

Session 4 Biblical Signs of the Times Related to Israel

I. THE END-TIME SCRIPTURES ARE JERUSALEM-CENTRIC

- A. In Scripture, Israel and Jerusalem are the reference point in discerning God’s timetable for His end-time plans. His end-time purpose is *Jerusalem-centric*—His “prophetic calendar” or end-time plans advance particularly related to Israel being in the promised land, living in Jerusalem (under Israel’s jurisdiction) with a functioning temple. The most striking events in prophecy are the return of the Jews to their homeland to reestablish the *state of Israel* and to gain control of *Jerusalem*.

*This is session four of our **Biblical Signs of the Times** course. We are going to look at the most obvious, the most dramatic signs tonight. Those are the signs related to the nation of Israel. Now if you are twenty years old, which many of you are, you are really used to Israel being a nation. For you it is like, “Well, I mean they have always been a nation as far as I can remember.”*

The reestablishing of Israel as a nation is such a dramatic, radical, stunning, convincing sign. It was impossible that it would happen, historically speaking. It has never happened before, anything like it in human history, that a nation would be out of its homeland for even more than one generation, and return back to their land with their language. It was about 2,000 years, not forty years, not fifty years. No nation has ever made it that long and returned to their land, the ancient land, with their ancient language. Israel did it after 2,000 years against all odds. The Lord knew that, and it was declared by the Hebrew prophets, the Old Testament prophets, in advance. We looked at a little bit of this last week when we were giving the brief overview.

Now in Scripture, Israel and Jerusalem in particular are the reference points for God’s end-time plan. Meaning that on divine calendar of events that unfold most of them are tied to the city of Jerusalem and what happens in that city. I like to say—and I have heard it from others; it is not original—that God’s end-time purpose is Jerusalem-centric. Jerusalem is central; it is central to the clock, to the prophetic clock.

The return of the Jews to their homeland is the most striking event in end-time prophecy. Prophecy teachers over the generations have said that. You know for 2,000 years many of them just could not figure out what it meant because it looked like it meant Israel would become a nation. They thought that could not be what it meant.

- B. Many end-time prophecies related to Israel are closely linked to each other and overlap. They include Israel in the land, the re-establishing of Sabbath laws, speaking the Hebrew language, etc.

II. THE REBIRTH OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL AND THE RETURN OF JEWISH PEOPLE

- A. In one day, Israel became a nation on May 14, 1948, and later they gained control of Jerusalem in the Six-Day War (June 1967). No prophetic sign is more dramatic or convincing. The Jews were scattered to the nations in AD 70. Now, 2,000 years later, they are back home.

⁸Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once?...Zion...gave birth to her children. (Isa. 66:8)

⁸In the latter years you [Gog=the Antichrist] will come into the land of those [Israel] brought back ... and gathered from many people [nations] on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely. (Ezek. 38:8)

“In that day...Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place—Jerusalem.” (Zech. 12:6)

It says here in Isaiah 66:8, “Can the earth give birth in one day? Can a nation be born in a day? Has such a thing ever happened?” Well, in one day, May 14th, 1948, Israel was born as a nation. Remarkable. Unheard of. Isaiah lived 2,700 years ago, and he said, “Oh, it is going to happen! You wait and see.”

The Jewish nation was scattered, most of you know, in AD 70. So returning in 1948—that is almost 2,000 years, we’ll just say that as a round number. Look what Ezekiel said, Ezekiel 38:8. He said it too, 2,500 years ago. He said, “In the latter years” or in the end times—he was describing the activity of the Antichrist. I want you to notice the description. Do not think so much about the Antichrist right now but he says—“you are going to go into a land,” and it is a land of the people who have been brought back from many nations. It is a land that had been desolate for a long, long, long time. Look at that.

So what nation was scattered around many nations and desolate for many, many generations and brought back to the land of Israel? Obviously it is Israel. They were brought out of all the nations. You know in Ezekiel’s day they might have said it was about them because they were in Babylonian captivity. But they might also have thought, “To be gathered across nations in what sense? And after a long, long desolation” They would have thought, “Well, you know we are only supposed to be in captivity seventy years.”

Ezekiel said, in effect, “No, there is another dispersion that will last a long, long time, long beyond seventy years.” A land that has been desolate for many generations is the idea.

Zechariah, again about 2,500 years ago, said in essence, if you read the whole context, that in the end of the age Jerusalem shall be re-inhabited. It shall be inhabited again. Now because Jerusalem is a thriving city we think, “Hey, that is cool.”

I like what Mark Twain wrote in 1867. He went to visit Jerusalem in the land of Israel. He said, “The land is desolate.” This was 1867, 150 years ago and about 80 years before Israel was re-established as a nation and 100 years before they gained control of the city of Jerusalem in 1967. So 100 years earlier Mark Twain said that the land was desolate. He said it was full of weeds, that he hardly saw a person anywhere. Hardly had a land been more desolate and empty and barren than this land. Who could have imagined that it would one day be a thriving city at the very center of world attention when it was just a desolate, empty, broken land.

B. ***Returning to the land:*** The Lord said that His people would return to the land. Over one million Russian Jews have moved to Israel since the 1990s. This is unprecedented in the history of Israel.

¹⁴“Therefore behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “that it shall no more be said, ‘The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’¹⁵ but, “The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.’ For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers. (Jer. 16:14-15)

Here in Jeremiah 16—again about 2,500 years ago; I am just giving ballpark numbers—the Lord said that there is going to be a time when Israel would be re-gathered to the land, particularly from the land of the north. They would be re-gathered from all the nations, all the lands around as well as particularly the land of the north. That was maybe a little bit of a strange idea to include in all the details of this. Jeremiah 16:14, “Behold, the days are coming.” This passage is clearly about the end of the age. It had a partial fulfillment in Zerubbabel’s generation, just a little bit, but nothing like in this hour of history at the end of the age.

Verse 14, “‘The days are coming,’ says the Lord, ‘that Israel will not say the Lord lives who delivered us from Egypt under Moses.’” They are not going to talk about the deliverance out of Egypt. I mean that is almost unbelievable, right? I mean I do not want to say it that way, but it is the deliverance out of Egypt, ten plagues, the nation grows dark, boils, frogs, the Red Sea splits, water flows out of a rock, the pillar of cloud guides them, food shows up every morning from heaven. I cannot think of anything more dramatic than that.

Jeremiah said that a day is coming when that deliverance will not be the main thing the nation of Israel talks about. There is another deliverance coming that will overshadow even what Moses did, though that seems inconceivable, if you take the ten plagues seriously, the Red Sea dividing, the food appearing, the water flowing out of a rock for a couple million people. I take it literally. Jeremiah said that a day is coming when they will not reference that deliverance because there is going to be a supernatural deliverance and a bringing up of people from the land of the north. Not only the north. but from all the lands where God has driven them. Thus says the Lord, “I will bring My people back to the land.” Again, for 2,000 years the theologians would say or think, “I do not know if that is really going to happen.”

