year peace treaty with Israel (Dan. 9:27);
    - ii. Allowing the re-building of the Jerusalem Temple.

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- d. After 3 ½ years, the Antichrist will break the peace treaty in an act of betrayal of Israel's trust in him.
  - e. The Antichrist's deception of Israel will give rise to the Abomination of Desolation. Dan. 9, 11 and Matt. 24 prophesy of the persecution of Israel at the End of the Age and Zechariah 13 prophesies of an End-Time Holocaust that will come upon Israel.
6. Zechariah 11:1–14 is God's judgment on Israel because of her rejection of Jesus.
  7. Zech. 11:15–17 — The deception of Israel as she accepts the Antichrist as her "shepherd". This will open the door for the greatest crisis in the history of Israel, which will surpass Pharaoh's persecution in Exodus, Haman's scheme in Esther, Antiochus Epiphanes in 167 BC and Hitler in World War II.
  8. It is vital for us to understand the convergence of many agendas and see that Satan will seize the opportunity to persecute Israel. God allows all this to happen and the key is to know how we should pray for Israel.
  9. In Zechariah 11, there are two parables being acted out by Zechariah. These two prophetic acts are found in verses 4–17:
    - a. Verses 4–14 — Zechariah depicted the coming Messiah, Jesus the Good Shepherd.
    - b. Verses 15–17 — Zechariah depicted the Antichrist, the false and wicked shepherd.
  10. The Lord called Zechariah to work for a time as a head shepherd in Israel. There were three incidents that foreshadowed what would happen in Israel's future:
    - a. He fired three shepherds for their failures to do their jobs:
      - i. This is a prophetic picture of the failure of Israel's leadership (both spiritual and governmental);
      - ii. Jesus built on this in Matt. 23. The eight "woes" of Jesus reveal how God viewed Israel's leaders.
    - b. 30 pieces of silver were paid to Zechariah as the shepherd's reward:
      - i. This gives us prophetic insight into what Israel will think of Jesus. They will think very lowly of Jesus.
      - ii. It was the same amount of money that Judas was paid to betray Jesus (Matt. 26:14–16).
    - c. The breaking of two shepherd's staff — "Beauty" and "Bond":
      - i. Two staffs — Shepherds carried two staffs when going out to feed their flock (Zech. 11:7). One staff was used to protect the sheep from wild animals and the other to direct them to green pastures. The names of the two staffs had prophetic significance related to the coming judgment.
      - ii. "Beauty" could be translated as "favour." This spoke of God's favour to keep "all the peoples" (Gentile nations), Israel's enemies, from destroying them.
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When Zechariah cut this staff in two (Zech. 11:10), it spoke of God lifting His protection and allowing the Gentiles (i.e. Rome) to attack Israel. He had “covenanted” with the peoples (nations) to keep them from harming Israel.

- iii. “Bonds” spoke of God keeping Israel united as a nation.
- iv. The breaking of the two staffs speaks of the breaking of God’s covenant and grace over Israel.
- v. The covenant with the peoples was not a formal covenant since God never breaks His promises. The term “covenant” is used in a loose sense and not as a formal agreement. It refers to the Lord’s hand of restraint upon the nations to stop them from assaulting Israel. He has many ways of restraining nations from engaging in international or civil strife.

### C. Outline of Zechariah 11

1. Verses 1–3 — Judgment of God on Israel as a result of her rejection of Messiah
  - a. The partial fulfilment of this prophecy was in AD 70;
  - b. The ultimate fulfilment is at the End of the Age (Zech. 12 – 14).
2. Verses 4–14 — Reasons for Israel’s judgment  
The judgment upon Israel is primarily because of her rejection of Jesus.
3. Verses 15–17 — Deception of Israel resulting in the acceptance of the Antichrist as their “shepherd”
  - a. The reason for Israel’s judgment at the End of the Age will be the rejection of Jesus, which was the same as for AD 70;
  - b. However, the judgment at the End of the Age will be heightened because of her acceptance of the Antichrist as their leader.

### D. Judgment on the whole land of Israel (Zech. 11:1–3)

1. In these verses, Zechariah described a judgment that would affect the whole land of Israel.
2. There are two fulfilments:
  - a. A partial fulfilment on ancient Israel in AD 70 where Emperor Titus led the Roman invasion of Jerusalem;
  - b. The ultimate fulfilment at the End of the Age prior to the Second Coming of Jesus (Zech. 12 – 14):
    - i. Israel and the nations will be judged;
    - ii. God will cleanse the earth and remove all evil so as to establish “everlasting righteousness” (Dan.9:24).

3. *“Open your doors, O Lebanon, that fire may devour your cedars. Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen, because the mighty trees are ruined. Wail, O oaks of Bashan, for the thick forest has come down.”* (Zech. 11:1–2)
  - a. Lebanon is called to “open” its doors so that fire might destroy its forests of cedar trees (v.1). There will be no point resisting because it will be God who sends the judgment (Lk. 19:41–44);
  - b. In ancient Israel, they thought they could prevail;
  - c. Lebanon is symbolic of the leadership and cedars were symbolic of kings or the royal class (Judg. 9:7–15; Isa. 10:33–34; Ezek. 31:3–18);
  - d. The mighty tree of cedar (v.2) is something that is valuable to them;
  - e. These verses imply that there will be no chance of survival. There will be no mercy and favour from God.
4. *“There is the sound of wailing shepherds! For their glory is in ruins. There is the sound of roaring lions! For the pride of the Jordan is in ruins.”* (Zech. 11:3)
  - a. The sound of wailing shepherds is symbolic of Israel’s leadership. They wail because everything will be destroyed by the invading Roman armies;
  - b. “Roaring lions” is symbolic of invading Romans armies;
  - c. Everything will be destroyed from Northern to Southern Israel.

#### **E. Israel’s rejection of the good shepherd (Zech. 11:4–14)**

1. This prophecy was given 500 years before the First Coming of Jesus. Zechariah gave the reason for the destruction of Jerusalem in v.1–3:
  - a. The Lord sent Israel the best shepherd (11:4–6);
  - b. However, they rejected Him (11:7–14).
2. **Zechariah 11:4–14** recounts Zechariah’s first prophetic act that prophesies of Israel’s rejection of Jesus
  - a. The Lord told Zechariah to offer Himself as a shepherd to care for a flock of sheep that were soon to be sent to the market to be slaughtered and sold.
  - b. As he tells the story, he speaks for the Messiah and as the Messiah.
  - c. *“Feed the flock for slaughter...”* (v.4)
    - i. Zechariah was to take a job that included taking a flock of sheep out to graze in the pasture lands. This flock was being fattened for slaughter so that their wool and meat could be sold at the market.

