

The Chosen People



June 2015
Volume XXI, Issue 5

WILL AMERICA STAND BY ISRAEL?

INSIDE: God's Purpose for the Jewish People • An Enduring Partnership
• Jerusalem: The Capital of Messiah's Kingdom—Study of Isaiah 60

A Brief Overview of God's Plan and God's Purpose for the Jewish People



Dear friend,

Support for Israel and the Jewish people is wavering among many Christians today.

This is too bad, because for the first time in recent history, Jewish attitudes towards Christians and the Gospel are changing—for the better! Many Jewish people, including some of my own not-yet-believing family

members, now understand that true Christians are the best friends of the Jewish people. One of my family members told me the other day that he was surprised to find out how many Christians support Israel, hate antisemitism and love the Jewish people!

This is really good news for Jewish evangelism as my people are beginning to have a more positive view of Jesus and His followers. So, it is critical that we encourage believers in Jesus to stand with Israel—for the right reasons.

For many years, there was strong support for the Jewish people, especially in light of the Holocaust and all the excitement surrounding the formation of the modern state of Israel. But, our younger generation did not live through these events. This is why we need to understand what the Bible has to say about God's plan and purposes for the Jewish people and the nation of Israel.

So, take a moment with me now to examine the role of the Jewish people in the plan of God and especially how the Jewish people will play a critical role in the return of Christ and establishment of the Kingdom. For if the Jewish people do not play a role in God's plan, then why would Jewish evangelism be important? After all, there are only 15 million Jewish people in the world.

However, if God's mighty hand still rests upon the Jewish people, then reaching Israel for the

Messiah Jesus takes on a new and strategic spiritual importance.

The Apostle Paul understood the ongoing role of Israel in God's plan of redemption when he penned these words,

For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? (Rom. 11:15)

The future of Israel and the Jewish people is bright, but we must understand the very foundation of God's promises to understand why this is true.

The Promise (Genesis 12:1-3)

Let's begin by looking at the key biblical promise which outlines God's plan for the Jewish people found in Genesis 12:1-3, often called the Abrahamic Covenant, as we can only begin to understand God's plan and purposes for the Jewish people by understanding the nature of this covenant.

I divide the passage into two parts.

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3).

God makes a total of eight promises to Abram. In verses 1-2,

God told Abram he would be given a land, become a great nation, that he would be personally blessed and his name made great and finally that he would be a blessing to others.

In verse 3 there are three additional promises to the Gentiles.

FIRST OF ALL, those who are not physical descendants of Abram will experience God's blessing—for blessing Abram and his children.

SECONDLY, those who curse the descendants of Abram would themselves be cursed. It is important to note that the Hebrew word used for *curse* in the first instance literally means, "to make light." The second word, translated curse refers to the usual term for judgment often used in both Deuteronomy 28 and



Leviticus 26. The play on words should not be missed. Those who devalue or make light of Israel's role in the plan of God or somehow demean the role of the Jewish people will then actually experience the very same curse God promised to the Jewish people that they would receive for disobedience to the Torah.



THIRDLY, God would use the Jewish people to bring blessings to the world.

This elevates the importance of properly understanding what it means for the Jewish people to be chosen by God for His purposes. It is a serious issue for Jewish people who are themselves chosen, but also important for non-Jews as this passage describes the ongoing benefits and repercussions from the way in which Gentiles treat the Jewish people.

An Unconditional Covenant (Genesis 12:3)

The covenant is unconditional as there are no time limits or conditions tagged to the promise.

It would be easiest within our space constraints to focus on two of the promises.

I. The First Promise: A People

God miraculously created a people from the aged loins of Abraham and Sarah. If Israel is anything at its core, it is a people, or community, bound by ethnicity and covenantal purpose.

Fundamentally, to be Jewish is to be part of a people that God created for His holy purposes. We are a community — created by God for Him and for one another. God has promised He would preserve His people until those purposes were fulfilled. The Bible makes it clear the Jewish people have not been destroyed because God will not be diverted from fulfilling His plan for the chosen people and for the world.

II. The Second Promise: The Land

Clearly, the Jewish people are not the only group of people that has been dispersed from its national boundaries, but the Jewish people may be the only people created as a nation prior to receiving their national boundaries. It is important to understand that God chose Israel before they emerged on the international scene as a nation. In fact, Israel had no prior existence before the Abrahamic Covenant and would have had no existence outside of the direct intervention of the One who

created the heavens and the earth, determined the boundaries of nations and holds the hearts of the kings of nations in His powerful hand.