Well, the fulfillment of this prophecy many scholars say began in the 1990s. A million Jews have returned to—not returned really because they themselves never lived in Israel—came to Israel out of Russia after the Communist wall came down, so to speak. The Iron Curtain was lifted, so to speak, and a million Jews went to Israel from the land of the north. It is going to be more dramatic than that; that is the beginning of this prophecy. A million from Russia went then because they would not let them out before. God opened the door. There is going to be yea a greater deliverance that is more dramatic, that even overshadows what happened in the days of Moses.

My point is that this is a sign of the times, the fact that there are six million of them that have now gathered in the last decades. That is six million, when in 1948 there were less than a million. There were just a few of them in the land compared to now. Again this gathering, this returning of Jewish people to the land is a sign of the time for it has never happened in history like this ever. We can be so used to it that we do not see the Lord’s message in it. What other nation has anything like this happened for them or in their midst?

III. THE TEMPLE, SABBATH LAWS, HEBREW LANGUAGE, AND THE MILITARY

- A. **Temple:** The rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem with animal sacrifices (according to the law of Moses) is at the heart of the prophetic promises and signs regarding Israel in the end times (Mt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-2; 13:12-18; cf. Dan. 9:26-27; 11:31; 12:11).

A sign of the time is this: the Bible makes it clear that the temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt in the generation the Lord returns. They will offer the animal sacrifices like in the days of Moses.

1. The temple in Jerusalem has not existed since it was destroyed in AD 70.

Now the temple was destroyed in AD 70 when the city was destroyed. Today there appears to be no hope of the temple being restored because the Dome of the Rock, the third most sacred site to Islam, is in that place where the temple has to be built. Because the temple has to be built in the exact place it was, but Islam built a temple there, the Dome of the Rock. So they think that if you touch that Dome of the Rock, we got a war, more than a war. God says we will watch it happen anyway. That is, the temple will be rebuilt in its original location is the idea.

Now the animal sacrifices do not lead to salvation. They do not contribute to salvation. As Gentile believers we think, “Animal sacrifices again? That is weird. What?” Their restoration has nothing to do with salvation,

which is only by faith in Jesus. This prophecy is a huge statement concerning Jews returning to their religious heritage. That is not sufficient for salvation, but it is a huge step of Godward thinking in returning to their religious heritage that many have forsaken. It is in that context that the Lord will tell them who the Lamb that is slain is.

Some people get excited about this and start saying there is a different way of salvation through the Jewish sacrifices. No, no, no, no, no! That is just a beginning of a national turning of their awareness to their religious heritage. It is a good step in their turning, but it is insufficient entirely. It has nothing to do with salvation by faith except for them beginning to see the picture of the Lamb slain. The Lord says, "That Lamb is My Son."

2. Today, there is a strong new movement in Israel to rebuild the temple.

Today there is a growing movement to establish the temple right now. They are studying the animal sacrifices because when you read how Moses described them, it is not always so clear. So the scholars are studying it, and there is quite a bit of energy around this subject, and it is recent. Again, for almost 2,000 years there was no conversation about it in any way that anybody could recognize. Now the conversation is building stronger and stronger in the land.

That is a sign of the times, the very fact of this energy and this awareness to see this temple established. It is going to take a miracle for it to happen, but when that miracle happens a whole lot of folks who have just dismissed it are going to wake up. Right now they say, "There is no way," just like they dismissed Israel becoming a nation, like they dismissed Jerusalem coming under the leadership of Israel's government when it had been under the leadership of the Arabs for many, many years. When they build that temple, because they believe the Bible the Body of Christ is going to say, "This is like real. My goodness, this is real!" Because right now most of the Body of Christ does not take this seriously, and they say, "Well, technically it means something, but we do not know what it means. Maybe it is figurative." No, it is not. It is literal.

B. **Sabbath:** The re-establishment of the Sabbath in the social and civil law is a sign of the times (Mt. 24:15-20). The abomination of desolation (related to the Antichrist's worldwide worship system) occurs in context to a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem and the re-establishing of Sabbath laws. The two main components of "the abomination" are the *image* and the *mark* of the Beast (Rev. 13:15-18).

¹⁵When you see the abomination of desolation...¹⁶then let those who are in Judea flee...²⁰ Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. (Mt. 24:15-20)

Another sign is the reestablishing of the Sabbath, and that happened in 1951 when it was incorporated into the official law of the nation. It is the only nation in the world in which the Sabbath on Saturday is a part of the national legal code. Well, Jesus made a reference to this in Matthew 24. He said, "When the abomination of desolation takes place, pray that it is not on the Sabbath." For 2,000 years the church wondered what difference did it make?

The Sabbath is a law in Israel today so much so that it shuts down the transportation systems. Many unbelievers live with the consequences of the Sabbath being a law in the nation. I have been over there a few times, and some of them think it is kind of ridiculous that a lot of things shut down. Jesus said Matthew 24 that the Sabbath will be a reality in that day. Well, for 2,000 years there was no thought of that. In 1951, that all changed.

Now we have covered the abomination of desolation a few times over the years. The abomination is the "great evil." Abomination means evil. There is one evil that far surpasses all the evils of human history. Heaven calls it the abomination, the great evil. It is a great evil that results in desolation, destruction; that is what desolation

means, destruction. This is when the Antichrist goes into the rebuilt temple and says, “I am God.” He does not leave it there, though that is evil. He will say, “I am God, and I am going to use my military, economic, political resource to kill everyone who does not declare I am God.” Never before has a man had the authority in the military, in the economic realm, and the political backing to enforce that he be worshipped as God at the scope that the Antichrist will have. I mean the various Roman emperors did it. It was much more difficult to enforce, and the scope was much smaller. This will have a global dimension to it, not just a Roman Empire scope. Even with a smaller scope it was very hard to enforce.

My point here is that 2,000 years ago Jesus declared that the Sabbath would be operating in that time when the Antichrist was on the earth. For almost 2000 years there was no nation, no the city of Jerusalem, no Sabbath at all, but now there is.

- C. Today, the Sabbath on Saturday has been established in the national law as an official day of rest.
- D. **Hebrew:** The re-establishment of the Hebrew language as Israel’s official language occurred on May 19, 1948. No nation has ever maintained its national language without a homeland for more than one generation. For Israel to establish their ancient language after 2,000 years is unprecedented in history. Many see the establishing of Hebrew in Israel as part of fulfilling Zephaniah’s prophecy.

⁹Then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, that they all may call on the name of the LORD, to serve Him with one accord. (Zeph. 3:9)

Hebrew has been reestablished as one of Israel’s official languages. Arabic had been the language for many years there. Right after Israel became a nation in May 1948, the Jewish people said, “This is our official language now after 2,000 years: Hebrew.” Well, it is Modern Hebrew, but it has great connection to the ancient language. They have zeal to make it connected. So Modern Hebrew is the official language of the Jewish people. Again, no nation has ever retained its national, its ancient language after being out of the homeland for more than a generation. Israel maintained it 2,000 years later.