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- ii. The spiritual condition of Israel at the First Coming of Jesus was very corrupt. They were hostile towards God and had set their hearts against Him. This was evident through their attitude towards the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus (Matt. 11:18; Jn. 10:20).
3. *“...whose owners slaughter them and feel no guilt; those who sell them say, ‘Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich’, and their shepherds do not pity them.”* (v.5)
    - a. The new owners who bought the sheep represented the Roman rulers who controlled Israel. The Roman armies will show no mercy and destroy Jerusalem (Lk. 21:20–24).
    - b. The shepherds who sold the sheep were Israel’s former leaders who, through their unbelief and sin, set the people of Israel up for future judgement at the hands of the Roman army, which was an instrument of God.
    - c. Jesus exposed these shepherds in Matt. 25 through the eight “woes” that set Israel up for judgement.
  4. *“For I will no longer pity the inhabitants of the land,’ says the Lord. ‘But indeed, I will give everyone into his neighbour’s hand and into the hand of his king. They shall attack the land, and I will not deliver them from their hand.’”* (v.6)
    - a. God prophesied that He would deliver Israel into the hands of the Roman kings. He would not deliver and protect Israel any longer.
    - b. The Lord no longer pitied or showed mercy to the generation of leaders that had rejected Jesus.
    - c. This was because the Lord saw their murderous hearts and thus, their participation in the murder of previous prophets (Matt. 23:35);
  5. *“So, I fed the flock for slaughter, in particular, the poor of the flock. I took for myself two staves: the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bonds, and I fed the flock.”* (v.7)
    - a. Zechariah was a prophetic picture of Jesus as the good Shepherd coming to feed the flock of Israel.
    - b. Israel was destined for slaughter because of their decision to reject the Messiah.
  6. Zechariah was received by a group he called *“the poor of the flock”* (Zech. 11:7, 11). The poor can be translated as the afflicted or the humble. They refer to a godly remnant who paid and will pay close attention to Zechariah’s words and believe that what he had spoken was God’s true word (Zech. 11:11).
  7. Typically, shepherds carried two staves when going out to feed their flock (Zech. 11:7). One staff was used to protect the sheep from wild animals, and the other to direct them to green pastures. In Psalm 23, Jesus is portrayed as the Shepherd who protects, provides and guides.
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8. The names of the two staffs were “*Beauty*” (favour, covenant) and “*Bonds*” (unity, grace).
- a. *Beauty*
- i. It spoke of God’s favour to keep “all the peoples” (Gentile nations), Israel’s enemies, from destroying them. It spoke of God’s favour to keep the peoples (Gentiles), Israel’s enemies, from destroying them.
  - ii. When Zechariah cut this staff in two (Zech. 11:10), it spoke of God lifting His protection and allowing the Gentiles (i.e. Rome) to attack Israel. He had previously “covenanted” with the peoples (nations) to keep them from harming Israel.
  - iii. God has always been in the picture and if God does not allow for it, nothing could touch us.
- b. *Bonds*  
It spoke of God keeping Israel united as a nation. It was and will be the grace of God that united Israel and Judah, not human wisdom and ability.
9. “*I dismissed the three shepherds in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.*” (v.8)
- a. “*Dismissed the three shepherds*”
- i. In one month, Zechariah fired three shepherds who were working under him. It was a prophetic picture of Jesus rejecting the three shepherds.
  - ii. The three classes of shepherds (i.e. leaders) that were dismissed were the elders, chief priests, and scribes.
  - iii. Jesus named these three classes of leaders who rejected Him in Lk. 9:22.
- b. The dismissal of these three governmental offices was the outward sign that God was suspending Israel’s enjoyment of a covenantal relationship with Him and with it, all its benefits.
- c. Their dismissal was an expression of judgement because they abhorred Jesus (Matt. 23:37).
10. “*Then I said, ‘I will not feed you. Let what is dying die, and what is perishing perish. Let those that are left eat each other’s flesh.*” (v.9)
- a. The words “*dying*” and “*perishing*” describe God’s judgment on them for their rejection of Jesus and their fate — many Israelites died.
  - b. Some were so hungry that they engaged in cannibalism and ate one another during the siege of Jerusalem in AD 70.

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11. *“And I took my staff, Beauty, and cut it in two, that I might break the covenant which I had made with all the peoples. So, it was broken on that day. Thus, the poor of the flock, who were watching me, knew that it was the word of the LORD.”* (v.10–11)
- a. When Zechariah cut this staff into two, it spoke of God lifting His protection and grace from Israel and allowing the Gentiles (Romans) to attack her.
  - b. He had “covenanted” with the peoples (nations) to keep them from harming Israel.
    - i. This was not a formal covenant since God never breaks His promises. This term “covenant” was used in a loose sense and not as a formal agreement.
    - ii. It refers to the Lord’s hand of restraint upon the nations to stop them from assaulting Israel. As signified by the cutting of the staff in two, He would allow the nations to harm Israel for a season.
  - c. The poor, humble and godly remnant knew that it was the Word of God. We can learn much from it because God is not impressed with giftedness and talent but with those who tremble at His Word (Isa. 66:1–2).
12. **Zechariah 11:12–14** reveals Israel’s attitude towards her messianic King. Zechariah ended his prophetic act by asking the other shepherds to pay him the wages that they felt he deserved for his service. It would be a prophetic expression of how they felt towards Jesus.
13. *“Then I said to them, ‘If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain.’ So, they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver.”* (v.12)
- a. They paid him thirty pieces of silver, which was the cost of making restitution for the work that could not be done when a slave was injured (Ex. 21:32). This small amount of money was an insult in light of all that Jesus the Shepherd would do to feed Israel.
  - b. It revealed how little Israel valued Jesus’ service. To offer Zechariah this wage was akin to telling Jesus that they considered the services of a common slave to be about as helpful as He had been to them.
14. *“And the Lord said to me, ‘Throw it to the potter,’ that princely price they set on me. So, I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord for the potter.”* (v.13)
- a. The Lord told Zechariah to throw the silver to the potter in the temple courtyard.
  - b. This was a statement and expression of disdain for the wages since potters were usually very poor.

15. *“Then I cut in two my other staff, Bonds, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.”* (v.14)
  - a. The staff “Bonds” referred to God’s keeping of Israel united as a nation.
  - b. When Zechariah “cut” this staff, it meant that the Lord was going to allow great strife to divide Israel. This division would be temporary; they will be forever reunited at the end (Zech. 10:6).

#### F. Zechariah’s Second Prophetic Act (Zech. 11:15–17)

1. **Zechariah 11:15–17** — Zechariah depicted the “false shepherd” or the Antichrist in this prophetic act. This is a terrifying passage because God will raise up a “foolish and worthless shepherd” for Israel to choose him. Zech. 11:16 makes it clear that it is God who raises up the Antichrist.
2. *“I will raise up”* (v.16)
  - a. God will raise up this foolish shepherd “in the land” of Israel. However, Satan and man’s sinful choices will contribute to it.
  - b. Jesus is the One who will open the first seal to release the Antichrist (Rev. 6:1–2).
3. Prophetic Precedents in the Bible
  - a. The Lord raised up a wicked Pharaoh in Moses’ day. He was the most powerful man in the world (Ex. 9:16; Rom. 9:17);
  - b. The Lord raised up a cruel and powerful Assyrian king named Sennacherib to judge Israel in a severe way in 722 BC (Isa. 10:5);
  - c. The Lord called the wicked Nebuchadnezzar His “servant” to judge Israel in 586 BC (Jer. 25:9,12; 27:6; 43:10; Hab. 1:5–7).
4. The principle of man’s free will:
  - a. God wants to reveal the depth of human wickedness (Jer. 17:9);
  - b. God will allow man to act on his own free will with no restraint at the End of the Age (2 Thes. 2:7);
  - c. Sin, evil and wickedness will reach the fullness of which mankind is capable of (Dan. 8:23; Rev. 9:21);
  - d. There will be a company of God’s people who will choose righteousness (Isa. 60:1, Dan. 11:32–33).
5. Zechariah was told to take symbolic action by presenting himself as a foolish shepherd and taking up certain tools that such a shepherd would use.