We should not think it odd at all that in the midst of creating the Jewish people as a nation,

and all of the unique and special revelation this included, that God would also literally determine the specific boundaries of Israel's national existence in Genesis 15:17-21, and these boundaries have yet to be fulfilled!

And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates — the Kenites and the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites."

It is also important to remember this land deed passes from Abraham to his son and grandson, Isaac and Jacob, as noted in many passages, but Genesis 35:9-12 is a good summary of God's unfolding plan and promises to the descendants of Abraham.

Then God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Paddan Aram, and blessed him. And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name." So He called his name Israel. Also God said to him: "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. The land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I will give this land."

The Fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant

Yet, these promises of nationhood and of a land created for that nation only become spiritually meaningful in light of God's promise to bless, use and enter into a relationship with the people He created through Abraham and Sarah.

The promised spiritual restoration of the Jewish people is the key that unlocks the fulfillment of God's promises.

It is God Himself who will one day take responsibility for spiritually re-engaging His *wayward* chosen people. This was promised even before the Jewish people entered the Promised Land for the very first time.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN ZIONISTS – AN ENDURING PARTNERSHIP

The relationship of Jewish and Christian Zionists predates even the First Zionist Congress held in Basel, Switzerland in 1897. It was given a tremendous boost by the unlikely friendship between Theodor Herzl (1860-1904) and William Hechler (1845-1931), chaplain to the British Embassy in Vienna and author of *The Restoration of the Jews to Palestine According to Prophecy* (1882). Hechler, a devout Christian, was born in India, the son of a missionary. A member of the Church of England, he was also a member of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity Among the Jews. Hechler's relationships with influential politicians were extensive.

In March of 1896, convinced that his unique network of contacts had groomed him for just such a moment, Hechler paid Herzl a visit and placed himself and what contacts he could access at the disposal of the somewhat astounded Zionist leader. Hechler became an active emissary on Herzl's behalf. In the brief time that they knew each other, owing to Herzl's early death, Hechler and Herzl developed a genuine friendship. Not only did Herzl extend Hechler the courtesy of allowing him to address the Zionist Congress, but apart from family members, Hechler was the last person to visit Herzl at his deathbed.

In the United States, the formation of the Zionist Organization in 1897 was followed closely by the creation of the Federation of American Zionists (renamed the Zionist Organization of America in 1917). The Zionist cause gained much needed additional influence in America as a political force largely through the efforts of William Blackstone (1841-1935), an energetic missionary who in the 1880s had helped to establish Chicago's Moody Bible Institute and was founder and president of the Chicago Hebrew Mission. Blackstone was also known as the creator of two widely circulated petitions, known as memorials, in

support of a Jewish homeland in what was then known as Palestine. The first, in 1891, had been presented to President Benjamin Harrison and the second, in 1916, reached the desk of President Woodrow Wilson.

In a letter penned May 8, 1916, by the widely respected philanthropist Nathan Straus, founder of the R.H. Macy department store, Straus forwarded the profuse thanks of Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, one of the most important leaders in the Zionist movement in America. Praising Blackstone in glowing words, the letter said,

Mr. Brandeis is perfectly infatuated with the work you have done along the lines of Zionism. It would have done your heart good to have heard him assert what a valuable contribution to the cause your document is. In fact he agrees with me that you are the Father of Zionism, as your work antedates Herzl.

A familiar figure at Zionist gatherings, Blackstone modestly referred to himself as "a stranger and a Gentile" who, as he addressed a Zionist meeting on January 27, 1918, declared,

I wish all of you Gentiles were true Israelites in your religious life, and I wish all of you Jews were true Christians. I am and for over thirty years have been an ardent advocate for Zionism. This is because I believe that true Zionism is founded on the plan, purpose, and fiat of the everlasting and omnipotent God, as prophetically recorded in His Holy Word, the Bible.

Indeed, the connection between Jewish and Christian Zionists was established early and has certainly proven to be enduring.

Franklin Graham: "I support Israel not only because I worship a Jew, but because of what the Bible says about Israel and the future of Israel." (Speaking at a solidarity event at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, DC, 2014)



And there you will serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and all your soul. When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the Lord your God and obey His voice (for the Lord your God is a merciful God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them (Deut. 4:28-31).