The end of the age is the context of Zephaniah 3. In Zephaniah 3:9 the Lord said, “I am going to restore a pure language.” He was talking to Israel. “I am going to restore it and all the people who call on God’s name will speak that language.” They will serve Him with one language with one accord. In other words it is going to be a national official language throughout the nation. For 2,000 years it was not possible that the Jewish people would have one official language, in the land of Israel. While many of them speak English and other languages, the official language for them is Hebrew. In 1948, a brand new thing happened. Many of these signs have happened in the last several decades, I mean three, four, five decades type of thing. Now, Switzerland has four official national languages. South Africa has eleven official national languages. There was not a chance that Hebrew would be re-established and be the language spoken by the Jewish people throughout the entire original land of Israel.

- E. **Military:** The restoration of a military in Israel in the end-time (Zech. 9:13; 10:3-7; 12:6-9). Zechariah developed the theme of the Lord being with the military force as He was with David and empowering the Israeli army to resist the Antichrist even *before* Jesus returns (12:6-9).

⁵“They shall be like mighty men, who tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle. They shall fight because the LORD is with them... (Zech. 10:5)

⁶In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile...they shall devour all the surrounding peoples...⁸In that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David... (Zech. 12:6-8)

Well, of course Israel did not have a military for almost 2000 years because the people of Israel did not have a nation or a government or a population base. Yet 2,500 years ago Zechariah the prophet described the effectiveness of Israel's military in the end times. So for 2,000 years as Christians read that they would think, "They cannot have a mighty military because they do not have a military, they do not have a government, and they do not have a population base."

Zechariah 9, 10, 12: I have these three passages written down. And it is even more intense than just the fact of having a military. Look down at Zechariah 12. It is going to be more than the fact they have one, though that is a miracle already. Again for 2,000 years the scholars would read that and think, "Military? Hum, that is not very likely." Zechariah took it up a couple of notches. He said that not only is there going to be a military but there are going to be occasions where the glory of God is going to be released through that army and they will be as mighty as King David, even mightier than David, with a supernatural grace of God working through them in the military.

Now, that just messes up everybody's theology. I am talking about the Gentiles in the nations. They think, "What?"

I have talked to different pastors. I ask, "What do you think that verse means?"

"Well, spiritually the Church will be like David, and they will defeat Goliath in their spiritual life. They will overcome their fears and their addictions."

I respond, "I do not think that is what it means." Now I do not ever want to be sarcastic or cavalier on these kind of subjects, but I believe it really means what it says.

There were moments of God's supernatural intervention in various times since 1948. There is a far greater manifestation of this coming, yet future. Different ones in the military will encounter the Lord in the place of His power in a surprising way, just like I have seen quite a few accounts of some of the wars in Israel from 1948 on concerning how angels appeared or supernatural deliverances where unsaved soldiers and captains gave official, recorded testimony and openly said things like, "I saw the angel. I did not know what was going on, and I did not even believe in angels, but I do now." There is a remarkable number of testimonies, not one or two, and it only the beginning of the beginning. Does that mean that Israel's military does right in all of their choices? No, Israel's military is like the United States' military and like a lot of other militaries. There are ungodly men and women that lead it. A lot of militaries make really bad choices.

The Lord would say, "I am going to break in in a way that is going to surprise everybody." It is not my major point that God is going to break in with miracles far beyond even the last seventy years in the military. My point is just the fact there is now a military is a sign of the times because for 2,000 years there was not a chance of it.

IV. THE SALVATION OF ISRAEL

- A. Jesus will not forcibly take the kingship over Israel, but will wait until it is given to Him by those in positions of authority over the land. He prophesied that He would not come back to Jerusalem until the leaders of Israel ask Him to reign over them. He "bound" Himself by this prophecy.

³⁷***“O Jerusalem...how often I wanted to gather your children...but you were not willing!***

³⁸***See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹for I say to you, you [leaders of Israel] shall see Me no more till you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!” (Mt. 23:37-39)***

The salvation of Israel is itself a sign. I mean, that is the nation most hostile to Jesus. One of the reasons they are so hostile to Jesus is because of the testimony and the activity of those who claim to be followers of Jesus through history. I mean I understand the Jewish mindset. When they hear “Christianity,” they hear “Nazism.” When they hear “Christianity,” they hear “Crusades,” and they hear “Spanish Inquisition.” You know in the late 1400s, in 1492, the Jews were driven out of Spain if they would not convert to “Christianity” under the pain of death. The Jewish memory and testimony is that the people who say they follow Jesus kill us. We are supposed to convert to that?

The greatest failure in Christian history is the treatment of the Jews in the name of Jesus. Greatest, I mean the very top of the list, the greatest sin, greatest failure of the Church. Jesus is grieved, and all the people who are in touch with His heart are grieved by this.

When I meet with a Jewish person who does not know me, they say, “Ugh, Gentile, Hitler, Spanish Inquisition, Crusades. Whoa, whoa, whoa! No, no! Do not tell me about that. I am not joining Hitler’s team. I am not.”

When opportunity provides I like to say, “I apologize. They were not obedient to Jesus’ leadership. They did not know His heart. They did not know His plan. They did not reflect His leadership. It is grievous what they did. I apologize to you.”

They say, “Well, okay, that is nice, but I did not know you knew. A couple of you apologizing does not really make that much difference to us.”

The great shock of Israel is when they find out Jesus was against all of this stuff through history. It grieved Him. He is going to reveal Himself as the great Shepherd of Israel, the great Deliverer of Israel. The shock of Israel is going to be that Jesus is Jewish, and He is on our side, and He loves us, and that the Gentiles actually joined our faith.

*Beloved, as Gentiles we are grafted in to the tree of Abraham. We are grafted into the olive tree, and we are branches grafted in. It is **their** faith. God graciously said, “You guys can come partake,” but the Jewish people can’t see that. Jesus said, “Oh, I promise you they will. I have a plan.” He did not say it exactly that way, but it is taking 2,000 years to unfold. “I am going to reverse the whole narrative of My leadership and My plan and My purpose. I am going to reverse it all in their sight. They will become loyal, grateful at My love for them, My tenderness towards them, and My correction and rebuke of the Body of Christ for the way they have been treated.”*

The reason I am going on about this is because many believers think, “Well, you know those Jews! They just do not get it. They have a huge history, a huge history.”

You know, I meet white people who say, “Well, why don’t some of those black people do this and do that”

I say, “Do you have any comprehension of what has happened for 400 years in America to black people by white people?”

“Oh yeah, but that was some time ago.”

I say, “Come on!”

They say the same thing about the Jews. “Oh come on! We did not do that; that was over in Europe.”

The Lord would say, “I want you to be sensitized to what is going on.” The narrative has to be radically shifted for many things in His kingdom to come to pass. So I am just alerting us to it. Many of you already have that sensitivity, but it is just good to say it again and again.

