

THE BLESSING OF ISRAEL

**What Christians Need to Know
to Intercede and Interrelate with The Jewish Nation**

Sandra Teplinsky

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This second edition is dedicated
to the memory of

Linda L. Wong
1947-2002

“Ruth” forerunner and friend to the Jewish people,
whose prayers still prevail in effect for Israel,
and who honored God with her life.

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Introduction

Jerusalem: Pray for the Peace or Prey for the Piece

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

May those who love you be secure.

Psalm 122:6

Imagine if you can the recapture of the ancient city of Jerusalem by Israeli soldiers in June 1967. Only days earlier, the tiny Jewish State had been besieged by the surrounding nations of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Though bent on Israel's annihilation, attacking Arab armies are now retreating on all sides. Midst the stench of death and destruction, artillery blasts and blackened skies, the holiest of Jewish sites comes into Jewish sight. After nearly 2,000 years, the Temple Mount, with its cherished Western Wall, is taken by a battalion of Israeli foot soldiers. The heart of Jerusalem is again in Jewish hands. It is a stunning moment on earth. The heavens collide.

Jews in Israel and worldwide celebrate the victory, at once laughing and weeping in delight. Christians throughout the nations speculate the closure of the biblical "time of the Gentiles." God's covenant people ponder the coming of Messiah. But the delirium of Israeli triumph is short-lived.

THE WAKE-UP CALL

The battle between Jew and Arab, Jacob and Esau, Isaac and Ishmael, will not be quickly quelled. And Jerusalem, the City of Peace, remains so in name only. But what happens to her is destined to impact the

world. The peace of Jerusalem—or lack thereof—tripped an alarm like no other in modern history on September 11, 2001. The church woke up that morning to the sight and sound of ancient hatreds spilling blood halfway around the world, on American soil.

Many Christians realized for the first time their *need* to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. To pray for, and love her, is clearly connected to one's own security in Psalm 122. As God's new covenant adopted people, Christians are compelled by the Bible to stand with the Jews, in love and truth. Together we are destined to prepare the way of the Lord, the redemption of this world by our glorious Savior, *Yeshua* ("Jesus" in Hebrew). It is a destiny that involves preparing that city, Jerusalem, to which He will return, and from where He will reside, rule and reign.

The prey for the piece of Jerusalem is real. The enemies of God and His people do not under-value the past, present and future significance of this holy city. An aroused church is now asking Yeshua, as did His original disciples, to teach them afresh not only how to pray, but how to live in these tumultuous times.

In light of unprecedented global events and materializing Bible prophecy, how does God want the church to relate to the beleaguered State of Israel, Jews and Arabs? Precisely how do we petition the Throne of Grace on their behalf? How do we make complex, new choices in agreement with God's will? To what extent ought we give focus to the words of not only Israel's ancient prophets, but those of our day? What is the war in the Middle East—including *Iraq*—really about, anyway?

PROPHETIC INTERCESSION

This book addresses these and other timely questions insofar as they pivot on the prophetically key issues of Israel and her relationship to the church. Based on an overview study of the book of Romans, chapters 9-11, the following pages explain what the Bible teaches as the foundational plan of God for the Jewish nation. His prophetic heart is revealed, enabling the reader to gain intercessory and relational insight. (Please note this book does not offer instruction on prayer or on activism in general. It assumes the reader has some understanding and experience with both, to which it adds particular perspectives about Israel.)

Intercession consists of standing in the gap not only spiritually but tangibly. The Spirit's call on the church is not only that of interceding before the Holy One. The Spirit is preparing Christians to serve as salt and light before human leaders and authorities in positions of world power. No sphere of influence in society, government, or the media is too small or large for the Lord to touch. Not everyone is called or gifted to stand in more than one gap. But every Christian is commanded to live, as Jesus did, a life of prayer and practical compassion. What ought this life look like in this hour?

The reader of this book will gain a foundational understanding of relevant Bible truths about Israel. He or she will then be empowered to intercede and interact with the Jewish people in an informed and Spirit-sensitive manner. Christian efforts, however well-intended, must be based on an accurate understanding of the character and purposes of God. *Now* is the time to transform our thinking in accordance with His Word on the crucial matter of the Jewish nation. "Understanding is a fountain of life."¹

DIVINE DESTINY:
ISRAEL'S KEY TO THE KINGDOM

This present clash of world kingdoms—Islam vs. Judeo-Christianity, Mohammed's Allah vs. Yeshua's Yahweh—is going to intertwine God's covenant peoples, Christians and Jews. This interrelationship is key to preparing the way of the Lord's return. It is time now for us to join hands in shared destiny. For the prey for the piece of Jerusalem is not confined to one holy city. The God/god who rules Jerusalem, rules the earth. It is a war of the worlds.

As a Messianic Jew who worships Yeshua, I have spent decades praying, studying, teaching and laboring internationally with the church for the salvation of Israel. Since the most recent outbreak of violence commencing on the Temple Mount in 2000, the "Al-Aqsa Intifada," I have undertaken regular missions of intercession to the Land. I've been privileged to spend much time there with Israeli Messianic leaders. As a former attorney, I've distilled my gleanings and overlaid them on key Bible teaching. For this I've used the book of Romans, chapters 9-11, since that passage provides such a thorough discussion, written specifically to the church, about Israel. Therefore, I strongly urge the reader to take the time to read each chapter's introductory passage from Romans.

Revived waves of antisemitism have accompanied the opening years of the 21st century. Once again, the Jewish people are being blamed for the ills of the world, from Baghdad to the World Trade Center, to much more. Under the thin veneer of politically "correct" anti-Zionism or anti-Israelism, and centering on Palestine, "the new antisemitism," as it is called, threatens to engulf even much of the Christian church. Israel is God's grand sifting

mechanism. In His hand, the Jewish nation is a testing ground, a threshing floor where the true intents of mens' hearts are exposed. In these last days, how will *you* stand?

This book is meant to help you sort through biblical foundations of important issues of our day. It is not intended to present a scholarly treatise on Israelology. Instead it offers a brief summary of key Bible principles, from a Messianic Jewish perspective of prophetic intercession. Many of these principles deserve a book all their own, and the presentation herein is necessarily abbreviated and conclusory. But I have tried to draw these conclusions and principles from God's own heart.

It is my prayer that this book be used to sharpen the focus of the church as we labor for the peace of Jerusalem, all Israel, and thereby, all the earth. May the pages that follow help guide us along this unchartered but glorious pathway, that Yahweh's kingdom come and His will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. And may all who read these pages be swept more and more into the loving, holy presence of God Himself, as He is herein revealed.

Chapter 1 **Father's Heart**

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I speak the truth in Christ--I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit-- I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel.

Romans 8:38-9:4

The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous person avails much.² Effective intercession is linked not only to identification with those for whom you and I stand in the gap, but identification with the One before Whom we stand. As we stand before Creator God Almighty, the extent to which we are clothed in His character is more important than our technical cache' of prayer programs, prophecy charts, and conference notes.

THE GREATEST IS LOVE

As the Jewish apostle Paul penned long ago, *the greatest is love.*³ Love is the greatest tool, spiritual weapon, key to effectiveness in prayer, and essential quality in the universe. It is the essence of God, for God is love. His love manifests in holiness, the righteousness of Christ. That righteousness gives us standing with Him.

Submitted in humility to God and filled with His Spirit of Love, the intercessor actually *lives out* his or her intercession. The intercessor's life becomes, in a sense, an unending prayer. It is a prayer that avails much.

An ardent summation of God's everlasting love is found in the book of Romans, chapter 8. Directly following the conclusion that nothing can separate us from His love in verse 39, flows the New Testament's concise discourse on Israel in chapters 9-11. Paul's train of thought was not accidental. As he focused on the eternal nature of God's love, He naturally thought next of Israel. As you may know, there were no chapter breaks in his original letter to the church at Rome. Chapters in the Bible were added at a later date for the sake of convenience.

Throughout this book, it will be important to remember this context of Romans 9-11, the foundational Scriptures for our study on intercession. Remember that the prefix, *con*, means "with." Context goes with text; therefore, biblical *text* must be interpreted in its God-inspired *context*. Could there be any greater context than love?

In the biblical text of the New Covenant as well as the Old, the Father's love and heart are intimately connected with, and revealed through, Israel. Israel simply can not be properly understood or related to, apart from this heart of love. A Christian wholly in love with the Lord, is a Christian swathed in such holy love. Such a one can be used to stand in the gap for the Jewish people. Indeed, such a Christian will be *constrained* to do so.

BURDEN OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Paul serves as our example and prototype. As he unveils the burden

of his heart for the Jews, he thrice affirms the veracity of his passion. It is as if he calls the Trinitarian Godhead as witness to the pathos of his soul: “*I speak the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit--I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart...for the sake of...the people of Israel...*” At the same time, it is clear this burden does not originate with Paul. Rather, it is that of the Holy Spirit. To be Spiritually sensitive, to love the things of the Spirit, is to share His burden for the people of Israel.