This end-time repentance and turning of the Jewish people to the Messiah is fundamental to their once again being blessed by God and being used by Him to fulfill the purposes for which Israel was created and chosen.

This end-time turning of the Jewish remnant to Yeshua (Jesus) is further described by the prophet in Zechariah 12:10.

And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

At that time, the Jewish people will become the Israel God always intended and receive the fullness of covenantal blessings promised to our forefather Abraham. The Jewish people will then be characterized by *shalom* as they will have peace as a people: peace in

President Harry Truman: "I had faith in Israel before it was established, I have faith in it now. I believe it has a glorious future before it—not just another sovereign nation, but as an embodiment of the great ideals of our civilization." (As quoted by the Jewish Virtual Library)

the land of promise, peace with the God who made the promises and peace among the nations to whom they were called to shine the light of God's presence and commands.

The Apostle Paul confirms that the Abrahamic Covenant will be fulfilled one day—future to our

present day in fact! He writes,

Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! (Rom. 11:12)

Conclusion: The Response of Believers to God's Plan and Purposes for Israel

The Church in general, and especially Gentile believers, should understand the significant role non-Jews have in God's plan as founded on the Abrahamic promises. Gentiles are participants in the Abrahamic Covenant in that they are spiritual descendants of Abraham (Gal. 3:6-9). This does not mean that Gentiles become Jews upon receiving Yeshua as this is passed through

physical lineage beginning with the patriarchs. However, Gentiles do become the spiritual sons and daughters of Abraham by faith as God's blessings have come to "those far off" (Eph. 2:11-13) through the mediation of the Jewish Messiah.

The Abrahamic Covenant implies at least two major responsibilities non-Jewish believers in Jesus have towards the Messianic Jewish community and to the Jewish people in general.

First of all, the Church, knowing God's covenantal faithfulness, must support the Jewish people and pray for the Jewish people.

Secondly, the Church must accept the mandate found in Romans 1:16 and 11:11 and bring the Gospel to the Jew first by making the Jewish people jealous. We cannot allow Jewish evangelism to become the great omission of the Great Commission.

Together then, Messianic Jews and Gentile followers of Yeshua, bound together through the Messiah and the Abrahamic Covenant, must work together as partners with God in progressing towards this great day of covenantal fulfillment.

I hope you enjoy the remainder of the newsletter. I know you will especially enjoy some of the great statements by Christian and political leaders regarding Israel, the Jewish people and the promises of God. I pray that we may all recognize the role God has given to the Jewish people today!

Your brother,


Mitch

SEE THE BIBLE THROUGH JEWISH EYES

BY DANIEL GOLDBERG, TH.D., D.D.



Dr. Goldberg serves as International Ministries Representative for Chosen People Ministries and lives in Pineville, North Carolina with his wife, Madeline.

JERUSALEM: THE CAPITAL OF MESSIAH'S GLORIOUS COMING KINGDOM Isaiah 60

Isaiah 60 describes the everlasting glory of the New Jerusalem. A new day will dawn for Israel when the glory of God will shine on the city destined to be the capital of a new world. Messiah Himself will return to earth in answer to His people's prayer, "*Thy kingdom come...*" (Matt. 6:10). What will this mean to the waiting world?

A NEW BEGINNING FOR ISRAEL AND ALL THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD ISAIAH 60:1-5

After the days of the Tribulation, darkness will envelop the earth, according to Isaiah 60:2-3 and the words of the Messiah in Matthew 24:29. Then suddenly, the sign of the Son of Man will lighten the entire earth. Messiah will return to the exact place from which He departed, with power and great glory (Isa. 60:2; Acts 1:10-11).

Zion, the mother city, will lift up her eyes and see all her sons and daughters returning from every corner of the globe (Isa. 60:3-5).

THE REGATHERING OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE ISAIAH 60:4-9

Isaiah describes in some detail the homage that Gentiles will pay to

Israel. While many commentators incorrectly put the Church into the scene, we have here a description of ships bringing back the sons and daughters of Israel from many distant lands.

Gentiles will not only give their wealth, but will also function as servants for Israel in that coming age (compare Isa. 60:11 with Zech. 14:16 and Rev. 21:24-25). In fact, the very welfare of Gentile nations in that day will depend upon their submission to Israel (Isa. 60:12; Zech. 10:1; 14:17).

Israel in her days of sinful rebellion was a byword to the nations. But in this anticipated "Day of the Lord," the nations will refer to Jerusalem as "the city of the Lord" and "the Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 60:14).