Jesus gave the most unusual prophecy to the shock of Jerusalem leaders. In Matthew 23, it was the same week He was going to die on the cross. It was in that hour, those final days. They had already determined they were going to kill Him. He knew it. They did not know He knew it, but He knew it. He knew it before they were born. He looked at them in Matthew 23:39 after He rebuked them, and He said, “Let Me tell you this.” It was one of the great, most significant prophecies. He said, “I will not come back to Jerusalem and you will not see me again until the Jewish leaders say to Me, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.’” In other words, until they say Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah who came from God.

The Jewish leaders were about to crucify Him, so they probably said, “That is never going to happen.” I mean I do not know what they actually said.

Jesus did not say this exactly, but He could have said, “There is a 2,000-year plan that is going to unfold. I am going to break in in tenderness, power, and mercy. I am going to turn the whole Body of Christ towards you to serve you and to love you, and I will cause them to see what I see when I look at Israel. You will say with your mouth, ‘Blessed is He, that Jesus of Nazareth who came from God’ or I will not enter the city as your King. Unless you call Me with your mouth, I will not come to your city,” and that is the time of the second coming. So therefore the second coming of Christ to the earth is not just a coming to the earth; it is also a coming to Jerusalem. That is, it is to the earth, but He is coming to Jerusalem. He said, “I will not come in until the current leadership in that hour says with their mouth, ‘Come in! You are our King.’ Then I will come in.”

For 2,000 years the vast majority of the Jewish people basically said, “I don’t even know what that prophecy means. We are not going to say He is our King.”

Jesus bound Himself by this prophecy. He said, “I will not do it until you say it.”

- B. Israel’s leaders are the official representatives of that national covenant with God. Jesus will rule from Jerusalem only *after* Israel repents and asks Him to be their king (Acts 3:19-21).

¹⁹“Repent therefore and be converted [Israel] that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, ²⁰and that He may send Jesus...²¹whom heaven must receive [retain] until the times of restoration of all things.” (Acts 3:19-21)

⁶This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him... ⁷Lift up your heads, O you gates...be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. (Ps. 24:6–7)

Peter was in Jerusalem when he was preaching in Acts 3. He said in Acts 3:19, “Repent and be converted,” and he was talking to the people in Jerusalem right there. And he went on, “Until you repent and are converted, Jesus will stay in heaven.” In other words, until the conversion of the Jewish people, until they see Jesus differently. Remember, they see Him in part through the radical transformation of the behavior and the attitude of Jesus’ people, the Gentile church, in the sense that we have grafted into the salvation of Israel.

Look at that. Peter said that He is not coming from heaven—read the verse a bit on your own—until the city of Jerusalem repents and calls on Me. So a godly, powerful testimony of the glory of Jesus in the city of Jerusalem is a critical issue related to the second coming of Christ. It is not unimportant. Some people say they do not get that “Israel thing.” Well, it is deeply connected to the unfolding of God’s plans. The enemy is coming after Jerusalem to destroy the Jewish people. God is going to break in directly, but God is also going to break in

through the Body of Christ, the international Church, that reflects His heart, His leadership, His plans, and His love for the nation of Israel. They reflect it by standing with Israel. The whole narrative of who Jesus is and how He leads is going to change in their mind.

Look here at Psalm 24. There is a generation—Jacob. Jacob means Israel. It is Jewish Jerusalem. This is speaking of Jacob, the Jewish people. There is one generation in history, one that is called “the generation that seeks God.” It is those final hours of natural history. Look, it makes it clear, verse 7, “When the King of glory comes” back into Jerusalem, but He only comes at the invitation of Jewish leaders who have completely, radically changed their mindset because of the power of God, because of His deliverance, because the testimony of the Church has radically changed. All of these things add up together. Beloved, I think we are in the early days of that generation, the generation of Jacob, or say Israel in your mind or Judah or the Jewish people, the generation that seeks Him. There is prophesied one generation of Jewish people that seek Him according to His terms, in alliance to His Son.

- C. Today there are over 120 Messianic congregations in Israel, totaling more than 15,000 believers. In a survey of Messianic believers in Israel (taken in 1999) the number of congregations had increased from 2 (1970) to over 80 (1999); the number of Jewish believers had, from 1970-1999, increased from under 200 believers to over 2000 believers. Messianic congregations are seeing more Jewish people in Israel come to Jesus than at any time since the first century.

Well, we are seeing a radical shift. We mentioned this last week, that there are over 120 Messianic congregations. 1970, forty-six years ago, there were only two, just two congregations in the whole land. After 1,900 years, there were only two congregations in the land. That was not very good. Today there are over 120.

There are over 15,000 believers. I don’t mean Gentiles joining Jewish congregations that love Jesus, but 15,000 Jewish believers whose eyes are opened. The number is beyond any other time in history since the first century. It is remarkable. Never have so many Jews been coming to Jesus because they do not see Him as the God of the Gentile history of near-Pagan Christianity. There have been some devout Christian men through history who have been deceived. You know we have talked about Israel has been deceived. Beloved, there has been some really devout, godly men who have been deceived by the enemy, by the Devil himself. They were right on many things, but deeply deceived on this issue of Israel.

The very explosion of Jewish believers is unprecedented in history. It is happening right now in this hour of history. All of these things are coming together in the same time frame, these things that have not happened for 2,000 years nearly.

- D. We are watching the amazing fulfillment of the prophetic promise of the Lord to establish night and day prayer for Jerusalem until it experiences *full revival* and transformation, proclaimed by Isaiah:

⁶I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night... ⁷And give Him no rest till He establishes and...makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. (Isa. 62:6-7)

*Here is a verse we know well. “I am going to raise up intercessors for Jerusalem in Jerusalem **and** for Jerusalem around the world.” There are prayer ministries around the earth going 24/7, thousands of them. I do not mean led by music, but thousands of prayer rooms that go 24/7. I talked to some guys that have studied this for forty years, some really smart guys. They say with energy there are 20,000 twenty-four hour prayer rooms happening in the earth right now, 20,000 of them.*

They say twenty years ago it was just a fraction of this. There was just a few, like 100 or something like that. Really they said there were twenty-five of them in 1984 and 20,000 of them now. The vast majority of these prayer rooms pray for Israel; that has never happened before. Again I am talking about prayer rooms with one person at a time praying for an hour, then somebody else, kind of like a prayer chain but in a room, you know, one by one. The vast majority of them have a theology and an understanding of praying for Israel. God is raising up the wall of intercession around the earth, 20,000 prayer rooms so far.

That same group of men who have studied this and said there were only twenty-five in 1984 back then and that there are 20,000 now, I pressed them, saying, “No. No way. No way. You mean there are 1,000.”

Man, they gave me the stats in the countries. They said, “No, there are 20,000. We are not backing down; we know the facts.”

I thought, “Really? Where have I been?”

V. WORLD CONTROVERSY, PERSECUTION, AND ANTI-SEMITISM FROM THE NATIONS

- A. Jerusalem as a center of world controversy: The Hebrew prophets foretold that Jerusalem would be persecuted by all the nations (Zech. 12:3, 9; 14:1-3; cf. Joel 3:2, 12; Zeph. 3:8; Lk. 21:20-24). They prophesied a significant increase of Arab hostility against Israel (Ezek. 35:1-15; Joel 3:1-7).