TEARS FOR MORE THAN A TIMEPIECE

This “great sorrow” and “unceasing anguish” is reminiscent of the heart of the prodigal son’s father in Jesus’ parable. Indeed, Israel is in a sense a prodigal nation, except for her remnant of faith. Again, hear the Spirit’s burden reflected in Jesus’ own lament: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, *as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings*, but you were not willing.”⁴ Hear the same burden in Hosea 11:8-9: “How can I give you up...How can I hand you over, Israel?...*all my compassion is aroused*. I will not carry out my fierce anger, nor will I turn and devastate [you]...” (Emphases added.)

Paul goes so far as to be virtually willing to be cut off from God if it would mean the salvation of the Jewish people. His exemplary heart echoes Moses’ in Exodus 32:32: “Please forgive their sin, but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written.”

In this hour, prayer and pro-action for Israel must emanate from nothing less than divine unconditional love. Since the Jewish nation’s

rebirth in 1948, many Christians have viewed her primarily as an exciting prophetic timepiece. Indeed, she is. But Jesus did not die for prophetic timepieces. He died because he so loved humanity. It's time to let God refine our motives. Let our tears wash the timepiece with Tenderness and Truth.

HE ALSO ADORES ARABS

This book is about Christians and Jews as a nation. But approximately 4 million Arabs live within the borders of the Jewish nation today. How fiercely God loves them as well! How desperately they need to know the good news of Love Incarnate! The only lasting solution to the conflict in the Middle East is Love between Jew and Muslim, the salvation and reconciliation of both peoples through Yeshua. Though not a thorough study on the Arabs, this book is in no way intended to devalue God's heart for them, and indeed, all the lost.

WHOLLY HOLY CHURCH

Pray for and challenge the body of Messiah to fulfill the greatest commandment of the Bible: to *wholly love* the Lord with all its heart, mind and strength. Then *holy love* for Israel—tears, friendship, and intervention on all levels—will naturally flow. As the church's heart beats with the Father's, holy love will light and pave the way of prophetic intercessory vision. Holy love will energize, embolden and equip the "army of God." Holy lovers can lay down their lives for their friends. The foundation of intercession in a world at war can rest on nothing less. Only Love never fails.

Chapter 2 Israel's Identity

Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

Romans 9:4-5

The above passage outlines blessings bestowed uniquely—and irrevocably—on Israel. At first glance, verses 4-5 might be mistaken as a pathetic sigh. Paul's words could sound like a case for feeling sorry for the Jewish people. But instead, this passage presents a grand description of both Israel's heritage and prophetic destiny. *It profiles Israel's identity.*

LIGHT TO THE NATIONS

It has been said that Israel's bottom-line problem has always been her unwillingness to be Israel. It is not easy to serve as the microcosm and nucleus of God's dealings with the world. But such is inherent in her servant-calling as a light to the nations.⁵ In turn, the church's servant-calling to Israel is to help birth and nurse her into being that light.

ADOPTION

Israel's is the adoption as sons. Every child of God is in a biblical sense adopted. However, the Jewish people retain a certain irrevocable birthright as God's first-born son.⁶ That birthright passes on to her a double portion inheritance. The firstborn son receives unique honor, even though

all children are equally loved.⁷

GLORY

Israel's is the divine glory. While He shares His glory with no man, God has deposited a unique dimension of His glory, or divine nature, on Israel. This glory is destined to impact and transform the world. To the extent Israel embraces her identity, that glory will be activated and released not only to her, but all nations! That glory is so profound in quality and quantity that it will ultimately achieve "life from the dead,"⁸

The glory of verse 4 on the Jew resonates to the *Shekhinah* Presence of Yahweh in times gone by—and to come. It has been given to the Jew to welcome back the Messiah, to usher in His return. Indeed, Jesus said we would not see Him again until Israel declares, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord."⁹ No other nation has been handed this honor.

COVENANTS AND PROMISES

The biblical covenants belong to the Jewish people. Covenants in the Scriptures can be conditional or unconditional. If conditional, then the fulfillment of a covenant depends on the performance of the person(s) with whom that covenant has been made. *But if the covenant is unconditional, then God's fulfillment of that covenant does not depend on human performance. God's covenant with Israel to preserve her as a people before Him, and His covenant with her pertaining to the Land, are unconditional.*¹⁰

Despite Israel's sin, God has bound Himself to perform these unconditional covenant promises for her. In the meantime, the conditional

covenants continue in applicability to the Jewish people as well. However, these covenants *are* conditioned on Israel's performance. This means that *if* Israel obeys God, then she reaps certain blessings.

An example is seen in the Land covenant. God assigned to the Jewish nation irrevocable stewardship rights to the Land of Israel. But biblical history shows that her possession of that Land is generally pre-conditioned on her obedience to Him. One important exception seems to exist: her restoration in unbelief foretold in Ezekiel 36-37—the very restoration taking place before our 21st century eyes. (Some argue that Israel's disobedience now justifies the nations' demanding her relinquishment of the Land, and we will see later that this is *not* the case.)

The fulfillment of both conditional and unconditional covenants pertaining to the Jewish people is connected to Christian intercession. God's promises remain poised to prosper His ancient covenant people. Therefore, let us “give Him no rest until He establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth.”¹¹

LOVELINESS OF LAW

The receiving of the law rests with the Jews. They gave us the precious Holy Scriptures, guarding its integrity with their very lives. Every writer of the Bible (except perhaps Luke) was Jewish. They are indeed the people of the Book.

There remains an anointing on the Jews to love, comprehend, teach and mediate the law, the oracles of God, to the nations. Later we will look at the importance of the law of God, and how, without a Jewish presence in

the church, the law has been too often disregarded—if not altogether discarded.

TEMPLE WORSHIP: LEVITES AND PRIESTS

According to Romans 9:4, Israel has been given the temple worship. Notice the use of the present tense “*is*” in verse 4. The gift of temple worship *is still* carried by the Jewish people today. This is so even though the Holy Temple no longer exists, and despite all the worship gifting God has graced upon the church. Can you imagine the magnificently unprecedented worship that will emerge when the Jewish people are fully restored, not only physically to their Land, but spiritually to their God?

Yet another profound dimension of temple worship lies dormant in Israel. When Jesus returns, He will rule and reign from a restored, literal Holy Temple in Jerusalem. *The Jewish people will in that day serve Him and the nations as they minister in temple worship.*¹² How utterly glorious will that day be!

As an important aside, the Scriptures indicate there will be a third temple—and a fourth. Religious Jews seek today to rebuild the third temple as a substitute for salvation by grace through faith in Yeshua. Eventually the anti-Christ will enthrone himself as king in this temple. Will the one true Messiah occupy this same defiled temple?

When He returns, Yeshua will rule and reign from a specially-built Holy Temple, much larger, according to the Scriptures, than the third. This fourth Temple will rest on the Temple Mount—the exact spot now occupied by the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsaa Mosque. It is the same site

on which the first and second Temples stood. Little wonder that war wages over this precise and precious plot of land.

FATHERS AND SON

The patriarchs belong to the Jews. The patriarchs bespeak ethnicity, a flesh-and-blood inheritance. The Word of the Lord promises blessing for a thousand generations to the ethnic descendants of one who is blessed.¹³ Therefore, unique patriarchal blessing abounds to the Jewish nation. As the hearts of the sons and daughters of Jacob turn to the God of their fathers, this patriarchal anointing will be released to the whole body of Messiah. We will see blessings spoken over them millennia back, materialize. Since the Jews' patriarchal blessings were always meant to cover the nations, the church will explode into abundant, new life.

Last but certainly not least, "from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ." What blessing and appropriate honor is on the nation that birthed the Savior of the world...the nation into which God chose Him to be born!

Chapter 3 The Question of Election

Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad--in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls--she was told, "The older will serve the younger." Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.

Romans 9:11-16

Why did God choose the Jews? Chapter 9 says because He wanted to. God's election *is God's election*. It is His sovereign selection. Have we the right to require that our Maker justify to us His choice? "What if," according to Romans 9:23, "he did this to make the riches of his glory known to [us] the objects of his mercy?"

The Scriptures assure us that God is perfectly just in all His ways. When He intentionally conceals from us the reasons why He does things, it is for our ultimate good and blessing. He may indeed offend our minds to expose our hearts. At such times He calls forth in us humility and trust. Human pride would insist on human understanding and control. We will have to repent of both if we wish to flow with what the Spirit is doing with Israel and the church in these last days.

STUMBLING OVER SELECTION

The question of election concerning the Jews has been a stumbling block to the world. In particular, the Arab peoples have so stumbled as to fall, *en masse*, into the deception of Islam. The church's collective mind has gone "tilt" over Israel too, as we will see in more detail later. It is true that Israel has stumbled over the Messiah. But the church has stumbled over Israel.

The Almighty One created by covenant a chosen people out of the loins of Abraham. Then He specifically identified and limited the inheritors: Isaac, *not* Ishmael; and, Jacob, *not* Esau.¹⁴ Abraham asked God to bless Ishmael, and God said He would—but *His covenant would be established through Isaac*.¹⁵ Next in the line of promise would be Jacob, though the younger of Isaac's two sons.¹⁶

SIBLING RIVALRY

God promised to bless Ishmael and make him "a great nation." But the world is forewarned that he will be a "wild donkey of a man, and his hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand against him," even as he "dwells in the presence of all his brothers."¹⁷ The battle for Jerusalem, Israel's war of attrition, and global terror are the continuation of this ancient sibling rivalry between Ishmael and Isaac.