6. *“And the Lord said to me, ‘Next, take for yourself the implements of a foolish shepherd.’” (v.15)*

This “*foolish shepherd*” prophecy will find its ultimate fulfilment in the Antichrist, who will make a covenant with Israel and then break it to fiercely persecute Israel (Isa. 28:15–18; Dan. 9:27; 11:36–45; Jn. 5:43; 2 Thes. 2:3–10; Rev. 12:13–17; 13:1–18).

7. *“For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces.” (v.16)*

The Antichrist is described as one who totally devours people. To “tear the hooves” means to frantically search for the last morsel, which reveals that Israel will be totally consumed. He will have no mercy on Israel.

8. *“Woe to the worthless shepherd, who leaves the flock! A sword shall be against his arm and against his right eye; his arm shall completely wither, and his right eye shall be totally blinded.” (v.17)*

- a. God’s judgment on the Antichrist — This “woe” applies to all the evil kings of Israel, but one specific man is especially in view.
- b. *“his arm shall completely wither”* — This means that the Antichrist’s power will be totally broken;
- c. *“his right eye shall be totally blinded”* — This means that he will lose his understanding and sanity;
- d. Jesus will easily and quickly destroy the Antichrist (Dan. 7:11–14, 22, 26–27; 9:27; 11:45; 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 19:20).

Session 18

# The Salvation and Cleansing of Israel

(Zech. 12:1 – 13:6)

## A. Introduction

1. Zechariah 12:1 to 13:6 is about:
  - a. Israel's salvation by the Lord and her eventual cleansing that occurs at the End of the Age;
  - b. The feasts of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur that point to the events in Zech. 12 – 14.
2. About Zechariah 12 – 14:
  - a. These chapters are a few of the most important prophetic Scriptures concerning Israel at the End of the Age. This whole section of Scripture is a summarized version of the book of Revelation from the perspective of Israel in the End Times.
  - b. They give us insight to and details of Israel's coming great trouble, deliverance and salvation by the Lord, and the Millennial Kingdom in the context of Jerusalem. It is vital to study this with Daniel 12 and Joel 3, to have the bigger picture of what is to come.
  - c. These three chapters are compulsory for students of the End Times and Israel to know because they give:
    - i. Understanding of Israel's trouble in the coming days;
    - ii. Insight into the real issue concerning Israel's trouble;
    - iii. Insight into God's zeal for her. He is the One who will engineer all the events in Zechariah 12 – 14: God says "I will" 16 times.

## B. Our approach to the issue of Israel (Zech. 12 – 14)

1. Israel will be the vortex of the world's chaos and conflict at the End of the Age. Every nation will be involved and no one will be exempted. We will either be with Israel or against Israel.
2. We need to make sense of what is happening now in the Middle East not in terms of politics but from a spiritual perspective.
3. The tension and conflict over Israel will continue to escalate and no nation will be exempted. This is God's litmus test for everyone. We are either for God or against God (Joel 3:14; Matt. 25:31–46).

4. Zechariah 12:2 mentions that God will make Jerusalem a "cup of drunkenness". God will be the One who stirs up crisis in and around Israel.
  - a. "Cup" represents the nation and issue of Israel;
  - b. "Drunkenness" represents hatred that is totally irrational and illogical.  
An example can be found during World War II, when Hitler was still determined to destroy the Jewish people even though he knew that he was losing the war.
5. Zechariah 12:3 mentions that Jerusalem will be a "heavy stone"
  - a. It will be the central issue that will affect everyone — Jews, believers, unbelievers and nations of the earth;
  - b. God is using the controversy surrounding Jerusalem to reveal our hearts and to cause Israel to return to Him (Zech. 1:3).
6. Zechariah 12 – 14 describes the great trouble that Israel has faced and will face. Both Zechariah 12:1 – 13:6 and Zech. 13:7 – 14:21 tell the same story in the same timeline, but from different viewpoints.

### **C. Primary theme of Zechariah 9 – 14**

1. The primary theme of Zech. 9 – 14 is that of the Messianic king bringing judgment and blessing on Israel. He empowers Israel to defeat the Gentile world powers in order to establish the Millennial Kingdom from Jerusalem.
2. Zechariah 9 – 14 is centered around two oracles:
  - a. The deliverance, empowerment and re-gathering of Israel (Zech. 9 – 11);
  - b. The salvation, restoration and transformation of Israel (Zech. 12 – 14).
3. Both oracles are in the context of a global war at the End of the Age. There is no shadow of doubt that human history will end with a global war with Jerusalem at the center of it.
4. God's End-Time plan to transit from this age to the Millennial Age includes nations coming against Israel.

### **D. The Ultimate and Complete Fulfillment of Zechariah 12 – 14**

1. It is compulsory for us to know these chapters because they give us clarity and insight into what is going to happen spiritually, politically, economically and geographically to Israel at the End of the Age
2. This is a tremendous gift from God for us and it is vital for us to spend energy and effort on this passage so that we can:
  - a. Know the storyline and characters;
  - b. Understand the heart of God;
  - c. Stand for the truth and align with God;

- d. Boldly and gently proclaim this message to the church (Rom. 11:25) and Israel (Isa. 40:1–2).
3. It is one of the most dramatic and vital passages of prophetic Scripture that reveals Israel's coming horrific suffering, greatest victory and eventual world leadership.
4. These chapters are full of paradoxes:
  - a. Israel will experience the greatest revival and most severe apostasy;
  - b. Israel will witness her best days and her worst days ahead;
  - c. Israel will taste victory and suffering that will surpass anything in history;
  - d. Israel will be re-gathered to the land and then scattered again;
  - e. God will gather nations against her and God will defeat nations for her.
5. The most important and controversial thing about these chapters is that everything is engineered by God. He said, "I will" 16 times throughout these three chapters.

#### E. Israel's Primary Issue

1. Zechariah 12:1 makes it clear that Israel's primary issue is neither the Islamic nations nor anti-Semitism. Israel's primary issue is God:
  - a. Israel is in rebellion against God;
  - b. In His zeal, He engineers her "greatest crisis" to cause her to turn back to Him without violating her free will (Zech. 1:3);
  - c. It is in God's heart to pursue after Israel (Zech. 8:2–3).
2. **Zechariah 12:1**
  - a. *"The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel..."*
    - i. God has great zeal for Israel;
    - ii. Thus, Israel's primary issue is God Himself.
  - b. *"Thus, says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him."*
    - i. This is a statement that gives us confidence;
    - ii. It is the Creator-God from Genesis 1 who will engineer the plan;
    - iii. He understands human emotions and the make-up of human hearts. Thus, He knows how to lead Israel to salvation.
  - c. Zechariah 12:1 is not meant to cause fear, but is meant to cause us to agree with Him in prayer, in partnership and in proclaiming His word.

3. Zechariah 12 – 14 is politically incorrect and offensive. It is offensive to:
  - a. Israel — Two-thirds of the Jewish people will be killed (Zech. 13:8);
  - b. Muslims — All nations will worship a Jewish God (Zech. 14: 2–16);
  - c. Church — The Millennial rule of God is centered around Jerusalem and on the Jews.
4. The issue of who inherits Jerusalem will ultimately be determined by God.
  - a. Currently, Jews, Muslim and Gentile Christians are all staking their claim on Jerusalem.
  - b. However, it is ultimately those who are in alignment with Jesus who will inherit Jerusalem (Ps. 2:6; 110:3), and it will be the Lord who evaluates the hearts of man.