²I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken...Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant...shall not be cut off from the city. (Zech. 14:2)

³...Jerusalem...though all nations of the earth are gathered against it [Jerusalem]. (Zech. 12:3)

²⁴“They [Israel] will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” (Lk. 21:24)

Our next set of signs is the prophecy of world controversy, end-time persecution, and anti-semitism. Who could have guessed for 2,000 years that the little, barren, desolate land and city would be the center of world politics and world controversy? Again, in 1867, Mark Twain said it was desolate, barren, weeds, no people, nothing, nothing growing. It is going to be the center of world controversy? I do not think so. After 1,800 - 1,900 years of being forgotten on the backstage of history so to speak, now it is absolute, not center stage, the absolute center conversation of the earth right now.

2,500 years ago Zechariah and the Hebrew prophets, said—a number of the Hebrew prophets said it, but Zechariah said it the clearest—that all the nations will battle against Jerusalem, all of them. Why would 200+ nations ally together to war against a little nation the size of New Jersey? Why on earth would all the nations fight them? Why not just one or two nations fight them? All the nations, in something so big, so powerful that it will engage all the nations.

I mean just at face value that seems impossible. Number one, that all the nations would ever be in unity about anything. No, really! That all the nations would all be in unity in a military direction? In World War II they lined up, a whole bunch of nations against some other nations. I do not want to go through all of that. But here they are all in unity against one. It has never happened before, in terms of a military objective. They will all be against a little nation the size of New Jersey.

The Hebrew prophets said that half of the city of Jerusalem would go into captivity, though it will be a temporary captivity. Half the city will be taken away into prison. This is a Hebrew prophet saying this. I mean you have to say this tenderly, but, “Like, what?” Lest you look at it and just say, “Wow, that is intense.” As I

mentioned last week, various Hebrew prophets talk about the Antichrist bringing a number of the Jews into captivity, not all of them by any means. The New Testament talks about the Antichrist bringing the Gentiles into death and captivity.

So in the Old Testament the Hebrew prophets say, “Hey, we are with you. Come on, we are on your team, but God told us...” The New Testament is what the Gentiles focus on, and that is where we see the focus of the Antichrist reign against Gentiles. There will be far more Gentiles that will be brought into captivity and killed by the Antichrist. The Antichrist will be a demonic, Adolf-Hitler-type man, but far more powerful. He will be brutally enraged against the Gentiles as well, not just the Jews.

Some people take a step back and say, “Well, I feel sorry for the Jews.”

I reply, “Wait, I don’t think you understand the global rage of this evil, demonic man.”

The part that is interesting is that God specially emphasized that the Body of Christ would stand with Israel. I mean of course the Body of Christ will stand with other Gentiles as well undoubtedly, but He emphasizes particularly standing with Israel as it is critical. It is as if He were saying, “I want to change the narrative of how Christians represent My purpose, My heart, and My leadership. I need to change it radically, and I am going to have you stand with Israel. It is going to purify you while you stand with them, and you are going to grow in love, and My pleasure and power will be manifest in the union and the joining in the one new man, Jew and Gentile, together as one spiritual family.”

In Zechariah 12 he says it again, that all the nations will be against Jerusalem. Never before has there been a military unity anywhere close to this in terms of a military plan and objective. Beloved, we see this anti-semitism increasing now. We can see the nations gathering against Jerusalem even now, in the early stages. It is mounting up stronger and stronger. The part that is grievous is how many anointed, devout leaders in the Church are lined up on the wrong side of Scripture and the wrong side of history in this issue.

The Lord says that He will show His people; He will show His servants. Walk tenderly together. Love one another. Do not rail and do not put down. He is going to open the eyes of His people, the Gentile believers, as He opens the eyes of His people, the remnant of Israel. He is going to open the eyes of Jew and Gentiles together in this issue. It is happening. There is a surge of Gentile believers turning their attention in this direction. It has never happened in history like this. I mean it is unprecedented, the pro-Israel insight. It is not near enough, but the numbers are growing so fast, and it is a sign of the times. The hatred of Israel, the anti-semitism, is also growing fast, another sign of the times.

- B. Today’s terrorism was prophesied by Jesus (Jn. 16:2). The initial fulfillment of this prophecy occurred in the first century at the hands of fellow Jews like Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9), then again by the Gentile crusaders and the Spanish Inquisition through the Middle Ages. The most dramatic fulfillment of this prophecy will be in the end times by Islamic terrorists, which will greatly increase (Ezek. 35:1-36:7).

²***The time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. (Jn. 16:2)***

- C. The Lord said that He would first “send” fishermen (those who allure with grace) and then hunters (those who drive with fear) to hunt or trouble the Jewish people who lived in the nations. The context is the restoration of Israel as a nation. Biblical scholars believe this was hunting was partially fulfilled by persecution that led many to return to the land over the last 100 years. The biblical nuances between God “sending” and God “allowing” evil men to harm His people is not easy to understand. The Antichrist’s soldiers are the ultimate fulfillment of hunters in this passage.

¹⁴“Therefore behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “that it shall no more be said, ‘The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’¹⁵ but, “The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.’ For I will bring them back into their land...¹⁶ “I will send for many fishermen,” says the Lord, “and they shall fish them; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. (Jer. 16:14-16)

VI. THE BATTLE FOR JERUSALEM

- A. The battle for Jerusalem will be the decisive battle to end the Armageddon campaign.

²I will gather all...nations to battle against Jerusalem...³Then the Lord will go forth [second coming] and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. (Zech. 14:2-3)

Again I will quote the same verse, Zechariah 14:2, “I will gather all nations to battle against Jerusalem.” That is such a big theme, and we see the gathering now way beyond any time in history. It is mounting up as millions are in agreement to be against Israel. This is in context to the second coming of Christ. Some people say that happened in AD 70 when Rome came against Israel. Verse 2, “I am going to gather all the nations” and then Jesus is going to appear—at the second coming—is the next verse. It is in context to Jesus delivering Israel.

Jesus is going to deliver Israel—Jerusalem—in a way that is parallel to how the Lord delivered the captives out of Egypt in the days of Moses. It is going to be far more dramatic. It is not going to be Moses and Egypt; it is going to be the greater Moses of Jews in captivity. There will be a lot of Gentiles in captivity as well. Believers and unbelievers, godly and ungodly, Jews and Gentiles, the Antichrist is coming after anyone who will not worship him. The Lord will appear and many will be delivered while in captivity. They will not die in captivity. I am sure many will and many will not—we do not know those kinds of numbers—both Jew and Gentile.

- B. The battle for Jerusalem is a spiritual, political, and military battle for the control of Jerusalem. It is one of the most significant battlefronts in the spirit today. It will only end at Jesus’ second coming, when He comes to reign over the whole earth and cast Satan into prison (Rev. 20:1-3).