Ishmael and Esau, both suffering the pain of rejection when they were excluded from inheriting the covenant, chose to begrudge rather than bless their younger brothers. Consequently, seeds of bitterness were buried deep in their souls. Eventually some form of reconciliation took place between Ishmael and Isaac, then Esau and Jacob. But as the centuries

mounted, so did bitter root rage and jealousy among the descendants of these brothers of Isaac and Jacob.¹⁸

Most of the Arab nations today trace their ancestry to Ishmael. God had specific plans for Ishmael. His progeny would be close to the Jews not only in a geographic sense, but in a familial sense as well. They are literally cousins. But family feuds are often the most virulent.

ARAB CLAIMS

God made provision for the Arab peoples, multiplying them to the extent that they inhabited Edom, Moab, Ammon and the Arabian peninsula. Today they occupy over 5 million square miles, or nearly 12% of the earth's surface!¹⁹ That territory contains enormous wealth in the form of oil reserves. But nothing less than the ouster of the entire Jewish State will appease her neighboring nations.

The religion of Islam has added theological fuel to the fire for the past 1300 years. The collective soul of the Arab peoples, wounded and embittered, was sadly ripe for deception. When the man Mohammed claimed visitation by an angel that replaced the truths of the Bible with the Koran, his people were only too eager to believe it. *Allah* was at last replacing the Jew and Christian both with the Arabic Muslim as his covenant choice. Divine mandate was released to destroy the former infidel inheritors. Not just Jews, but also Christians were to be converted or killed, said fundamental Islam.

It should come as no surprise that *Allah* to the Muslim does not refer to Yahweh, the Creator of the Universe. *Allah's* identity comes from a

pagan, territorial moon deity worshiped in the Saudi Arabian peninsula in Mohammed's time. Perhaps uninformed Muslims today don't know this, but their god is definitely *not* ours. The crescent moon symbol of Islam should serve as a reminder as to who is being worshiped—a dead rock that can only reflect light, not *The Rock* who *is* Light.

AN HISTORICAL GLIMPSE

This was the hostile environment into which the State of Israel was re-established in the 20th century. To summarize a complex history, Israel's modern inception began in 1920, when the League of Nations handed Britain a mandate to secure the establishment of a Jewish homeland in the region then known as Palestine. Within two years, however, Britain gave away 78% of this land to create a Palestinian state called Transjordan.

The name "Palestine" was scarcely used until the 20th century. The Romans re-named Israel "Palestine" when they conquered the country in the second century AD. To erase any reference to the Jewish people, the Romans assigned an identity to the area that reflected the name of Israel's ancient and long-extinct enemy, Philistine. But the so-called Palestinians of today are not descended from the Philistines. And the word "Palestine" never appears in the Bible. There is no genuine historical or biblical Palestinian claim to the Land.

In 1948, Britain withdrew from Palestine and Israel declared independence. One day later, she was attacked by all her Arab neighbors. In the aftermath of this War of Independence, large numbers of both Jewish and Arab refugees were created in the Middle East. Israel eagerly absorbed 800,000 Jews forced to leave Arab countries. However, similar numbers of

Arab refugees would not be absorbed by their surrounding brethren nations.

THE PALESTINIAN PLIGHT

Instead, these refugees were directed into camps by the outside Arab leaders. They were told to flee their homes ahead of armies that would quickly come and “drive the Jews into the (Mediterranean) sea.” But to their surprise and humiliation the fledgling Jewish State won the war.

Still, the surrounding nations refused to take in their displaced people. These countries would not even negotiate a plan for the refugees’ return and re-absorption back into Israel. Such negotiations would have required their recognition of Israel’s existence—and this they refused to do.

In the meantime, Israel offered citizenship rights and privileges, including freedom of religion and the right to hold public office, to those Arabs who chose to remain within her borders, under her sovereignty. Some accepted the offer. However, the overwhelming majority did not, choosing to wait for a deliverance by their brothers that would never come. Instead, they would be used as political pawns, even to this day, in the real goal—*elimination of the Jewish State*.

Understandably, frustrations of life in refugee camps spawned hatred and violence. Under Yasser Arafat and the PLO, and with the financial backing of oil-rich Arab sponsors, these camps have given rise to a new generation of warriors whose weapon is terror. Today they infiltrate the world. The creation of a new state of their own will only strengthen their death-grip on Israel, the church, and the nations.

Despite the plight of these people, we must remember that Jordan was created little more than 50 years ago specifically to be a Palestinian Arab state. The majority of Jordanians today are Palestinian Arabs. Therefore, when the nations of the world decry the need for a Palestinian state, we need only point them east towards the city of Ammon, and remind them that such a state already exists. It is called Jordan.

MERCY TRIUMPHS OVER JUDGMENT

Bible prophecies about the Arab nations seem uniquely applicable today. These passages forebode judgment against the descendants of Esau in parts of Jordan and Northern Saudi Arabia (Mount Seir) as well as Iraq (Babylon).²⁰ God is against them because of their continuing “ancient hatred” and violence against Israel.

At the same time, God has blessing in store for the sons of Ishmael. To their forefather he made great promises of protection and prosperity in Genesis 17. Isaiah 19 foretells of future altars to the Lord in Egypt, where He will make Himself known. A highway will arise from Egypt to Assyria, and the two nations will worship together. “In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth. The Lord Almighty will bless them, saying, ‘Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance.’”²¹

God’s redemptive call on the Arabic peoples includes serving as a path of readiness, a bridge of hospitality between Israel and the nations of earth. The Arabs are called to partake in a unique way of our father Abraham’s blessings, and mediate those blessings to the Gentiles. Someday, the Arab will serve as the Jew’s close friend rather than his bitter enemy.

And vice-versa.

Fast and pray that Arab Muslims would receive mercy and grace to repent. Pray for their salvation and healing. Pray that through the war in Iraq, God will liberate multitudes of Muslims from the heretofore impenetrable veil of Islam. He wants them set free from darkness, into His loving light. Ask Him to send laborers into the ripening harvest fields of Islamic lands.

Pray that ancient jealousies and rivalries will begin to be healed between Jewish and Arab Christians. Most Arab Christians do not believe the Bible gives Jewish people any special rights to the Land which they (the Arabs) do not possess as well. Pray that the question of election be resolved in their hearts. Minister in love and sensitivity to them, treating the sons of Ishmael as Jesus would. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Chapter 4

From Fear to Faith

But Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it...because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the 'stumbling stone.'

Romans 9:31-32

Daily life for the typical Israeli has become somewhat of a nightmare. With the whole country so small--about the size of New Jersey--each casualty and death is keenly felt and mourned. Not long ago, it was commonly said that every family had lost at least one member in Israel's wars during its brief modern history. While the recent wave of former Soviet immigration has changed these statistics a bit, now everyone knows someone who knows someone lost to the tragedy of terror.²²

Terror is designed to unleash fear. Much of Israeli talk about security issues betrays their understandable *insecurity*. Yet somehow, amid the terror, and maybe on account of it, faith will arise. Faith must arise. Christians with faith must help. God will raise them up for the challenge.

HARVEST FIELDS ARE RIPE

Harvest fields are ripe. With nowhere else to turn, scores of Israeli Jews are looking afresh to God. Jewish hearts are softening. Many Israelis know they need true Christian friends. The ultra-religious, ultra-Orthodox Jewish community is thankfully no longer their sole voice of faith.

This loosening of ultra-Orthodox power is significant. Since the modern nation's inception, these rulers have held dogmatically and tightly to the teaching of attaining to righteousness by works. This stranglehold stubbornly anchors in ancient principalities, even as it affronts today's values of democratic liberty. Vested with not only religious, but political power in Israel, these modern "Pharisees" have quelled any other expression of Jewish faith, *especially Messianic Jewish faith*.

Pray that a genuine spirit of faith will override fear and unbelief, that the situation will not have to worsen before hearts are turned to the Defender of Israel. Pray that a softening, rather than a hardening, will continue to fall upon the soul of the nation. Add fasting to prayer whenever you can.

PRAY FOR ISRAEL'S REMNANT

Pray that great faith will arise in the Messiah-believing remnant of Israel, the Messianic Jewish community, that these people who know their God would begin to do great exploits.

And just as important, lend practical support. Help the Messianic Jewish community in their efforts to rally the Christian world to the cause of greater freedom for the expression of biblical faith in Israel. Work with them to loosen the grip of ultra-religious rulers, and loose instead the liberty of the Spirit.

It is not appropriate here to list all of Israel's sins, if ever such a thing could even be done. However, it is appropriate and necessary for the

remnant of Israel to repent for the faithlessness and sin of the nation. (It is the same for the church in any nation, with whom spiritual responsibility for that nation rests.) It is also appropriate for Christian intercessors who love Israel to pray humbly but perseveringly for God to grace her with the gift of faith.