#### F. Brief Outline of Zechariah 12:1 – 13:6

1. Zech. 12:1–3 — All nations gather against Israel, specifically Jerusalem;
2. Zech. 12:4–9 — Jesus defeats and destroys all nations that come against Jerusalem;
3. Zech. 12:10–14 — Israel’s national salvation;
4. Zech. 13:1–6 — Israel’s national cleansing.

#### G. A Study of Zechariah 12

1. Zechariah 12 begins with a “burden” of the Lord. This can be taken to mean an “oracle” or “heavy burden”. The focus of the oracle is on the siege of Jerusalem by all nations (Zech. 12:2–3; 14:1–2) and the return of Jesus (Zech. 12:10; 14:3, 9).
2. Human history will end with a great battle — the battle for Jerusalem that is traditionally called the “battle of Armageddon”. This battle will be for the control of Jerusalem because the return of Jesus hinges on Israel crying out to Jesus and inviting Him back as their Messiah and King (Matt. 23:39) from Jerusalem.
3. The End-Time siege of Jerusalem will definitely happen. The surrounding nations will be involved and eventually, the nations of the world too will be drawn into this conflict:

*“...though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.” (v.3)*

*“Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision...” (Joel 3:14)*

  - a. In that day, there will be no neutral ground when it comes to the nation of Israel. Everyone will have to take a stand.
  - b. It is vital for us as God’s people to get it right and accurate theologically.

4. “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all surrounding peoples (nations) when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem.” (v.2)

“And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.” (v.3)

There are two metaphors that serve as a warning to the nations:

- a. “Cup of drunkenness”
    - i. This describes the irrational and illogical hatred and hostility that nations will have towards Israel.
    - ii. God is the One who stirs up the "drunkenness" amongst nations. It is the litmus test of God to see whether we are with Him or against Him.
  - b. “Very heavy stone”
    - i. Israel will be a vortex that draws all nations in. She will be the central issue that will involve all nations.
    - ii. Anyone who tries to remove her will be "cut in pieces".
5. This is intriguing because it is the Lord who will gather the armies of nations to stand against Israel (Zech. 14:2; Zeph. 3:8; Joel 3:2). Although Satan will help by sending deceiving demons (Rev. 16:13–14), God is ultimately the One who will gather them. He wants to:
- a. Judge Israel (Zech. 11);
  - b. Cleanse Israel (Zech. 13);
  - c. Replace her government with the rule of the Righteous One — Jesus.
6. The situation will be a re-enactment of the "David and Goliath" drama. Israel will place their confidence in the God of Israel (Ps. 20:7–8) instead of in their political and military allies or in their own defense force.
7. **Zechariah 12:4–9** speaks of Jesus defeating the nations for Israel (Joel 3, Rev. 19:17–21).
- a. “It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all nations that come against Jerusalem.” (v.9)
    - i. This will be the greatest military turnaround in history.
    - ii. It will also be the most violent battle in history (Rev 13:20; 19:17–18).
  - b. “In that day...I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness...” (v.4a)
    - i. The Lord will release confusion and a spirit of insanity on the Gentile armies (Zech. 12:4; Deut. 28:28);

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- ii. Horses will be terrified and suddenly struck blind and soldiers will be struck with insanity;
        - iii. There will be a great panic that comes on these Gentile armies (Zech. 14:13).
      - c. *“I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.”* (v.4b)
        - i. The Lord will open His eyes on the house of Judah. This speaks of His supernatural intervention in the battle.
        - ii. The Lord is One who watches over Judah (Ps. 32:8; 33:18).
  8. In **Zechariah 12:5–6**, the Lord gives strategic insight into the battle:
    - a. *“And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, ‘The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God.’”* (v.5)
      - i. The Lord will supernaturally empower the small Israeli army as a weapon in His hand.
      - ii. The political leaders of Judah who live outside Jerusalem will see and conclude that God is helping Jerusalem. This will greatly inspire and encourage those in Judah.
    - b. *“In that day, I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place — Jerusalem.”* (v.6)
      - i. “Like a firepan”
        - The leaders of Judah will also receive supernatural help from the Lord;
        - God will make them like a firepan (a vessel that carries hot coals to ignite other fires);
        - This implies that they will devour all the armies who are surrounding them.
      - ii. “Like a fiery torch in the sheaves”
        - The military success of the leaders of Judah will be comparable to fire that burns the dry grass;
        - It will be effortless and instantaneous.
  9. *“The Lord will save the tents of Judah first so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah.”* (v.7)
    - a. The Lord will empower the soldiers who live in Judah first. This is to ensure that the people living in Jerusalem will not think that they are more important to the Lord.
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- b. Those in Judah will be in a more defenseless position, as indicated by them dwelling in tents, while those in Jerusalem will be more protected as they dwell in the well-defended capital city.
  - c. All this will work together to help end the long-standing infighting among the Jewish leadership (Zech. 11:6, 14). There will be reconciliation and unity amongst the Jewish people.
10. *“The Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the Angel of the Lord before them.”* (v.8)
- a. Zechariah prophesied that the Lord would anoint the Israeli soldiers, as He did David.
  - b. This will be before the return of Jesus in order to empower the Israeli army to resist the Antichrist.
11. *“It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”* (v.9) — Jesus will destroy all nations that come against Jerusalem.
12. After the battle is fought over Jerusalem,
- a. The leaders in Jerusalem will receive Jesus as their Messianic King (Matt. 23:39; Ps. 24:7–8);
  - b. Jesus will establish His Throne in Jerusalem and transit this Age to the Millennial Age (Matt. 19:28; 25:31; Jer. 3:17; Rev 20:1–5).
13. **Zech. 12:10–14** focuses on:
- a. The national repentance and salvation of Israel;
  - b. The Lord delivering Israel from her spiritual enemy. Israel’s greatest enemy is:
    - i. Not Satan;
    - ii. Not the Antichrist;
    - iii. Not anti-Semitic nations;
    - iv. But sin and unbelief.
  - c. The Lord opening the eyes of the people of Israel through the spirit of revelation. This results in national mourning and repentance, and the nation turning to Jesus in just one day (Isa. 66:8).
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**H. Outline of Zechariah 13:1–6**

1. The theme of Zech. 13:1–6 is the national cleansing of Israel
  - a. The events in Zech. 12:1 – 13:6 are chronological, and the same people and places are mentioned within the same timeframe in both chapters.
  - b. Once Israel receives her Messiah in repentance, Jesus will begin to cleanse the land.
  - c. Israel will be cleansed from sin, idols, false prophets, and the unclean spirit.
2. *“In that day, a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. It shall be in that day...that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land.”* (v.1–2)
  - a. God will open a fountain of grace to cleanse Israel of all her national and individual sin.
  - b. Jesus will remove Idolatry, false prophets, and the unclean spirit that was in the land, which will be related to the abomination of desolation (the center of Antichrist worship) in Jerusalem (Matt. 24: 15).
  - c. Satan will be thrown into prison, and the Antichrist and False Prophet will be thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 19 – 20; 20:1–3).