¹¹Behold, a white horse. He [Jesus] who sat on him...makes war...¹⁶He has on His robe...a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords ...¹⁹I saw the beast [Antichrist], the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him...²⁰The beast was captured and the false prophet...these two were cast alive into the lake of fire ...²¹The rest were killed with the sword...^{20:1}I saw an angel...²He laid hold of...Satan, and bound him for a thousand years... (Rev. 19:11-20:2)

The battle for Jerusalem is a spiritual-political-military battle for the control of the city of Jerusalem. That battle is mounting up in the spirit, politically, economically, and militarily. In every way that battle is mounting up right now in the nations. The Lord said it would happen. Here is one little key to this. Revelation 19 tells us and I am just going to paraphrase it—you can read it on your own—it is the second coming passage. Jesus is coming on a white horse in Revelation 19:11. He is making war. Wow, that is interesting! He is going to make war. He is not just coming and blowing a trumpet. He is actually going to make war against the nations around Jerusalem; that is who He is talking about. All the kings of the earth are around Jerusalem.

He is coming back not just to the earth, but to Jerusalem in particular. He will rule the earth, and that is where His throne will be and that is where He is making His touch point. He is going to that city. Verse 19 describes

all the kings of the earth gathered. It does not say Jerusalem here, but all the other places say they are gathered at Jerusalem. Jesus defeats the Antichrist and the false prophet and throws them in the lake of fire.

Here is the big issue. In Revelation 20:2, He throws Satan into prison. Though most of us do not really think much about Satan going to prison, I assure you Satan thinks much about Jesus of Nazareth throwing him in prison. Now I believe this is on his mind above everything else. We think Satan just hates us. Well, he hates us because he is filled with murder and hate. However, his number one agenda or at the very top is not to keep you unhappy or to send you to hell. That is not his number one agenda. His number one agenda is to stay out of prison; it is for real.

The Antichrist throws a lot of people in prison during his short reign. The end result is Satan is thrown into prison and the Antichrist is thrown into the lake of fire.

- C. Satan's strategy is to seek to exploit Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 23:39 as a "loophole" in God's end-time plan by seeking to keep the leaders of Israel from receiving Jesus as their king. Satan knows that Jesus cannot violate His own prophetic word. Therefore, Jesus cannot return to earth to rule from Jerusalem until Israel's governmental leaders beckon Him to be their king.

- D. Satan's end-time strategy includes seeking to permanently **control Jerusalem** by:

I believe Satan thinks he is going to exploit a loophole in the prophecy: that Jesus will not come back to Jerusalem if the Jewish people do not say to Him, "Come back" Until the Jewish people say, "Be our King," Jesus said, "I will not come."

So I imagine the Devil thinking something like, "I am going to make sure they do not ever call him back." Because if the Jews do not call him back to be their King in that city, Satan never goes to prison.

Again we kind of imagine that Satan's whole point is to make our life unhappy and to make sure our family goes to hell. And he wants to do that, for sure, but that is not really what is on his mind, not big time. He is figuring out a way to keep the leaders of Jerusalem for calling on the name of Jesus.

1. **Deceiving Israel** into taking the mark of the Beast (making an alliance with the Antichrist).
2. **Killing the remnant of the Jewish race** so there are none to invite Him to rule Jerusalem.
3. Trying to make Israel so **offended at Jesus** that they will not receive Him as their king.

Number one, he will deceive some of Israel in the future to take the mark of the beast. Number two, he is going to try to kill as many as he can. If he cannot get them to take the mark of the beast, and many will just like many Gentiles will, he will kill them. He will kill some, but he certainly will not kill them all, so number three He is going to get them offended at Jesus. Because if they get offended at Him through the way the Church acted through history and he can get the church continuing in that dark spirit, that demonic expression of hatred against Israel, he can keep the Jews offended. Now I do not know all of his plans and how it all works. I imagine that he has got these kinds of things and undoubtedly many more. Because, again, if the Jews are offended, all of them are offended or killed or they have taken the mark of the beast, there is no one to invite Jesus back to Jerusalem.

The Lord Jesus would say, "Oh, I have a plan! I am going to preempt all of that. I have got a plan. I will have a remnant. I will have the Body of Christ across the nations. I will show them My glory, and they will call me as their King, and I will return. You, Satan, will go to prison when I come back to Jerusalem."

Beloved, there is a demonic energy fueling anti-semitism. The Jews throughout history—I mean you hear it in the different documentaries on TV and on the internet and books—say, “Why is everybody so mad at us?” I tell you why they are mad at you. There is a real devil who inspires Christians and non-Christians to hate Jews. It is really demonic, even though some who hate Jews are real believers, godly people. You might say that if they were really godly, they would not do it. Well, Peter said, “You are the Christ” and Jesus said, “Flesh and blood has not revealed that.” A minute later Peter said, “You cannot go to the cross,” and Jesus said, “Get thee behind Me, Satan.” So one minute he knew Jesus was the Messiah, a few minutes later Jesus said to him, “Satan is deceiving you right now,” right there in Matthew 16 within the same hour. Godly people can be deceived in things like this.

- E. Satan wants to exterminate the Jewish people so that a believing remnant cannot invite Jesus to rule Israel as her Messiah. John uses a prophetic picture of Israel as a woman being attacked by Satan as a dragon; God will protect her from total annihilation (Rev. 12:13-17; cf. Zech. 13:8-9).

¹³When the dragon [Satan] saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman [remnant of Israel]... ¹⁵The serpent spewed water...like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood [persecution]... ¹⁷The dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring [the Church], who...have the testimony of Jesus. (Rev. 12:13-17)

In the book of Revelation John the apostle shows Satan via the picture of a dragon. You can read the verses there on your own. Satan wants to destroy Israel, all of Israel, and that is his ambition. It is not going to work, but he is going to try to destroy them. He is going to make a significant impact, but he is not going to prevail. Look at this in Revelation 12:17: he is going to turn on the Body of Christ, the Gentile believers, who stand with Israel. He is going to go after them too because they are standing together. That is why he is going after both of them.

- F. The city of Jerusalem shall be taken and half its population shall go into captivity (Zech. 14:2).

²“For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken...half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off.” (Zech. 14:2)

1. Jerusalem shall temporarily be taken by the Antichrist, creating the context in which Jesus delivers Israel parallel to Israel being delivered from captivity in Egypt in the days of Moses.
2. About 600,000 Jews currently live in Jerusalem; thus, it is possible that as many as 300,000 Jewish people will be taken as captives in final years of the Great Tribulation.

- G. ***Two conflicting trends:*** anti-Semitism in the nations and love for Israel in the Body of Christ. Many Jews and Gentiles will go into prison camps under the Antichrist’s reign of terror. Jesus will deliver Israel and require the Church to stand with her like Corrie ten Boom’s family did in World War II.