Chapter 5

Salvation: One Way

*Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God
for the Israelites is that they may be saved.*

Romans 10:1

Paul's greatest prayer, and the Holy Spirit's greatest burden, for the Jewish people, is that they be saved. God is willing that none should perish spiritually. But this truth is sometimes obscured even from evangelical Christians.

LOVING JEWS TO DEATH

In the aftermath of the Holocaust, Western Christians became sensitized to antisemitism. A movement sprang up which came to be known as "Jewish-Christian dialogue." Christian Zionism gained new fervor. Much interest was sparked in the Jewish roots of Christianity. These were evidences of God's love drawing His covenant peoples together and into their shared destiny. However, these interactions rarely included any clear evangelistic aim to the end that Israel be saved.

There has been a reluctance, and in some cases outright refusal, on the part of many Christians to openly and clearly explain the gospel to the Jewish people. Some hope the Jews have another salvation "option" open to them ("dual covenant theology"). Perhaps they think Jesus didn't really mean it when he told a *Jewish* audience none of them could come to the Father but through Him.²³ But that is wishful thinking.

The Christian who relates to the Jewish people in this hour will not be ashamed of the gospel, for it *is* (not was) the power of salvation to all who believe—to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile.²⁴ It is time to love the Jews to life, not death.

Admittedly, the issues can be thorny. Tragically, many Jewish people have learned to associate Christians witnessing with Christians warring against their lives. (More will be said about this later.) Prayer, unconditional love, and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit are imperative.

THE STATE OF THE GOSPEL IN THE STATE OF THE GOSPEL

An even trickier challenge is involved relating to the State of Israel as an entity. A Christian organization must obtain the permission of the Israeli government in order to operate there. But to secure permission, the ministry must agree not to evangelize. In effect, it cannot openly support or sympathize with Messianic Jews. Therefore, if a Christian ministry to unsaved Jewish people somehow results in the salvation of an Israeli Jew, that ministry usually disassociates itself with this new-born member of the household of faith. In reality, salvations rarely result, and still are not typically the stated goal of many Christian ministries to Israel. Yet the Spirit's desire and prayer is that Israel be saved—and thereby truly comforted.

Christians who love Israel will carefully choose to support ministries driven by God's holy love to minister in accord with His Word. It is simply good stewardship. This is not to slight the efforts of any believers who love the Jewish people and have sacrificed on their behalf. These brothers and

sisters are commended of the Lord. But in these days He is calling us all to new levels of consecration according to His priorities.

Consider this, for example: A popular cause in Western Christianity has become the sponsoring of *aliyah*, or Jewish immigration to Israel, from throughout the nations. Certainly this is a biblical mandate. *But how much good does it do for Jews to move to Israel, only to die there, eternally separated from God?* Furthermore, the Scriptures also teach that Jews living dispersed among the nations will come to faith, even though they are *not* in Israel.²⁵ The gospel must be shared with them—your neighbors—as well.

TO THE JEW FIRST

It is true that God deals sovereignly with the Jewish nation. At some point in the future, on a grand scale, He will reveal to them the Savior. But He mostly works through—not in spite of—the church. And the church's mandate hasn't changed: salvation offered to the Jew first, then to the Gentile.

Generations of Jews have come and gone to perish on Israeli soil. Messiah sacrificed on the cross, the ultimate altar of atonement, and resurrected from the dead, must be preached to them. The gospel must be given to God's people. And love must be lavished on them—unconditionally and sincerely—wether or not that gospel is ever accepted. Did Jesus do anything less?

Chapter 6 The Church and The Old Testament

*Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness
for everyone who believes.*

Romans 10:4

Jesus gives His followers a concise commentary on the law of God. "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to *fulfill* them."²⁶ He adds that anyone who breaks *even the least of the commandments*, and teaches others to do the same, will be called "least" in the kingdom of heaven. But those who practice and teach the law will be called "great" in the kingdom.²⁷ Jesus says kingdom teaching on the law is like a "treasure."²⁸

Throughout church history, where the theological stance on the Jewish *law* has been that it is irrelevant, unnecessary or damaging to the Christian, there has also been the stance that the Jewish *people* are irrelevant, unnecessary in their existence, or damaging to the Christian. Today, however, the Lord is restoring to the church a right embrace of the law, and a rightful inheritance of lost treasures in the Hebrew Scriptures.

THE JEWISH WORD FOR TODAY

Correctly understood, Romans 10:4 helps us appreciate the role of the law in new covenant faith. The word translated here into the English, "law," is the Greek, *nomos*. *Nomos* does mean "law." *Nomos* is also used to refer to "Torah," the first five books of the Old Covenant. *But a much more accurate English translation, based on the Hebraic understanding of*

“Torah” and “law,” would be “teaching” or “instruction.”

As such, the New Covenant writers, including Paul, actually intended to communicate “teaching,” where the word *nomos* is used. They were referring to the Old Covenant teaching as a whole, or *all* the Hebrew Scriptures. For this reason Paul instructs, “All Scripture [*i.e.*, the Old Covenant, the only Scripture at that time] is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.”²⁹

This interpretation is consistent with Jesus’ succinct summary of the relationship of the believer to the “law” or *teachings* of God. In Matthew 5:17, He says He has not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it. In short, *He has come to fill the law full of Himself*. The Greek word translated to the English, “end,” referring to Christ being the “end” of the law, is *teleos*. *Teleos* means completion, but in the sense of fulfillment, not cessation. It does *not* refer to a stopping or finishing of something. God’s teachings aren’t over, and they haven’t come to an end. Therefore, we are enjoined to love the Jesus-fulfilled law³⁰ and follow all of its teachings. (Bear in mind that much of the Torah, especially laws of a ceremonial nature, pertain only to the Jews, not Gentiles.)

THE RELEVANCE OF LAW

These critical days cry for a cure from the law of God. The rotten fruits of lawlessness—terror, legitimized murder, immorality—threaten to tear apart the very fabric of so-called Christian society. But a renewed church is arising that loves the Lord and His laws—the Holy Spirit-filled, Old Covenant teaching.

Remember that the Lord Jesus Himself is the Word. Revel in the written revelation of the Redeemer. Gain an accurate assessment of God's character and ways as displayed in Torah. Embrace all the teachings of the Old Covenant. They provide the basis for all the teachings of the New Covenant. The Bible is *one* book, not two.

As issues and choices grow increasingly complex, how we need His Word as a lamp for our feet and light for our path! It will be ever more important in all we do on His behalf. Know the Word, know Him; no Word, no Him.

Chapter 7

The Remnant: Messianic Jewish Revival

For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile--the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?

Romans 10:12-15

Multitudes of Jewish people all over the world have come to faith in Messiah Yeshua in the last 30 years. In the former Soviet Union alone, since the Iron Curtain fell in 1989, an estimated 150,000 Jews are believed to have embraced Yeshua. Many of them are emigrating to Israel and changing the spiritual climate in the Land. Ex-Soviet, born-again Jews have fueled Messianic revival in Israel.³¹

These Messianic Jews constitute today's faithful remnant. They represent the first fruits of revival, and are destined to help prepare the way of the Lord. They are also members of the same household of faith with Christian Gentiles. Together in Messiah, these Jews and Gentiles mysteriously and magnificently manifest "one new man."³²

PROTOCOL PLEASE

There is an important but often overlooked godly order, or protocol, to this one new man. That order is fundamental to Christian interaction and relationship with the Jews. We will look at two of these points of protocol:

(1) Christian ministry to Messianic Jews; and (2) Jewish forms of worship in the church.

FAMILY COMES FIRST

Concerning ministry, the Lord tells us as a priority, to “do good to all people, *especially* to those who belong to the family of believers.”³³ This holds true when ministering to any people group. So when ministering to Jews, Christians are instructed first to do good to those Messianic believers in the household of faith. Then, good can next be done to those Jews not belonging to the “family of believers.”

Unsaved Jews in the mainstream and institutionalized sense reject Jesus as the Messiah. *In fact they often do what they can to undermine Messianic Jews.* However, as we’ve seen, the majority of Christian support flows to unsaved Jews. So when Christians send them financial and other support, these Christian resources may indirectly help stamp out, *or at least set back,* Messianic Jewish revival. Messianic Jews have been aware of this backfire for decades. Now is the time for the discerning church to refine its target and strategic focus.

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND

Bear in mind that mainstream Judaism teaches that a Jew can not be a Christian. Any Jew who believes in Yeshua, they say, is no longer Jewish. Evangelicals are often seen as trying to convert Jews into Christians, which lessens the ranks of the Jewish people. This is very threatening to them. We must deal with this false threat—this devilish misconception that Jews can not worship Yeshua—but not at the expense of Jews who do.

Messianic Jews typically are excluded from formal circles of interaction between Jews and Christians. This cause-and-effect phenomenon has obscured from the church how it unintentionally perpetuates the plight of Messianic Jews. At the same time, visible proof that Jews can—and *do*—believe in Jesus, is also thereby removed from the scene.

Messianic Jews in Israel, on account of their faith, endure serious discrimination by family, acquaintances, and employers, as well as the government. Some lose their jobs; others are ousted from their beloved country. Strange facts, perhaps, but essential for Israel-loving Christians to know and help rectify.