**I. Conclusion**

1. This will be a powerful re-enactment of Israel’s past deliverances by Jesus. In that day, Jesus will show Himself as the greater Moses when He frees the captives of Israel from prison camps.
2. He will be seen as the greater Joshua when He leads Israel, who will be refugees in the nations, back to the Promised Land.
3. He will be seen as the greater David when He wins back Jerusalem and establishes His throne and tabernacle there (Amos 9:11).
4. He will show Himself as the greater Elijah when He confronts the Antichrist, cleanses the earth of idolatry, and turns Israel and the nations to God.

Session 19

# The Refinement and Transformation of Israel

(Zech. 13:7 – 14:21)

## A. Introduction

1. We need to develop a living understanding of how God feels towards Israel and not just have cognitive knowledge about her.
2. We can fully understand this (Jer. 23:20) but we need to wrestle with the truth to develop conviction that will last (Jer. 30:24).
3. The key is to encounter the heart of God for Israel because God is not neutral (Zech. 8:2–3). God is not pro-Israel (in the sense that He does not agree with everything she does), but He wants us to agree with His heart.

## B. Global War and The Return of Jesus (Zech. 13:7 – 14:21)

1. This subject is highly controversial and offensive. It can also be intriguing and encouraging because it gives us insight into God's heart for Israel, His ultimate plan for her, and for the Millennial earth.
2. The prophecy in Zechariah 13:7 – 14:21 has the same timeframe and storyline as that in Zechariah 12:1 – 13:6, but it is retold from a different point of view.
  - a. Zech. 12:11 – 13:6 is prophesied from the angle of military conflict and spiritual cleansing;
  - b. Zech.13:7 – 14:21 is prophesied from the angle of geographical and spiritual transformation of both Israel and the earth.
3. Zechariah prophesied the following about Israel's future:
  - a. Her horrific suffering at the End of the Age;
  - b. Her attack by nations;
  - c. Her great ultimate victory;
  - d. Her mandate of world leadership in the Millennial Kingdom.
4. The reasons why God would allow such suffering for Israel are to:
  - a. Cause Israel to turn to Jesus (Zech. 1:3);
  - b. Refine Israel (Zech. 13:9);
  - c. Transform Israel (Zech. 14:10–21).

5. There will be another great Holocaust. We are escalating and racing towards this as prophesied in Zechariah 14. We need to be wise, watch and pray!
6. The primary theme of Zechariah 14 is the transformation of Millennial Jerusalem into the world capital of Jesus and the bestowing upon Israel the mandate of world leadership over nations. This has always been God's plan. He has decided for Israel to be the prototype of God's holy nation.

### **C. Brief Overview of Zechariah 13:7 – 14:21**

1. Zech. 13:7–9 — God's refinement of Israel;
2. Zech. 14:1–2 — The seige of Jerusalem and Jerusalem at the center of Global War at the End of the Age;
3. Zech. 14:3–5 — Jesus' return to deliver Israel;
4. Zech. 14:6–9 — Jesus is King of Kings over nations and Jerusalem is His capital city;
5. Zech. 14:10–11 — The transformation of Jerusalem;
6. Zech. 14:12–15 — Jesus' zeal over the condition and destiny of Jerusalem;
7. Zech. 14:16–21 — The glory of God in Jerusalem.

### **D. Israel's Suffering at the End of the Age (Zech. 13:7–9)**

1. These three verses are intense, dramatic, highly controversial and offensive. They were probably the reason why the Jewish leaders murdered Zechariah.
2. It is important to know these three verses because they give us an understanding as to why God would allow what is going to happen in Zech. 12:1–3 and Zech. 14:1–3. We cannot avoid these controversial and offensive passages; the key is that we must wrestle to understand God's heart.
3. We must understand these three verses to have insight into why God engineers such drama.
4. They reveal God's strategy to awaken Israel to turn to the "Desire of All Nations" — Jesus Himself.
5. They give us details of how the remnant of Israel is refined through the fire unto salvation.
6. God has a consistent principle and pattern in His dealing with Israel and the nations. He deals with them through judgments and shakings.
  - a. His aim is to remove all things that hinder wholehearted love and obedience;
  - b. In His wisdom and sovereignty, He knows just how much to shake;

- c. He uses the least severe means to bring the greatest number of hearts to Jesus at the deepest level of love without violating free will.
7. *“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion, says the LORD of hosts.”* (Zech. 13:7a)

In this verse, God the Father speaks. There are huge implications to this verse. It talks about:

- a. Jesus as the good shepherd;
  - b. The Father coming “against” Jesus and striking Him
    - i. This is a picture of Jesus being crucified on the cross;
    - ii. Jesus’ crucifixion was both an act of man (Zech. 12:10) and an act of God (Zech. 13:7).
  - c. *“Awake, O sword”*
    - i. This is the Father’s command for a sword (of justice) to be awakened to execute the Messiah.
    - ii. The cross and the issue of salvation is not one of love but one of justice, because a righteous God cannot pardon sin until the debt is paid and justice has been served.
8. Jesus fully understands and is fully qualified to lead Israel through the suffering of Zech. 13:8–9 (Heb. 4:15; 5:8). Israel will have no right to accuse Jesus of not being able to understand because He was struck by the Father’s sword and has faced His wrath (Rom. 5:8–9).
9. God refers to Jesus using these three titles in Zech. 13:7:
- a. *“My Shepherd”*
    - i. God’s plan has always been for Jesus (God Himself) to be Israel’s King (Deut. 17:14–20). However, Israel was impatient and wanted a king for herself like the surround nations (1 Sam. 8:7; 12:12).
    - ii. Even after God chose David to be king, David knew that he still was not God’s ultimate Shepherd for Israel. In writing Psalm 1, David wrote of the future Shepherd of Israel who would be coming.
  - b. *“The Man”*
    - i. This is a prophecy concerning the great mystery of the incarnation in 1 Tim. 3:16.
    - ii. It emphasizes that God became flesh.
  - c. *“My Companion”*
    - i. This highlighted the unique relationship between Jesus and the Father. Since before time began, Jesus had always been with the Father in close fellowship and communion (Jn. 1:1–3).

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- ii. Jesus shares in the divine nature because He is equal to God. The Pharisees were offended when Jesus claimed this about Himself in John 8:48–59.
10. The above gives us three powerful descriptions of who Jesus is:
- a. He is Israel's Messianic King;
  - b. He is God incarnate (1 Tim. 3:16);
  - c. He is fully God, but at the same time, fully man.
11. *"Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered..."* (Zech. 13:7b)
- a. This is a prophecy regarding the immediate result of Israel rejecting the Messiah — her diaspora;
  - b. Jesus predicted this in Matt. 23:37–38 and Lk. 21:24 and Moses prophesied of it in Deut. 30:1.
12. *"...Then I will turn My hand against the little ones."* (Zech. 13:7c)
- a. This verse is often viewed as negative. However, the word "against" can be better translated as "back on", and interpreted to mean a turning back of God's "hand of favour" upon Israel after her scattering.
  - b. It is a message from God to assure Israel that there will always be a godly remnant that is preserved even during the long dark years of dispersion (Matt. 26:31–32).
    - i. Paul taught the doctrine of the godly remnant of Israel (Rom. 11:1–5);
    - ii. Israel's rejection of Jesus is not total and it is the sovereign will of God that Israel be scattered and blinded. However, there has always been a godly remnant.
13. *"It shall come to pass in all the land...that two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it."* (Zech. 13:8)
- a. The context for this is at the End of the Age. Throughout Zechariah Chapters 12 – 14, "in that day" is mentioned 18 times to refer to the End of the Age.
  - b. To give a picture of the extent of the coming Holocaust: there are currently 18 million Jews worldwide. Two-thirds dying would amount to 12 million Jews.
14. *"I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name and I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"* (Zech. 13:9)
- a. The emphasis and focus should be on this because one-third will be radically born again and turn to Jesus.
  - b. Six million Jews will turn to Jesus in the span of three and a half years. This will work out to be an average of 4762 converts per day.
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- c. The reason for Israel's suffering is for her refinement (Mal. 3:1–6). She cannot be given world leadership over nations until she is refined (Dan. 11:35; Dan. 12:10).