⁶“I will...give You [Jesus] as a covenant to the people [Israel]... ⁷to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house... ²²But this [Israel] is a people robbed and plundered; all of them are snared in holes, and they are hidden in prison houses.” (Isa. 42:6-7, 22)

I am going to make just a couple little points, just point at them really and have you read this on your own. I mentioned this last week. There are two conflicting trends that are both growing fast. I have already said it a

couple times tonight. Anti-semitism is growing fast; that is a sign of the times. It is greater than at any time in history, but the Body of Christ loving Israel is also fast growing beyond any time in history.

Now this is very painful. It is like, “Ouch! It hurts our hearts.” The Jewish prophets focus on Jews in prison camps, though not all of them speak of it. The New Testament focus is on the Antichrist putting Gentiles in prison camps. Look at this in Isaiah 42:6. It is the Father speaking, “I will give You”—Jesus—“as a covenant to Israel.” I will send you, is what He is saying. I will give you as a gift. The delight of My heart, My Son, I am going to send You there.

Here is the purpose in verse 7, “You are going to bring the prisoners out of prison.” He is not talking about emotional prison, as in they have fear that they got to break through. He is not talking about that. “Those who sit in darkness from the prison house...Israel is a people robbed, plundered, all of them snared in holes, hidden in prison houses.” I do not think it means all of the Jews, because there are plenty of other verses that describe many Jews who are not in that condition. However, there is a man coming on the world scene who will be far more evil and powerful than the demonically-energized Adolf Hitler whose atrocities are the most grievous sins of human history.

- H. Scripture describes an aspect of Israel’s persecution just before Jesus returns as their being in prison leading to the time when Jesus returns and delivers their captives from prison (Isa. 11:11-16; 27:12-13; 42:6-7, 22-24; 49:5-25; 61:1-2; Jer. 30:3-24; 31:1-23; Ezek. 20:33-44; 39:25-29; Hos. 11:10-11; Amos 9:8-15; Joel 3:1-2; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 9:10-14).

I have given a number of verses where the Hebrew prophets are talking about this tragic time. Again, they do not talk about the Gentiles because it is not until the New Testament where we hear about the Gentiles in this condition. They are the only ones with the credibility to prophesy it to the Jews; the Hebrew prophets to say it to the Hebrew people.

When I talk to Jewish leaders about this—I do not like this subject at all. It pains me. It hurts my heart—I say that I do not even want to talk about it but I only talk about it for one reason. I want to get the Gentile believers in the earth as many as possible prepared to stand true in that hour. I tell them, “It is the Hebrew prophets who said it. Do you believe them?”

They answer, “Yeah.”

I say, “Help me get the Body of Christ ready.” I do not mean just me; I mean thousands and thousands of leaders need to do this.

My prayer is that 100 million Gentiles in the earth would see what the Bible says about where this is going, that they would be that growing trend of loving Israel and preparing. They would move in the opposite spirit of what the Church has done through history, that they would be girded for action for this fearless love in that hour like the Corrie Ten Boom family.

- I. **Salvation and persecution:** The Antichrist’s attack on Jewish people will result in 2/3 being killed and the remaining 1/3 accepting salvation. There has never been a time when 1/3 of the Jews in Israel testified of receiving Jesus as Messiah, we know that this prophecy has a future fulfillment. (The number of Gentile killed because of refusing to worship the Antichrist will be far greater).

⁸“It shall come to pass in all the land...that two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it: ⁹I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name...” (Zech. 13:8-9)

- J. The Antichrist's attack on Gentiles and the resulting death toll and imprisonment of Gentiles will far exceed the number related to Israel. However the Lord gives special emphasis to the body of Christ to love, stand with, care for, and even suffer with the Jewish people.
- K. **Contradiction:** Some theologians apply the biblical *promises* of the Israel to the church but *not* the biblical *descriptions of their suffering*. Some who love Israel do something similar by applying Israel's end times *promises* to Israel, but dismiss their *suffering* as having been fulfilled in AD 70. Both groups separate Israel's promises from their sufferings while the Bible places them together.

I want you to notice a contradiction; it is a very important contradiction. I want you just to be able to explain this. I do not want you to argue with anyone. I do not want to equip anybody to argue and debate. I do not like arguing and debating. I want to appeal for love; love is what I want to appeal for. I do not want to win an argument; I want to win hearts for God's purpose. We want to win hearts, and we want to appeal for love. Some guys says, "You show me, and I will show you!"

I say, "No, I don't even want to do that. I don't even want to do that."

Here is the contradiction. Some Christian theologians apply the biblical promises of Israel to the church. They teach that Israel has been replaced by the Church. The problem is that they say all the good stuff belongs to the Church, but they do not apply the bad stuff to the Church, and that is a contradiction.

*I tell them that if you apply the good stuff, you have to apply the bad stuff too, because the Bible shows them incurring the greatest good **and** the greatest resistance and persecution and judgment and everything. The greatest of all has happened in the same timeframe. You cannot give the Church the promises of Israel and delete the struggles. They respond, "Well, you know, technically you cannot."*

I answer, "Indeed not! Technically you cannot separate them. They are in the same timeframe."

Then I talk to some of my friends, Jews and Gentiles, who love Israel and see all of Israel's promises, the grand ones in the future, but they interpret the difficulty to be only in the past. I say, "No, you cannot do that either! It is a similar contradiction. Both the greatest things and the biggest struggles are yet future." In the Bible they are in the same timeframe.

So replacement theology says that the promises are ours but not the difficulties of Israel. Some others who love Israel, both Jew and Gentile, say the promises are coming in fullness but the trouble was all back in AD 70, and they dismiss the trouble. I say that you are not really helping Israel by doing that. We have to be girded for the trouble.

VII. THE TRUE CHURCH WILL STAND WITH ISRAEL

- A. The battle for Jerusalem will be one issue used to perfect the Church in her obedience to Jesus. Scripture calls the Church to stand with God's purposes for Israel (Isa. 40:1-2; 62:11; Jer. 31:7-10; Joel 3:14; Zech. 12:3; 14:2; Mt. 25:31-46; Rom. 11:11, 20-22; Rev. 12:13-17). I believe it will be a litmus test of obedience. The highest issue in serving God's purpose for Israel is obeying Jesus' sovereign leadership. We love Him; thus, we want to do what He does and love what He loves.

²⁷*...that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish [compromise]. (Eph. 5:27)*

- B. Gentile believers will eventually provoke Israel to godly jealousy to know Jesus (Rom. 10:19; 11:11). In other words, Israel will desire to have *what Gentile believers possess spiritually*. This will happen as Gentile believers show love for Israel including risking their lives to *provide refuge* for Jewish people in flight, *perform miracles* like Elijah, and be *fearless* in the face of death.

¹¹ ***...to provoke them [Israel] to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. (Rom. 11:11)***

I will just mention this, that God said in Romans 11:11 that the Gentile believers are going to provoke Israel to jealousy. Really, 2,000 years later, not very many Jews are provoked to jealousy by Gentiles. Being provoked to jealousy means the Gentiles' spiritual relationship with the Lord is going to provoke Jews to say, "I want what you have spiritually. You have something in God that I want."

The Gentiles will say, "Actually it is your faith. It is yours."