REMEMBER THE REVIVAL

Today is the day for the church to boldly cast its lot with Messianic Jewish revival. It is time to aid and abet Jewish evangelists and Christian ministries who preach good news to Zion. God's Word says missionaries cannot go unless they are sent. Prayer and practical help provide that sending mechanism. Time, energy, and money must be intelligently channeled in the direction of God's purpose.

Ultimately, salvations are at stake. Multitudes of unsaved Jews are waiting to hear the gospel, and anointed Messianic ministries are waiting only for the resources with which to go and tell them. They're ready to do their part to fulfill the Great Commission. Will the church do *its* part?

I believe God is raising up a church that will, because it correctly comprehends its part. In this hour the Spirit is unraveling misconceptions

and propelling the Gentile church into *her* unique glory in Him, even as He is with Israel. The Gentile church is gaining holy confidence in her reciprocal identity and calling in God.

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE ABOUT NO DIFFERENCE

Romans 10:12 says, “there is no difference between Jew and Gentile.” A church secure in the Lord will find this truth easy to embrace. Remember, verse 12 must be interpreted in context: its immediate context; the context of Paul’s entire letter to the Roman church; his other writings; and ultimately, the Scriptures as a whole.

Note that verse 12 appears in the context of Paul’s discourse on the irrevocable distinctives of the Jewish people. Throughout his letter to the Romans, as in his other letters, the apostle distinguishes between ethnic Jews and ethnic Gentiles. Here he does so even while he assures Gentile believers they are just as blessed as Jews. In his mind, the two peoples are definitely *not* literally or functionally the same. The point he is making is that they do, however, partake of the same blessings of salvation.

Romans 2:28-3:1 further illustrates Paul’s point. There he writes, “...a man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly. ...” The rest of the passage, however, makes clear the apostle is referring only to physical, ethnic Jews. He is identifying who among *ethnic* Jews are really *spiritually authentic* Jews, *i.e.*, the faithful remnant within Israel.

For this reason Paul’s next sentence continues, “What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? Much

in every way!” Obviously he thinks Jews are different from Gentiles, even in the body of Messiah.

SPIRITUAL JEWS

The issue may seem minor, but it is crucial. Sometimes well-meaning Christians love Israel, but only because they believe *they* have become the new Israel, or “spiritual” Israel. Others are convinced the blood of a Jew (Jesus) now flows in their veins, so they are Jewish. Others “just sense” they are Jewish because they “must” have an unknown Jewish relative somewhere in their lineage.

While appearing benign or even sweet on the surface, this sort of reasoning usurps biblical passages pertaining to ethnic Israel and her destiny. Indirectly, important promises are taken away from the Jewish people by Gentiles. The train of thought that belies this position is actually akin to the long-standing theology of replacement. (“Replacement theology” is a pernicious error that has given rise to centuries of Christian antisemitism. More will be said about it in the next chapter.) It would be far better for Gentile Christians to embrace their identity and calling to support the Jewish people, *simply as Gentile Christians*.

UNEARTHING JEWISH ROOTS

A related matter is the flourishing Jewish roots phenomenon. In the past decade, certain streams of Christianity have experienced a fresh surge of “outward Jewishness.” Jewish prayers, symbols, music, instruments of worship, and ceremonial objects are being used in Christian worship. The Old Covenant feasts are being observed and celebrated again. I applaud and encourage these expressions of faith as Christians embrace their biblical

heritage. These are evidences of the Holy Spirit's drawing Jews and Christians into their common destiny.

But proper protocol in the Spirit would defer to a certain approach as the church re-discovers lost Jewish treasures. This approach of deference leads to a second point of order in the body of Messiah. It is a point based on God's election and distinct functional roles assigned to Jews and Gentiles.

We have already seen there remains an anointing on the Jewish people for "things Jewish." Theirs *is* the adoption as sons, divine glory, covenants, receiving of the law, temple worship, promises, and patriarchs. Concerning these things, is it not incumbent on Messianic Jews to lovingly instruct their Gentile Christian brethren? And is it not seemly in the Spirit for nonJewish believers to seek out Messianic Jewish servant leadership in matters pertaining to their own heritage?

ONE NEW HUMANITY

Many Jewish believers will begin humbly serving and teaching the church about its Jewish roots. This will keep the church from mis-taking and mis-using these ancient treasures, even as they are being recouped. Gentile Christians will in turn humbly welcome the help, tutelage and empowering of Messianic Jews. Maturing relationships between Jewish and Gentile believers will result in restoration movements in the body of Christ that do not derail into replacement.

Maturity requires submission. Mutual submission of Jewish and Gentile believers will follow a pattern similar to that of marriage. In Christ,

husbands and wives love and esteem each other. They are equal before Him in value and importance. But clearly they are not equal in functional roles. In the realm of Israel and the church, we will see a similar flow of life, based on the loving servant leadership of Messianic Jews and Gentile Christians, one to another, as one new humanity.

Chapter 8 Rejection and Replacement?

I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew...Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious.

But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring!... For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

Romans 11:1-2, 11-12, 15

A palpable sense, even a spirit, of rejection seems to hang over the Land of Israel these days. It is little wonder. The young State was birthed from the ashes of the Holocaust. Since her inception, she has fought enemies on all sides bent on her destruction. The United Nations hurls at her one official condemnation after another. She scarcely has time to catch her breath. No solution is in sight to the barrage of terror which the Jewish State is singularly forced to face. Surely it could seem the world, and perhaps even her God, has rejected her.

GOD HAS NOT REJECTED HIS PEOPLE

But God has *not* rejected His people. The fact the nations reject Israel only propels Him ever closer to her: "... I will restore you to health and heal your wounds, declares the Lord, *because you are called an outcast,*

Zion for whom no one cares.”³⁴

It is true that Israel as a nation, through her leaders, has rejected Jesus as her Messiah, and failed to walk in the ways of the Lord. To *some* extent, it could be said she has thereby herself opened a door to rejection. But if Israel opened a door a crack, the church has stampeded through it for nearly two millennia with its theology of “replacement.”

REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

Replacement theology is the false doctrine that the church has replaced Israel in God’s purposes and heart. The church has inherited all Israel’s blessings, according to replacement pundits, but Israel has retained the cursings. The church today succumbs to replacement theology when it claims prophetic promises in the Scriptures, and forgets to apply them at all to the Jewish people.

A quick and simple example of replacement theology in subconscious action today is the common interpretation of Isaiah 62:1. This passage states, “I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth.” How many Gentile believers have replaced Jerusalem, in their own interpretaion, with the city in which they happen to live?

God certainly desires to bless Gentile Christians—and their cities—with the above prophetic promise, as well as many others. But room must be left for Him to bless the Jews, too. You and I must be sensitive to the issues of replacement theology which still loom large in the collective

consciousness of the Jewish people. We must also be sensitive to the heart of God when we dare to discount His dealings with Israel.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Sensitivity is gained by perspective, especially historical perspective. In Jewish ministry, it is essential to have some knowledge of church history relating to Judaism. Christians who minister effectively today to Israel understand, and are starting to deal with, the legacy of Christians past.

Beginning in about 200 AD, the church grew from mostly Jewish to mostly Gentile. This was inevitable. There have always been countless more Gentiles in the world than Jews. And Messianic Jews were doing their job, spreading the gospel far and wide. Simply put, they soon outnumbered themselves. And before long, for no good reason, they suffered for it.

As Jewish believers decreased proportionately to Gentile believers, the latter began to reject traditional Hebraic thought and Bible study for an approach more adaptable to their own cultures. Their cultures, however, were infused with pagan deities and immorality. Thus strange, idolatrous ways and means became entrenched in the church.

REPLACING THE HEBRAIC HERMENEUTIC

During the same time period, a new school of Bible interpretation developed in Alexandria, Egypt. It was based on the opposite of the accepted Jewish approach to the Scriptures. The traditional Hebraic method of Bible interpretation was a literal, or “literal-historical-grammatical” approach.

The literal methodology is simple. It assumes the words of the Bible

mean what they say. It assumes that because God is Love, He wants to communicate with humanity. Therefore He speaks to us plainly and clearly.

The Alexandrian school, however, gave birth to an “allegorical”, or symbolic approach to the study of Scripture. It assumes the words of the Bible do *not* mean what they say, or say what they mean, for the Bible is mostly an allegory. It assumes that because God is distant, mysterious, and incomprehensible, He does not communicate in a plain manner with humanity. Therefore, whatever He says must mean something other than what we would plainly understand.

According to the allegorical interpretation of the Bible, even words descriptive of concrete reality are symbolic. To illustrate, simple words like “chair,” “book,” or “dog,” do not apply to what we normally identify as a chair, book, or dog. The chair, book or dog are symbolic of something “deeper.”