A DESCRIPTION OF THE COMING GLORIFIED CITY OF JERUSALEM ISAIAH 60:12-22

In the remainder of Isaiah 60, we have a description of Jerusalem in the coming days of Messiah's rule upon the earth. Israel's prosperity is comparable to the time of Solomon's reign. Both injustice and discontent will disappear.

Isaiah 60:12 is an amazing text describing the future nature of Jewish-Gentile relations, stating, "*for the nations and kingdoms that do not serve you will perish...*".

Whereas Zion has been hated and forsaken by the nations in the past, her future will be celebrated. Gold will be utilized in the manner bronze is presently (Isa. 60:17), and people will call her walls "salvation" and her "gates" praise (Isa. 60:17-18).

The sun shall not strike the New Jerusalem by day, neither the moonlight by night, for the Lord Himself will be her everlasting light and the God of Israel will be her glory (Isa. 60:19-20).

CONCLUSION

Isaiah 60 assures us that astronomical moral and economic changes are in store for this earth. When the Lord works His sovereign purposes described in these prophecies, Israel will be a witness of His power and majesty to the entire world.

Your own future is at stake as well. If you want a share in the glorious future foretold in God's Word, you must place your trust in the only God and Savior, namely, the Messiah Jesus (Jn. 3:16-18).

NEWS BRIEFS

JEWISH WOMEN FIND MESSIAH IN THE PASSOVER

We had an enormously busy Passover season, with staff members presenting **Messiah in the Passover** in hundreds of churches around the world. Vladimir Pikman writes about this wonderful fruit of his labors: “We had a couple of Jewish ladies come to a Messiah in the Passover presentation I was privileged to lead. They were sitting in the very first row. When I was explaining how Yeshua (Jesus) initiated the Lord’s Supper with the unleavened bread and the third cup, one of them started crying and could not stop till the end of the presentation. God was at work! Afterwards she came to me saying, ‘Tonight I understood that Jesus is my Messiah!’ Praise the Lord! What a joy!”

NEW LIFE IN MESSIAH AND A NEW WIFE IN SOUTH FLORIDA

Manuel Goffman, who ministers among Spanish-speaking Jews in South Florida, is rejoicing about a new member of Messiah’s Kingdom who came to faith through the witness of Ana,* a health care professional who is a member of the Messianic congregation Manuel leads. Ana bore Gospel witness to a patient she was caring for, Jacobo,* a Hispanic Jew. Jacobo began to attend the congregation with her. After a short time, he received the Lord....and more recently Ana and Jacobo were married.

STREET ARGUMENT LEADS TO GOSPEL DECISION

The bold Gospel witness of our evangelism team in Portland, Oregon, has reaped a harvest in past weeks, with six people coming to faith in Messiah Jesus. One was Kenneth.* Walking downtown to his car after a discipleship meeting, our ministry representative could hear two men arguing rather vocally. As he approached them, one of the men left. Kenneth was extremely nervous and upset, almost in tears. Our representative asked if he would like prayer. Kenneth agreed. The ensuing conversation centered upon Kenneth’s life problems. After hearing a powerful witness and hearing the Gospel, Kenneth received the Lord and is now being discipled.

FOUR FAITH DECISIONS AT ONCE

Anna and Vladimir Bortsov, who serve in the Toronto area, befriended a young man, Ronald,* who recently emigrated from Israel with his wife, Sarah,* and two kids.

As a trusting relationship developed, the Bortsovs shared the Gospel with them. Little by little, Ronald and Sarah opened up to the Lord. Finally, as they gathered together for tea and conversation, Ronald and Sarah made decisions to pray. At that moment the doorbell rang. Another neighbor, Violetta,* dropped in. She began to ask questions, and the Bortsovs explained the Gospel. As they did so, Ronald and Sarah’s twelve-year-old son, Samuel,* who had been sitting on the sofa listening quietly, came to the table and announced that he also wanted to receive the Lord. So did Violetta. Thus four new souls became children of God!

MESSIANIC MINISTRY STRENGTHENED IN FORMER SOVIET UNION

Kirill Polonskiy, our man in Moscow, reports that a Chosen People Ministries’ seminar for leaders of Messianic congregations drew participants from all over Russia, the Crimea, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. He writes, “We had three amazing days of training and communication. Our Mission is the only Messianic organization in Russia doing such seminars for Messianic leaders. We believe that training and equipping of leadership is an essential part of our ministry that will give stability to the local Messianic communities.” The seminar was attended by Alexander Royanov, leader of the Messianic Jewish congregation of Mariupol, Donetsk region, Ukraine. The Messianic community in Mariupol is continuing its ministry there, despite hardships.