For 2,000 years it has not happening. Maybe a fraction of one percent of Jewish converts have been provoked to jealousy by Gentiles. I do not know the number, but a very small number. I say, "Lord, that prophecy has not been fulfilled remotely. Not even a hardly a fraction of a percent has that prophecy been fulfilled." It is yet future. I want to prophecy to you that Israel will be provoked to jealousy by Gentiles.

Israel will say, "I want what you have spiritually," and that is to be in relationship with the Jewish Messiah. Why are they going to do this? I think the great hour of provocation, the hour of being provoked by the Gentiles, will be in the persecution of Israel. God is going to raise up believers like the Corrie Ten Boom family in the 1940s who took the Jews in their house. Other families did as well, not very many, but they did. They will shelter Jewish families in flight because of persecution, because the nations will be coming after them particularly under the Antichrist reign. Again I do not mean all of the Jews, but many will be. A lot of them will be in Jerusalem where the Lord will protect them there as well because there are verses that make that clear.

The Jews will be at flight and the Body of Christ will say, "Come on in here. Come on, bring your whole family." Like The Hiding Place, the Corrie Ten Boom story.

The Jewish families will be there, and they will be saying, "Why are you doing this?"

*"Well our Messiah is telling us to do this. Actually He is Your Messiah. He is Jewish. He loves you. He has shown us that we are to love **whom** He loves and love **like** He loves.*

They will say, "Well, okay, pretty cool. At least right now it is, but really?"

I can imagine—though it will not always be this way—the occasion where there are ten potatoes and twenty people because there are a whole bunch of them hiding. The guy prays in the name of Jesus and all of a sudden there is the multiplication of food. They ask how did that that happen? "Well, that is what they did in the Old Testament, the miracles. That is the Jewish. Elijah did that stuff."

"Like what?"

"That is your faith."

Little Susie comes in and says, "Daddy, I had a dream that the bad people are coming tomorrow at six o'clock." The bad people come tomorrow at six o'clock.

The Jews in flight say, "How did she know? That is like our prophets!"

*"Yeah, yeah, it **is** your stuff. It is. That is the point."*

The Jewish family will ask, "Why are you risking your life and your family? Aren't you afraid of death?"

“Oh no, no. The Jewish Messiah rose from the dead. We have the promise of the resurrection so we are fearless in the face of death. Come on in. We are not afraid.”

They will be saying, “Who are you guys?” It is literally this kind of stuff—not exactly like I just said it, I just kind of dramatized it a little bit there—It is this kind of thing through which Israel is going to get provoked to jealousy before the second coming. It has not happened yet, but it is going to happen in a worldwide way.

- C. In the 1930s, if even 100 pastors across Europe would have spoken clearly about the coming persecution of the Jewish people and the biblical mandate to stand with Israel, then many believers in Europe would have had time to process this biblical mandate *before* facing the challenges to their faith under Hitler’s holocaust in the 1940s. Gentile believers would have had opportunity to prepare places of hiding with provision for the Jews in flight during the 1940s.
- D. The Lord called the Church to stand with Israel (Isa. 40:1-2; 62:6-7, 11; Jer. 31:7-10; Joel 3:14; Zech. 12:3; 14:2; Mt. 25:31-46; Rom. 11:11, 20-22; Rev. 12:13-17) in their persecution now and especially under the reign of terror of the Antichrist.

¹***“Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” says your God.*** ²***“Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned...”*** (Isa. 40:1-2)

¹¹***The LORD has proclaimed [mandated] to the end of the world [Gentiles in the nations]: “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Surely your salvation is coming; behold, His reward is with Him...”*** (Isa. 62:11)

Consider the 1930s. The Holocaust began in the 1940s. It was the most intense from 1941 to 1945. So it was the 1940s that we saw Adolf Hitler and the Holocaust. Now what if in the 1930s, for the ten years before the Holocaust—purely hypothetical story or situation—what if only 100 pastors in Europe—ten of them in France, ten of them in Germany, ten of them in the Netherlands, ten of them in Italy, ten of them in Poland, whatever hypothetical number, twenty in the Netherlands—what if 100 pastors for ten years had been saying to the Body of Christ, to their congregations, “The word is getting out and trouble is coming to the Jews. Let’s gird ourselves because it is in the Bible to stand with them.” The believers in Jesus could have had time to process it, see it in the Bible. They could have shifted little by little, as their understanding, their resolve increases, their faith increases, their courage increases. For ten years they actually could have prepared places for the Jews to go in flight, if they could have known for ten years. I do now know how they would have known, but just say hypothetically if only 100 pastors would have done it.

Instead, when the Nazis knocked on the door, the German believers went blank, frozen in fear, having never thought about what would happen if they were asked, “Are you loyal to the Jews?” They have never processed it, these believers. They have never thought about it. They have never seen it in the Bible. They were frozen and they denied what the Lord wants. They started that trajectory of denying Jesus’ leadership little by little. A few years later they have completely fallen away.

What if they had had ten or twenty years of understanding? What if they had had places prepared? How many more of the Jews in Europe would have been saved if the Gentile church would have been prepared? If God’s shepherds would have been clear about this a decade or two or three or four ahead of time?

Well, I want to be one of those guys who are clear. It may not ever happen in my lifetime; I am sixty years old. Maybe some decades down the road it will. I do not know. I tell you, I want my children and their children, both physical and spiritual children, to understand this. For them to not to be frozen with fear if a knock on the door

came in their nation. They will say, “Oh, we get it. We are ready. Lord Jesus, here we are. We are with You in this.”

Amen, let’s stand. We are just going to end with that.

- E. The Church must take a stand to boldly pray, declare, and sing the message of God’s purposes for Israel so that all the nations hear it clearly (Jer. 31:7-10).

⁷Thus says the Lord: “Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘O Lord save Your people, the remnant of Israel!’...¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd does his flock.’” (Jer. 31:7-10)

VIII. DIFFERENT RESPONSES OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL

- A. ***Some will be supernaturally protected:*** Some will remain in the land of Israel with God’s supernatural protection (Joel 2:32; 3:16; Zech. 12:10; cf. Isa. 4:3; Obad. 1:17). God will call some believers to remain in the land of Israel during the persecution of the Antichrist.
- B. ***Fleeing from the land:*** Some will leave the land under the Lord’s direction (Mt. 24:15, 16).
- C. ***Apostate:*** Some will stay in the land and worship the Antichrist, joining his regime.
- D. ***Killed:*** Some will die in the land of Israel at the hands of the Antichrist’s regime (Zech. 13:8).
- E. ***Imprisoned:*** Some will be taken as captives (Zech. 14:2; cf. Isa. 42:7, 22; 49:9, 24-25; Ps. 102:20), and some of these will be liberated by Jesus in a way that is parallel to the Jews in Egypt being liberated from captivity in the days of Moses.
- F. ***Summary:*** Some Jews will be supernaturally protected by God in the land, others will flee in obedience to the Lord, some will join the evil regime of the Antichrist, some will be killed, and some will be taken as captives (some of whom will be set free at the return of Jesus).