Similarly, the word “Israel” does not refer to literal, physical, tangible, ethnic Israel. It is a symbol, referring to something else. If the context in which it appears is good, it refers to the church. If the context is not so good, then it must still pertain to the Jews. *Not coincidentally, the city of Alexandria was a bastion of antisemitism when this new hermeneutic developed there.*

THEOLOGY FOR THE HOLOCAUST

By the fourth and fifth centuries, leading and highly esteemed church fathers such as Augustine, Chrysostom, Jerome, Eusebius, Tertullian and Justin Martyr successfully propagated the belief the Jews were a rejected,

damned race, a curse on humanity. Avoid all forms of Old Covenant worship and faith, they decried, lest any form of Jewish texture find its way into the fabric of Christianity. To extricate the church as much as possible from its Jewish heritage, a religious calendar was devised ensuring that Christian holidays had nothing to do with their Old Covenant roots. (This explains, for instance, why Good Friday, which fulfilled and took place during Passover, does not coincide today with that feast.)

Replacement doctrine saturated the church. It has affected much more than abstract understanding of God's Word. Eventually the proposition the church had replaced Israel as God's beloved people formed theological justification for the Crusades, Inquisition, pogroms, and Holocaust. A detailed study of this topic is beyond the scope of this book.³⁵ But it is important for the Christian laborer today to be aware of this sordid history.

CHRISTIAN ZIONISM

The Protestant Reformation marked the beginning of a movement toward a more literal interpretation of the Bible. As a result, prophecy pertaining to Israel was again understood as *pertaining to Israel*, eventually giving way to the emergence of a movement known now as Christian Zionism. Christian leaders simply saw the Bible as literally true, and therefore recognized the Jews as God's literal covenant people with a unique prophetic destiny.

Christian Zionists proved instrumental in the restoration of the modern State of Israel. For over 200 years, these Gentile saints prevailed upon fellow churchgoers, governments, and Jewish community leaders, to envision and embark upon a literal return to the Jewish homeland. Their

efforts continued all through the 1900's. We build on them today.

Christian Zionists in this hour will be saints who know who they are in Christ, and embrace their identity. Confident that they partake of the ancient prophetic promises, these Gentile Christian saints also know there remains a literal fulfillment of the promises unique to the Jewish people. They will have no need to replace Israel. Rather, they will persevere until the promises for Israel's survival *and revival* materialize. For if Israel's transgression means riches for the world (the spread of the gospel to all nations) what awesome, unimaginable riches await her national repentance.

LIFE FROM THE DEAD AND ISRAEL'S KEY TO THE KINGDOM

Those riches are described in verse 15 as "life from the dead." When the Jewish nation is saved, the world will experience a profound release of life that practically defies description. Israel's salvation will trigger an explosion of vitality that will propel our planet to new planes of existence. At its climax, this "life from the dead" will invoke the resurrection of deceased humanity—and the Lord's return. The Kingdom of God on earth will come as Jewish hearts are unlocked to the gospel. Israel holds the key to revival the church so longs to see.

An interesting historical parallel exists between the blessing of Israel and God's release of blessing throughout the nations. To illustrate, major moves of the Spirit on the Jewish people in the 20th century alone were consistently linked to Christian revival. With the inception of modern-day Zionism at the turn of the century, came the Azusa Street Revival. When Israel's statehood was declared in 1948, a healing revival broke out in the

U.S. Concomitant with Israel's victory in the Six-Day War of 1967, when the Temple Mount was regained, came the Jesus/charismatic movement. As multitudes of Jews committed to Yeshua in the former Soviet Union in the 1990's, a unique renewal originated in Toronto and visited the church worldwide. To the Jew first, and then to the Gentiles, says Romans 1:16.

ANTIDOTE TO REJECTION: JEWISH JEALOUSY

Salvation has come to the nations to make Israel envious, or according to the King James Version, "to provoke Israel to jealousy."³⁶ One reason, therefore, Gentiles are saved, is to make Israel envious for their own salvation—specifically because God has *not* rejected them.

The Greek word translated "envious" in the NIV or "jealous" in the KJV is *parazeleo*. It derives from the word *para*, meaning "along side" and *zeleo*, which means "hot envy." *Zeleo* is the Greek word from which we get the English "zeal." The Christian is asked to burn for God, next to a Jew! The antidote for Jewish rejection is a church on fire for Yeshua, igniting its Jewish friends with holy love.

Chapter 9 Grafted In

If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either... And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree! I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved...for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.

Romans 11:17-29

The Bible teaches that believing Gentiles have been grafted like wild branches into a Jewish olive tree. When Paul penned this metaphor, it was the practice in Israel to invigorate an olive tree that had ceased to bear fruit by grafting it with wild olive branches. The sap, or life-blood, of the wild olive branches would revive the cultivated tree. Then the original branches would re-commence to bear fruit. Similarly, the wild branches would produce such good and plentiful fruit as would otherwise be impossible.

When Gentiles who have been grafted into a Jewish-rooted faith function as God intended, great fruit will result.

HUMILITY

The essential grafting agent is humility. It is a rare and precious commodity. This is why Paul, by the Holy Spirit, admonishes the Gentile church, “Do not boast,” and “do not be arrogant.” A few paragraphs later, in verse 25, he reiterates, “I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery [about Israel] so that you may not be conceited.” Apparently arrogance, ignorance, and conceit were weeds already threatening to choke the original tree.

ANTISEMITISM

We who intercede and interact with Israel must echo the apostle’s petition to the Christian community. It is increasingly unpopular within certain spheres of Christianity to defend the Jews, Israel, or Zionism. Arab world pressure—based on oil interests—is tremendous in scope. It has manipulated the mass media into vilifying Israel as a modern “Goliath” relentlessly bullying a Palestinian “David.” That pressure is reaching into the recesses even of the church. That pressure, aided by the forces of globalization and liberal humanism, is bound to increase.

Recently it has become politically expedient to re-define the term “antisemitism.” “It is not the Jewish people we are against,” some say, “it is the Jewish State.” In their next breath, Israel is blamed for bringing the world to the brink of war. The international Jewish community calls this “the new antisemitism,” for it really breeds on Jew hatred.

Antisemitism is a posturing of the heart against, and in opposition to, the Jewish people. *Webster's Dictionary, 10th Edition*, defines it as "hostility toward, or discrimination against, Jews as a religion, ethnic, or racial group." Thus to be anti-Israel, or anti-the Jewish nation, is to be anti-Jewish. (Though it is certainly not antisemitic to disagree with Israel on specific, even many, issues or policies.)

ANTISEMITIC, ANTI-CHRIST

Antisemitism is actually much more than a Jewish or Israeli matter. A spirit of antisemitism is always associated with a spirit of anti-Christ. Antisemitism proves inherently anti-Christian because Christ was Semitic (Jewish). He now exists in the glorified body of a Semite (Jew). Christ is *for* the Jewish people; so, to be *against* them is to be against *Him*.

In addition, antisemitism is anti-Christian because *true* Judaism and *true* Christianity are really one and the same true faith in the One True God. The devil is well aware of this. If the Jewish people and nation are annihilated, so will be the kingdom of God on earth. For when Christ returns, it *must* be to the Jewish nation, at the behest of the Jewish people.³⁷ Hell's schemes have always been aimed at thwarting this event. The devil knows the Lord's return will result in his demise. Thus, antisemitism is as demonic as anti-Christ.

FULLNESS OF THE GENTILES

The knowledge of the truth, the Word of God, wars against that which is opposed to Him. Ignorance of the Word too easily provides fertile soil in which arrogance or conceit takes root and sprouts bad fruit. Therefore, Romans 11:25 again exhorts us not to be ignorant. Specifically, the Scripture

now tells us, “Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.”

Unfortunately, the very thing we’re cautioned about *not* to be ignorant, has to a large extent escaped our understanding. Partly, this is due to recent mistranslations from the Greek language. The Greek word translated “full number” in verse 25 is *pleuroma*. *Pleuroma* appears elsewhere in the New Covenant, actually in the same chapter, but is translated “fullness” rather than “full number.” There seems to be no reason not to use “fullness” in verse 25, other than the theological framework or bias of the translators.

Thankfully, less contemporary translations employ the word “fullness” in verse 25. The King James version reads: “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, *until the fullness of the Gentiles* be come in.”

The focus on “full number” vs. “fullness” may seem minor, but it really is quite significant. Very practical consequences hinge on the interpretation of this word. If the correct translation is indeed “full number,” then Israel’s resistance to the gospel will only cease once the full number of Gentiles is saved. When that last Gentile appointed for the kingdom comes to faith in Christ, then and only then, will Jewish spiritual hardness and blindness be removed. This is the understanding of much of the Western church. And for this very reason, many Christians feel it against God’s present purposes to evangelize the Jewish people.

On the other hand, if the correct translation is “fullness,” then Jewish resistance to the gospel is related not to any pre-determined *quantity* of Gentile believers, but to their *quality* of Christianity. A simple but sufficient understanding of the “fullness” of the Gentiles is gained by equating “fullness” with “Spirit-fullness.” Or put another way, “fullness” is that quality of mature Christ-likeness in the believer that will provoke Israel to envy for relationship with her Messiah.

Grasp the impact the “fullness of the Gentiles” will have on the Jewish people. It will open the door to their salvation. Be propelled toward maturity for the sake of winning the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Today is the day—*their day*—of salvation. Remember, Israel’s hardening or blindness is only *in part*. There has always been a faithful remnant of those who love Him and are called according to His purposes.

ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED

God says in verse 26 that *all* Israel will be saved. Bible scholars debate over the precise meaning of this prophetic declaration. Most postulate that the national Jewish leaders as a whole, who are alive at the time, together with the majority of then-living Jews, will come to faith in Yeshua and be saved. There is not much basis for a belief that all Jews or all Israelis who ever lived will be saved. Jews are saved the same as Gentiles, by grace through faith in Jesus the Messiah. In any event, at some future point, all Israel will be saved!

IRREVOCABLE GIFTS AND CALL

Verse 29 continues on to explain the gifts and call of God are irrevocable. The church is fond of this verse, and for good reason. It is

comforting to know God does not change His mind like we do. He is consistent in His integrity and faithfulness. Therefore, He has not revoked, neither has Israel relinquished, her gifts and call. They are irrevocable.

Israel *will* realize all of her gifts. She *will* fulfill her call. These events will not transpire *completely* until the Lord returns. But as that day approaches, Israel will increasingly reveal her divine anointing, *ushering in the greatest revival on earth*. Witness this phenomenon of the mounting manifestation of the kingdom of God on earth as we approach the day of His return. Watch and pray. Be energized by the Spirit to labor in the ripe fields of end-times Messianic Jewish revival.

Chapter 10

To God be the Glory

For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all. Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Romans 11:32-36

Paul's discourse on the relationship of Israel and the church closes with a sweeping adoration of Creator God. No one else could Mastermind this grand display of redemption, this triumph of Divine Grace.

Israel's election is based on nothing of her own doing or being. Her post-election disobedience leaves her no better off than the rest of the nations. Israel is saved only by redemptive grace. Gentiles are saved out of disobedience only by redemptive grace. God has designed a great symmetry and reciprocity between His covenant peoples that reflects the beauty of His redemptive mercy.

This earth resounds the call of Redemption. Our spirits soar as we peer into the telescopic lens of the ways of the infinite Almighty. The revelation of Jewish destiny vis-à-vis the nations evokes nothing less than high praise and majestic worship. We capture a hint as to why The Holy One would pick a sorry heel-catcher like Jacob through whom to

demonstrate to the hosts of the Universe His sovereign glory forever and ever.

It is this picture of Sovereign Glory that must be imprinted upon those of us involved in ministry to Israel. The picture is so much bigger than Israel. The picture is much bigger even than the church. *The picture is about God.*

As our eyes fix on His resplendent beauty, our souls anchor into Him. We know how history, His story, will end. The end is the beginning, which inspires us on, and on, and on. . . .

Chapter 11

Bible Prophecy in the Paper

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship.

Romans 12:1

At the beginning of this book we saw how God's plan for Israel is framed, at the outset, with an affirmation of His everlasting love. The closing framework of Romans 9-11 presents an exhortation to sacrificial service. In view of God's mercy made manifest through Israel and the church--*therefore*, in this context, offer yourselves to Him in sacrificial service!

How can the church serve God by serving Israel? First, as we have seen, individual Christians will apprehend biblical principles about the Jewish people and nation. When we know how God relates to Israel, then we know, at least in general principle, how we must relate to her.

Circumstances are, and will continue, to rapidly change concerning Israel. As specific situations evolve, so will the church's appropriate, called-for responses. But undergirding each response must be the firm foundation of the Word of God. To repeat for a final time: prayer and other practical means of support and assistance to Israel and the Jewish people must be predicated on the Bible.

WEIGHING PROPHECY

In a sense, the daily newspaper—*if* it reports accurately—might serve

as the next best commentary on Bible prophecy other than the Bible itself. We are living in times of intense spiritual activity. Scholars of Bible prophecy, as well as contemporary prophetic commentators, have much to say about Israel. Unfortunately, contradictory interpretations and predictions abound, with a dearth of accuracy. Might God's people confuse matters about Messiah's second coming the same way they did about his first?

Most Israeli Messianic Jewish leaders agree that, precisely *how* the facts will be played out in these last days has been largely hidden from us so far. They suggest that prophetic comment coming from other countries about Israel be taken with some caution. I personally believe perspectives both from within and outside the Land are helpful. Bearing all this in mind, I would suggest the following considerations toward an appropriate Christian response to events in Israel, as of the date of this writing.

PSALM 83

Psalm 83 lists a host of nations united for one reason: Israel's destruction. It represents a political alignment that seems not to have previously taken place. The people groups named in the psalm, however, can be traced to the nations now taking active aim against the Jewish State.³⁸ Psalm 83 bespeaks what lies not far ahead, and Israel's present war of attrition may comprise the "birth pangs" of its fulfillment.³⁹

Note that Psalm 83 is imprecatory in nature, *ie.*, it calls for God to take action against His enemies. But the psalm does not ultimately key in on destruction. Its final verse reflects God's true and love-motivated purpose for the nations involved: "*Let them know that you, whose name is the Lord—that you alone are the Most High over all the earth.*"

Even when God fights against Israel's enemies, His overriding goal is to glorify Himself over all the earth. He does not delight in the death of the wicked. But He will defeat their false gods. How else will they know He—and *only* He—is the Lord? For this reason alone—though there are others—Islam cannot ultimately triumph. Yahweh will magnify Himself and save not only the Jews, but the elect from among the Muslims, and all nations on earth.

THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE

War is on the horizon. Israelis feel escalated military confrontation is inevitable if they are to hold on to the borders they presently possess. Yet if these borders are relinquished, instead of producing peace, the world will have on its hands just one more terrorist state. In either case, the Jews will be blamed; they can't win for losing.

Interestingly, in 2001, Israeli rabbis decreed the nation had entered into the biblically prophetic “time of Jacob's trouble.”⁴⁰ They called for daily prayer and supplication. This ongoing prayer campaign is termed “Operation Shield of David.” The rabbis, though not regenerate believers, know that only prayer can form the ultimate shield.

THE DAYS OF ZECHARIAH AND EZEKIEL

The prophet Zechariah describes a day in which the Lord makes Jerusalem a “cup of trembling” to the nations surrounding her, and an “immovable rock” to all peoples. They gather to fight against the beleaguered city in a manner sounding more than just a little like today.

According to Zechariah 12-14, the Lord intervenes dramatically on

Israel's behalf, defending His Name and His people, and a great revival breaks out. The Jews worship Yeshua as Messiah. A fountain of blessing in Jerusalem opens up for all nations; the Messianic Age begins. I believe Israel is experiencing "first foreshocks" concerning these awesome, cataclysmic events foretold by Zechariah.

The book of Ezekiel further describes a future Mideast war in chapters 38-39. Pointing to armies invading Israel from the north of Israel, Ezekiel appears to warn of a military alliance of Islamic states. This coalition ostensibly includes not only the Arab world, but former Soviet republics as well. The formidable front proves unsuccessful when Yahweh steps in and miraculously delivers the Jewish State. However, the devastation will be horrific, and should wrench our hearts enough to propel us to action now.

WORLDWIDE ANTISEMITISM

Tragically, future attack will be aimed at Jews worldwide, not just in Israel. Antisemitism in its worst and murderous form will eventually sweep the globe. God will use this persecution to gather more and more Jews to Israel from around the earth, but many will never safely make it. The true church will be used to shield, shelter, and even lay their lives down to protect Jewish refugees throughout the nations. A test of love is coming to the Christian church on a scale as never before.

A more thorough discussion on eschatology, though relevant, is beyond the scope of this book.⁴¹ It is enough for now to say that severe trials are ahead. But so is revival!

AS YOU DO TO ISRAEL, IT IS DONE TO YOU

God's succinct purpose and prayer plan for times such as these may be hidden in the little one-chapter book of Obadiah. The prophet Obadiah echoes numerous narrative accounts in the Bible, in which nations are judged according to how they treat Israel. Even those nations that remain neutral and simply stand by while Israel is attacked are judged as her enemies! Israel is a testing ground. How the nations treat her reflects to an extent how they would treat God Himself. A wise nation will take heed.

Please read carefully Obadiah's warning in verses 10-15: "Because of the violence against your brother Jacob, you will be covered with shame; you will be destroyed forever. On the day you stood aloof while strangers carried off his wealth and foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them. You should not look down on your brother in the day of his misfortune...nor boast so much in the day of their trouble...The day of the Lord is near for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head." (Emphases added.)

The Living Bible makes matters even clearer. Verses 15 and 11 read, respectively, *"As you have done to Israel, so it will be done to you. Your deeds will boomerang upon your own heads. For you deserted Israel in his time of need. You stood aloof, refusing to lift a finger to help him when invaders carried off his wealth and divided Jerusalem among them. You were as one of his enemies."* (Emphasis added.)

Most Bible translations use the phrase "stood aloof" to describe the offending nation's reaction to Israel's calamity. The Hebrew word translated

“stood” or “stand” is *amad*. This word *amad* is used in the Scriptures to mean the positioning of oneself figuratively, such as standing for truth, or taking a stand for or against a certain cause. So the phrase “stood aloof” here refers to a position of intentional abstention from positive action. In simpler language, it means to distance oneself. The application today is obvious—and ominous.