### E. The Coming War Against Israel (Zech. 14:1–4)

1. **Zechariah 14:1–4** prophesies that Jerusalem will be temporarily captured and half its people will be taken captive.
2. *“Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst.”* (v.1)
  - a. *“The day of the LORD”*
    - i. This refers to the long-awaited Day that has been set apart to show the nations God's majestic power as He destroys His enemies and saves His people.
    - ii. It is the Day of His wedding (Rev. 19:7) when He returns as a Bridegroom for His Bride.
    - iii. It is the Day of His wrath (Matt. 25:31–32, Ps.2:9) when He returns as a Judge to judge nations.
    - iv. It is the Day of the Lord (Joel 2:11) when He returns as a King to fight nations on behalf of His people — both Israel and the church.
  - b. *“Spoil will be divided in your midst”*
    - i. Israel's spoil will be divided by the Gentiles who attack the city;
    - ii. This speaks of the temporal victory of the Gentiles;
    - iii. Israel will be defeated only for a short season. The Gentile nations will not realise it because they will have a false sense of confidence.
3. *“For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.”* (v.2)
  - a. Jerusalem shall temporarily be captured by the Antichrist's armies;
  - b. Half of Jerusalem will be taken into captivity, but the remnant of the people will be protected and shall not be cut off from the city;
  - c. About 600,000 Jews currently live in Jerusalem.

**F. Jesus Returns as King: Jerusalem Will Be His Capital City (Zech. 14:3–5)**

1. **Zechariah 14:3–5** prophesies that Jesus will return as the King of Israel to deliver her from her enemies. This is the same event as the one prophesied in Zechariah 12:4–9, where horses will be blinded and armies will become mad.
2. *“Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle.” (v.3)*

God will show Himself as the divine Warrior who will fight for His people and trample on nations. Jesus will return as a Warrior King in the context of war (Isa. 61:2; 63:1–6, Rev. 19:17–21, Ps. 24:7–10).

3. *“And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south.” (v.4)*
  - a. This will be a re-enactment of Moses parting the Red Sea. As Israel is being cornered by eschatological Pharaoh — the Antichrist — Jesus will come as the greater Moses to split the Mount of Olives to allow the Jews to pass through and escape.
  - b. This will take place at the end of Jesus’ 30-day procession at His Second Coming. The procession will include His moving across the sky and on land with His final destination in Jerusalem.
4. *“Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You.” (v.5)*
  - a. *“You shall flee”*
    - i. The Jews in Jerusalem will escape through this newly created valley after the Mount of Olives is split.
    - ii. They will flee with panic, as they would in an earthquake. When Jesus taught about moving mountains, He could have been standing on or near the Mount of Olives and pointing at it (Mark 11:1, 23).’
  - b. *“My mountain valley”*
    - i. God calls this “His” mountain valley because it was He who will form it by an act of His power in a way that will mirror the division of the Red Sea (Ex. 14:22).
    - ii. The Lord will split this mountain so that half of it moves to the north and half to the south, creating a vast east-west valley.
    - iii. The valley will stretch as far as Azal, which is at least 10 to 20 miles east of Jerusalem.
  - c. *“And all the saints with You.”*  
Jesus will return with His raptured and victorious saints (1 Thes. 3:12–13, Rev. 19:14).

**G. Announcement of Jesus as King Over the Earth (Zech. 14:6–9)**

1. **Zechariah 14:6–9** describe and highlight:
  - a. The Kingship of Jesus as seen through miracles of darkness, light and living water (Ps. 24:7–10);
  - b. Jerusalem as the new capital of the world;
  - c. The epicentre from which “garden-of-Eden-type blessings” will spread progressively to the whole world in the Millennium. The transformation of nations will be progressive in the Millennium (Isa. 9:6–9);
  - d. The healing waters and a mysterious light at night (Isa. 4:5; 30:26).
2. *“It shall come to pass in that day that there will be no light, the lights will diminish.”* (v.6)
  - a. It will be a day of gloom with utter darkness as there will be “*no light*”;
  - b. Darkness shall come upon the Antichrist’s global empire (Rev. 16:10);
  - c. The light of the sun, the moon, and stars will be darkened (Isa. 13:10; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15; Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24; Lk. 21:25; Acts 2:19–20).
3. *“It shall be one day (unique day or unique moment) which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen that it will be light.”* (v.7–8)
  - a. There will be a sudden and unique illumination that will take place “*at evening time*”. It is prophesied about in Isa. 24:23 as well.
  - b. This unique day and moment is known only to the Lord. Only God can understand this (Zech. 14:7).
  - c. This unique and mysterious light will introduce God’s new order for the created world (i.e. the sun, moon, animals, vegetation, soil, topography, etc.).
4. *“In that day it shall be that living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea (i.e. the Dead Sea) and half of them toward the western sea (i.e. the Mediterranean Sea); in both summer and winter it shall occur.”* (v.8)
  - a. A river with supernatural healing properties will flow out of the temple;
  - b. It is the same river that Ezekiel saw in Ezek. 47:1–12;
  - c. Its water will flow east to the Dead Sea and west into the Mediterranean Sea (Ps. 46:4; 65:9).

5. *“The LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be — ‘The LORD is one,’ and His name one.”* (v.9)
  - a. All the kings of the earth will worship and serve Him;
  - b. He *“is one and His name one”*, means that Jesus will be the only one acknowledged as God on the earth (Jer. 3:17).

#### H. The City of The Great King (Zech. 14:10–11)

1. These verses are primarily about the drastic change of topography and landscape of the city of Jerusalem.
2. *“All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba (northern Judah) to Rimmon south of Jerusalem (southern Judah). Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin’s Gate (north wall) to the place of the First Gate (north-east corner) and the Corner Gate (north-west corner), and from the Tower of Hananeel (north wall) to the king’s vinepresses (south wall).”* (v.10)
  - a. Jerusalem and the land around it will become as flat as a plain, while the whole area will be physically elevated to make it the perfect place to establish a world capital.
  - b. The prophets (i.e. Isaiah, Micah and Ezekiel) prophesied that in the last days the Lord’s house would be established on the top of the mountains and be exalted above the hills (Isa. 2:2).
  - c. At the command of the Word of Jesus, Jerusalem will both be levelled and raised or elevated to a height that surpasses all the other mountains. The topography of the whole region will be greatly altered.
3. *“The people shall dwell in it; and no longer shall there be utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.”* (v.11)
  - a. Jerusalem will be the safest city in all of history. No enemy will ever disrupt the peace in Jerusalem again.
  - b. Throughout history, Jerusalem has endured 36 wars, been invaded over 50 times, conquered 20 times, reduced to rubble 17 times and rebuilt 18 times.
  - c. God promises that from that time onwards, there will finally be peace and safety there forever because the Prince of Peace will be ruling over Jerusalem.