“We are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the purchase of our Jerusalem Messianic Center. This beautiful facility in the heart of Jerusalem (only a 20 minute walk from the “Old City”) has been a great blessing to our growing staff in Israel and to the many Jews and Gentiles who have found this Center to be an oasis of spiritual refreshment. The Center serves as the nerve center for our ministries in Israel and hosts Bible studies, outreach events, housing for short-term missions teams and much more. Please continue to think of our Center and staff in Israel when you “pray for the peace of Jerusalem” (Ps.122:6).



* names have been changed

I FOUND SHALOM

We are pleased to announce a new, exciting evangelistic website called "I Found Shalom." This site contains many video testimonies of Jewish believers in Yeshua. These "storytellers" will invite you into their lives, and you will see for yourself, through their eyes and experiences, why they decided to become followers of Yeshua and the profound impact this had on each of them as individuals. You will smile, laugh and at times be moved to tears by these compelling stories.

Please share this website with your Jewish friends and family members!

ifoundshalom.com



2015 President's Israel Tour
OCT 26 - NOV 5

Tour the land of Israel and visit the Jerusalem Messianic Center with Chosen People Ministries President, Dr. Mitch Glaser, and Dr. Rich Freeman, Vice President of Church Ministries and Conferences. Enjoy a spiritual journey through the Holy Land designed to draw you closer to Yeshua and to the Jewish people!

For more information contact Dr. Rich Freeman at rfreeman@chosenpeople.com or call 561-737-1431.

MESSIANIC RESOURCES

The People, the Land and the Future of Israel walks through the Bible's account of the role of Israel and the Jewish people—both now and in the future. An extensive foreword by best-selling author Joel Rosenberg addresses the question, "Will there ever be peace for Israel and her neighbors?" Readers will gain a deeper understanding of both current and future events in the Middle East as described in both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament.

Each chapter offers a profound insight into God's unfolding plan and purpose for the nation of Israel as depicted in Scripture. Chapters are written by Walter Kaiser, Craig Blaising, Michael Brown and many other Bible scholars. Scannable QR codes link to short video introductions by the authors.



Price: \$16.95^{US} • Code: 3159
To order this and other resources, visit www.chosenpeople.com/store or call 800-333-4936



Make sure to stay connected with Chosen People Ministries! "Like" us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter!



The Chosen People Newsletter

Chosen People Ministries has been taking the love of the Messiah to Jewish people worldwide since 1894.

The Chosen People newsletter is published monthly by Chosen People Ministries. For more information or to receive *The Chosen People* newsletter, write to: Chosen People Ministries, International Headquarters, 241 East 51st Street, New York, NY 10022. In Canada, write to: Dufferin-Lawrence PO, Box 58103, Toronto, ON M6A 3C8 (www.chosenpeople.ca). In Great Britain, write to: P.O. Box 47871, Golders Green, London, NW11 1AL (www.chosenpeople.org.uk). In Australia, write to: Celebrate Messiah Australia, P.O. Box 304, Caulfield, South Vic 3162, Australia (www.celebratemesiah.com.au). Contributing Editors: M. Goldstein, R. Goldstein, S. Ilchishin, S. Nassau, N. Parramore, A. Shore; Designer: Lois Gable Ruedinger.

Serving in: Argentina • Australia • Canada • Finland • France • Germany • Hong Kong • Israel • Netherlands • New Zealand • Poland • Russia • South Africa • Ukraine • United Kingdom • United States. Chosen People Ministries U.S. Board of Directors: Mr. Tom McHugh, Chairman • Mr. Kerry Alberti • Mr. Terry Amick • Dr. Richard Averbeck • Dr. Mitch Glaser • Dr. Gregory Hagg • Mrs. Barbara Medlin • Mr. David Schiller, Esq. • Mr. Roy Schwarcz • Mr. Rande Spiegelman, Vice-Chairman

Visit us on the Web at www.chosenpeople.com Our Spanish website is www.pueblolegido.com ©2015 Chosen People Ministries

Printed in the USA

Please remember Chosen People Ministries in your will. "I will bless those who bless you." (Genesis 12:3)