We must pray that our leaders, both spiritual and secular, not stand aloof from Israel! The church must not stand aloof from her, and in particular, must minister to her spiritual as well as tangible needs. Remember the key connection: “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; may those who love you *be secure*.”⁴²

REAP GORY OR GLORY

A full examination of the geopolitical conflict in Israel is beyond the scope of this book. It is sufficient to say that Israel’s hands have been tied, so to speak, by foreign powers, preventing her from defending herself against the terror of her enemies. This has been the sad fact of her modern existence. But God will not be mocked; that which is sown is reaped.

If the nations of the world, of which the United States is prime mover, had let Israel respond appropriately to its terrorist enemies decades ago, would we now be reaping the terror that presently abounds? And if the church had biblically stood in the gap for Israel, would our political leaders have made the choices they have? ... Is it too late to change our course? ... No, God waits in the wings, so to speak, so step in and deliver those who call humbly on His name and who walk in His ways.

Those that bless Israel will be blessed.⁴³ For the nations' own sake, may they stand with, not against or aloof from, Israel. For their and Zion's sake, we must not keep silent; for Jerusalem's sake we must not remain quiet, till her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch. "You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth."⁴⁴ For then the Kingdom of heaven has come to earth.

PRAYER POINTS

A host of more specific, situation-oriented prayer points pertaining to Israel's issues of the hour still remains. These are summarized—and admittedly oversimplified—in the remaining paragraphs below. They are listed by broad categories, as complex details will inevitably vary according to changing circumstances. As you pray be led of the Spirit, and when possible, consider fasting.

(1) *Salvation for Israel, Jews and Arabs.* Remember, this is always the burden of the Spirit. Pray for the gift of a spirit of grace and supplication unto repentance, that God alone be worshiped in Israel.

(2) *Israel's Leaders.* Pray that Israel's leaders would be men and women chosen by God, protected, and anointed by the Holy Spirit. Ask they be given wisdom, and a gift of the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom. Pray they be shielded from the riptides of man-pleasing, rather than God-pleasing, politics. Pray against the extreme political disunity that plagues Israel.

(3) *Physical Protection from Attack.* Petition for God's protection

and posting of warrior angels all along Israel's borders. Pray specifically for the empowering of angelic hosts assigned to protect the Jewish people.⁴⁵ Pray that the schemes of Israel's enemies be exposed and thwarted. Ask God to confuse her enemies and their communications. Undergird in particular the children, the Israeli Defense Forces, and Christian Arabs, with intercessory prayer.

(4) *Communications Media*. Pray for integrity and accuracy in news reports about Israel. Ask God to raise up truth and righteousness in the news media, and replace those networks unwilling to reform. Bless recent efforts undertaken by Jews and/or Christians to counteract hateful lies and Muslim propaganda, and communicate the truth.

(5) *Messianic Jews*. Pray for those who are members of the household of faith. Ask that they be blessed, strengthened and matured in all aspects of life. Pray they be given favor with the larger Jewish community. Offer practical help. Ask the Lord to grow and release them fully in their irrevocable gifts and calling for this hour. Invite them to speak in your church community. Support their ministries.

(6) *Jewish-Arab Reconciliation in Messiah*. Pray forth this necessary first step toward God's solution to the Palestinian issue and Muslim *jihād*. Pray that together Jewish and Arab believers would present a bold testimony of the healing power of salvation. Pray for the demonic stronghold of Islam to collapse. Ask God to intervene in the war in Iraq to topple demonic death-grips and set multitudes free in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(7) *Your Nation*. Intercede in particular for your nation and governmental leaders as they formulate foreign policy concerning Israel. Pray for other nations, *especially the United States*, as they seek to influence her as well.

(8) *The Christian Church*. Ask the Lord to convict and mobilize the church at large to actively and intelligently stand with the Jewish people. Ask Him specifically how *you* can help.

BE PRO-ACTIVE

Besides pray, there is much Christians can do for Israel. We can contact our denominational leaders, elected officials and local media, voicing our concern and mustering the support of others. We can obtain accurate news sources about Israel (*e.g., The Jerusalem Post*, online at www.jpost.com, which also provides excellent links). We can contact synagogues (including Messianic) and other Jewish organizations, and ask them how we can lend support to local pro-Israel activities. We can donate time, money and energy to various ministries and organizations, all easily ascertainable through the Internet.

Prepare now to save Jewish lives in the not-too-distant future. Eventually, Israel will be seen as the stumbling block to world peace and Arab (oil) appeasement. In effect, all the nations will turn their backs on Israel and the Jewish people. Antisemitism will mount vehemently to global proportions. Ask God to show you how to shelter Jews, facilitate their escape to Israel, and show them Jesus.

Last but not least, and while it is still possible, visit Israel if that is

within your means. The plunge in tourism due to terrorism is crushing not only Israel's economy. It is devastating to her sense of friendship with outsiders as well. There is no substitute for an ongoing Christian presence in the Land. Never underestimate the impact of literally taking a stand in Israel.

THE FRAMEWORK OF SERVICE

As circumstances evolve, God will give wisdom and release new strategies for building bridges with the Jewish people. They will be bridges cemented by sincere and sacrificial, holy love. Israel has laid her collective life down over the millennia as God's chosen people. It is time now for the church to lay down its life for her. *Therefore, in view of God's mercy, offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual worship.*

EPILOGUE

*Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her;
rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her.*

Isaiah 66:10

BE ENCOURAGED FOR THE JOY AHEAD

“Then you [Israel] will say in your heart, 'Who bore me these? I was bereaved and barren; I was exiled and rejected. Who brought these up? I was left all alone but these--where have they come from?' This is what the Sovereign Lord says: See, I will beckon to the Gentiles, I will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders. . . . Then you will know that I am the Lord; those who hope in me will not be disappointed.”⁴⁶

“Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you....You will drink the milk of nations...Then you will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”⁴⁷

“May the Lord bless *you* from Zion all the days of your life; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem, and may you live to see your children's children. *Peace be upon Israel.*”⁴⁸

Postscript

Sandra Teplinsky's forthcoming book, an in-depth Messianic Jewish perspective on the prophetic Scriptures about God's heart and call to Israel and the Church, is scheduled for release by Chosen Books in 2004.

NOTES

1. Proverbs 16:22
2. James 5:16
3. 1 Corinthians 13:13
4. Matthew 23:37
5. Isaiah 49:6
6. Exodus 4:22-23
7. Genesis 49:3; Exodus 13:2; *cf.*, Isaiah 61:7
8. Romans 11:15
9. Matthew 23:39
10. Genesis 12:1-3; 15:17-21; 17:4-8, Jeremiah 31:35-36
11. Isaiah 62:7
12. Ezekiel chapters 40-48, especially 43:7, 44:15-16, 23; Zechariah chapters 12-14; Isaiah 2:1-5
13. Exodus 34:7
14. Genesis 15:8-18, 17:19, 26:3, 28:13
15. Genesis 17:18-19
16. Genesis 25:23, 28:13

17. Genesis 16:10-12

18. *cf.*, Hebrews 12:15-17

19. For a thorough and well-documented discussion, see Netanyahu, Benjamin, *A Durable Peace: Israel and Its Place Among the Nations*, New York, NY: Warner Books, 2000.

20. Ezekiel 35:3-5, 10-12; 36:2-5; Jeremiah 50:4-6, 11, 18-19; Isaiah 13:19-14:2; Psalm 83

21. Isaiah 19:23, 25

22. An estimated 1 million ex-Soviet Jews have emigrated to Israel in the past decade.

23. John 14:6

24. Romans 1:16

25. Deuteronomy 30:1-4, Nehemiah 1:8-9

26. Matthew 5:17

27. Matthew 5:19

28. Matthew 13:52

29.2 Timothy 3:16

30. *cf.*, Psalm 119:97, 113, 163

31. This exciting phenomenon is described in detail in my book, *Out of the Darkness: The Untold Story of Jewish Revival in the Former Soviet Union*, Jacksonville Beach, FL: HOIM Publishing, 1998.

32.Ephesians 2:15

33.Galatians 6:10, emphasis added.

34.Jeremiah 30:17, emphasis added.

35.For an excellent study on antisemitism in the Christian church, see Brown, Michael L., *Our Hands Are Stained With Blood: The Tragic Story of the Church and the Jewish People*, Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Books, 1992.

36.Romans 11:11

37.Matthew 23:39

38.For a good discussion on this matter, see Dolan, David, *Israel in Crisis: What Lies Ahead?* Colorado Springs, CO: Oracle House Publishers, 2001.

39.Matthew 24:8

40.Jeremiah 30:7

41.For more on eschatology, see Walvoord, John F., *Israel in Prophecy*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962; Hess, Tom, *Let My People Go: The Struggle of the Jewish People to Return to Israel*, Washington, DC: Progressive Vision, 1988; Price, Randall, *Jerusalem in Prophecy: God's Stage for the Final Drama*, Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1998.

42.Psalm 122:6, emphasis added.

43.Genesis 12:3

44.Isaiah 62:1,7

45. Daniel 12:1

46. Isaiah 49:21-23

47. Isaiah 60:10,16

48. Psalm 128:6, emphasis added.