#### I. God’s Promise to Bring Destruction to Israel’s Enemies (Zech. 14:12–15)

1. Zechariah elaborates on the promise that Jerusalem will be safe.
2. This reveals the zeal of Jesus to bring peace, safety and security to Jerusalem.
3. Chronologically, these verses describe what follows after Zech. 14:3–8.

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4. The Lord will destroy the enemy by using four different means:
    - a. Through a plague (Zech. 14:12);
    - b. Through panic (Zech. 14:13);
    - c. Causing fear-crazed Gentiles to turn against one another (Zech. 14:13);
    - d. Through Israeli soldiers anointed for battle (Zech. 14:14a).
  5. *“This shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongue shall dissolve in their mouths...”* (v.12)
    - a. *“All the people”*

The Lord will execute vengeance on each individual person who fought against Jerusalem, stole her goods, raped her women, and took her citizens captive (Zech. 14:1–2).
    - b. *“Plague”*

The flesh, eyes, and tongues of the enemy soldiers will dissolve even as they stand there on their feet. The plague will also kill many of their animals (Zech. 14:15).
  6. *“In that day a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will...raise his hand against his neighbour’s hand;”* (v.13) — Great fear will take hold of those who come against Jerusalem and God will cause them to fight amongst their own soldiers.
  7. *“Judah also will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be gathered together: gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance.”* (v.14) — God will reverse the earlier situation by taking the spoil of the Gentiles in Zech. 14:2 and giving it to the Jewish people.
  8. *“Such also shall be the plague on the horse and the mule, on the camel and the donkey.”* (v.15) — This gives more details and is related to what the Lord promises to do in Zechariah 12:1–4, which is to blind the horses of those who fight against Jerusalem.
- J. God’s Zeal for the Supremacy and Preeminence of His Son (Zech. 14:16–19)**
1. Zechariah 14:16–19 give us insight into:
    - a. The conversion of the Gentiles and Gentile nations who then unite with Israel to worship Jesus;
    - b. God’s zeal for the supremacy and glory of His Son, who will be worshipped by all nations.
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2. *“And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.” (v.16)*
- a. *“Everyone who is left”*
- i. The unsaved survivors of the Tribulation (who refused to worship the Antichrist) who stood against Jerusalem will be radically converted to become worshippers of the God of Israel.
  - ii. Scripture prophesies that “those who are left” will receive salvation and populate the Millennial earth (Isa. 4:3; 10:20; 11:11; 49:6; 65:8; 66:19; Jer. 31:2; Ezek. 20:38–42; 36:36; Amos 9:9–10; Joel 2:32; Zech. 12:14; 13:8; 14:16).
- b. *“To worship the King”*  
All the Gentile survivors of the Tribulation will go up to Jerusalem annually to worship Jesus as King and to participate in the Feast of Tabernacles.
- c. *“To keep the Feast of Tabernacles”*  
The Feast of Tabernacles (also known as the “Feast of Booths / Ingathering”) is the one feast that God will require all to participate in. It is the only feast that all nations will be required to observe. This feast celebrates:
- i. The Lord’s provision (food and crops);
  - ii. His redemption from slavery;
  - iii. The ingathering of the harvest of the nations to Jesus;
  - iv. His tabernacling among His people.
3. *“And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.” (v.17–19)*
- a. The Lord will require all nations to come up to Jerusalem to worship Jesus annually. Through this, they will acknowledge Israel’s national supremacy on the Millennial earth.
- b. In the same way that the Lord judged Israel’s rebellion and compromise by withholding rain, any family or nation who neglects to obey this command shall have no rain for their crops (Deut. 28:23–24).
- c. The Lord will not make any exceptions for this requirement to keep the feast.

**K. Israel Will Be a Holy Nation unto The Lord (Zech. 14:20–21)**

1. Israel will be the first nation in all of history who will walk holy before God in every area of her life. Israel will walk in holiness in her:
  - a. Public life;
  - b. Religious life;
  - c. Private life
2. *“In that day ‘Holiness to the Lord’ shall be engraved on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD’s house shall be like the bowls before the altar.” (v.20)*
  - a. The “*bells on horses*” represent life on the streets in Jerusalem and symbolise public life.
  - b. The ordinary cooking pots in the temple will be as holy as the bowls used to sprinkle the sacrificial blood on the brazen altar. These symbolize religious life.
3. *“Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts...In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.” (v.21)*
  - a. The pots throughout Jerusalem and Judah represent Israel’s private domestic life. Every family in Israel will be set apart to the Lord.
  - b. “Canaanite”
    - i. Speaks of a type of behaviour, not a particular bloodline;
    - ii. The Canaanites throughout Israel’s history represented those who were ungodly and those rebellious towards God;
    - iii. This means that any person who rebels against God will never be allowed to enter Jerusalem again.

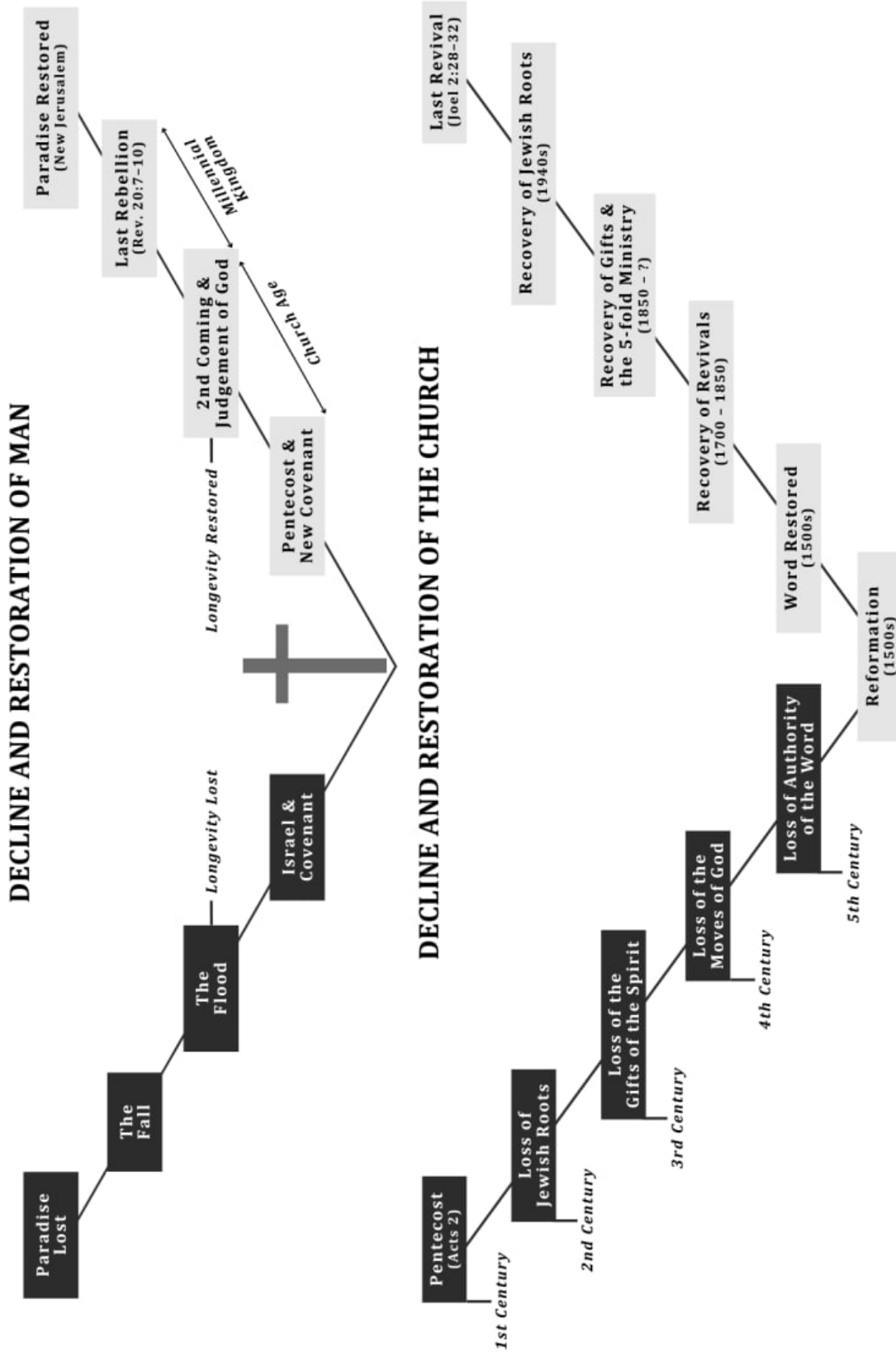
**L. Conclusion**

1. God’s original purpose for Israel is that they live as a holy nation of priests unto Him (Ex. 19:6).
2. For the first time, the world will see an entire nation with every individual radically dedicated to Jesus.
3. Jerusalem will be the world capital and will truly be The Holy City.
4. God’s zeal has been manifested and the Lord will cause the counsel of His will to come to pass (Zech. 8:2–3).

5. How then should we respond?
  - a. Stand with Israel because God is not neutral (Zech. 8:2);
  - b. Pray for Israel (Isa. 62:6–7) because it is God's requirement;
  - c. Be a voice to prepare the church (Rom. 11:25).

IHOP – ONE THING MINISTRIES

# Israel, the Church, and the Kingdom of God



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## About IHOP – One Thing Ministries

### The Heart of our Vision

*“John the Baptist said...the friend of the Bridegroom...rejoices because of the Bridegroom’s voice.”  
(John 3:29)*

*“Anna...did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day...and she spoke of Jesus to all...” (Luke 2:37 – 38)*

*“Pray that the Lord of the Harvest would send out laborers into His Harvest... therefore go to all nations and make disciples.” (Matthew 9:38; 28:19)*

*“...for My House shall be called a House of prayer for all nations.” (Isaiah 56:7)*

### Our Mission and Mandate

At the International House of Prayer – One Thing Ministries, we are committed to Prayer with Worship, the Prophetic and the Great Commission.

We embrace and seek to live out the following four heart standards (embodied in the acronym “IHOP”), in order to be a people who will partner with God in these Last Days:

- **Intercession:** a people of prayer, expressed corporately through night and day prayer and worship;
- **Holiness:** a people who have set ourselves apart for intimacy with God, and who live out the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle;
- **Offering:** a people who give extravagantly to God for the advancement of His Kingdom, and who live a fasted lifestyle (ie. living simply for ourselves);
- **Prophetic:** a people who stand boldly in faith, move in the power of God and have confidence in His provision, protection and direction.

As a **missions base**, we seek to equip and send missionaries as dedicated intercessors and evangelists with a forerunner spirit who will labour to see revival and a great harvest all over Asia.

The **heart of our missions base** is 24/7 worship and prayer; thus, we seek to establish a 24/7 House of Prayer in Singapore – a perpetual sacred assembly gathering corporately to fast and pray in the spirit of the Tabernacle of David.

Two historical figures from the Bible who inspire us are Anna, the first evangelist and forerunner in the New Testament, and King David from the Old Testament. Anna prayed and fasted for over sixty years before Jesus’ first coming (Luke 2:37), and King David organized and paid 4,000 musicians and 288 singers to worship God night and day (1 Chron. 23:1 – 25:31).

Our **mandate** is to train believers, from this place of night and day prayer, to love Jesus and people wholeheartedly as they go forth to preach the Word, heal the sick, serve the poor, plant Houses of Prayer and proclaim the return of Jesus across the earth.

## THE CALL AND INVITATION TO BUILD THE HOUSE OF PRAYER

My heart burns as I invite you to partner in the vision that the LORD gave us to equip people from all over the world to live lives overflowing with passion for Jesus and compassion for people. John the Baptist described himself as a “friend of the Bridegroom” as he prepared the people for the first coming of the LORD. Today, the Holy Spirit is raising up “friends of the Bridegroom” type ministries like John, with the “forerunner spirit” to prepare His Bride for Jesus’ Second Coming.

After being a pastor for more than 15 years, my ministry has changed significantly. I now devote all my energy to establish a ministry that embraces fervent intercessory prayer and worship with daily fasting as a foundation for effective outreach and world evangelization. I deeply believe that unceasing intercession, worship and fasting are the vital keys to the completion of the Great Commission.

One Thing Ministries is committed to Prayer (i.e. intercession, worship, healing, prophecy, etc.), Fasting (i.e. covering 365 days a year), the Forerunner Spirit (i.e. preparing the Church as a Bride for the unique dynamics in the End-Times), and the Great Commission (i.e. proclaiming Jesus to all nations). We are consumed with the mandate to train believers to love Jesus and others wholeheartedly as they go forth to preach the Word, heal the sick, serve the poor and plant Houses of Prayer across Asia.

However, at the heart of our ministries is the 24-hour a day prayer with worship. Our original inspiration came from Anna in Luke 2:37 – 38, the first evangelist and forerunner in the New Testament who prayed and fasted for 60 years before Jesus’ first coming. We were also inspired by King David, who organized 4,000 musicians and 288 singers to worship God 24 hours a day (1 Chron. 23 – 25).

On September 6, 2003, I gathered together a few people with the burden to establish a House of Prayer in the spirit of the tabernacle of David. We know that it is the heart of God to establish a House of Prayer where “the fire on the altar shall never go out” in the land of Singapore. We trusted that people would come from all over the island – musicians, worship leaders and singers would come; finances would be provided; etc.

In 1722, an “Intercessory Missions Base” was established Germany by Count Nicholas Ludwig Von Zinzendorf. They named their settlement Herrnhut, which means “The Watch of the LORD” and they began prayer meetings that continued 24 hours a day for over 100 years resulting in the first Protestant missions movement in history known as the Moravians. To this we say, “Yes LORD, do this in Singapore even in our day!”

*Leviticus 6:13 says that “the fire must be kept burning on the altar continuously; it must not go out.”* It is our goal also to keep the fire burning that it may never go out! **We are calling out to all the worship leaders, musicians, singers, intercessors, etc.** who have the heart to establish this House for the LORD to join us to keep this fire burning continuously!

*“So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God.” (Haggai 1:14)*

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