

*The  
Apple  
of  
God's eye*

*by P. L. Madsen*

# ***The Apple of God's Eye***

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# *Introduction*

This book is written primarily as a teaching to Christian believers. However, many others can better understand Israel and the situation in the Middle East by reading this book.

A Christian cannot avoid Israel, but quickly discovers that Israel is no ordinary nation, and that its people are no ordinary people. Whether one is a missionary, priest or a teacher of Christianity, one becomes drawn closer to her. When one begins to concern oneself with Israel, one touches something, which has to do with God Himself and faced with a challenge of faith to which he or she cannot remain indifferent. My wife and I have worked as missionaries in Africa and visited many other countries, yet we cannot get away from the fact, that Israel is something special. I have seen that wherever I have been abroad teaching in Bible schools and seminaries, there has been great ignorance about Israel, her origins, her relations with other countries, and the Jews' relationship with God, as His chosen people. It is necessary for Christians to have a biblically correct attitude towards Israel. We cannot merely allow ourselves to be misled by propaganda or what we see and hear in the media. We must base our attitudes on, what God's word says about Israel and her future.

I was in Tanzania during the Six Day War building churches in new districts and teaching in village schools about Jesus Christ, the world's redeemer. When the Six Day War broke out, the media put out a mass of propaganda, which did not accord with what I was teaching from the Bible. It became clear to me that many homes in Tanzania had a transistor radio, which played all day and that everyone heard all the information by way of radio. All news bulletins painted a very negative picture of Israel and blamed Israel for things, which I knew were not true. At the same time, they justified Israel's enemies. This was the cause of my receiving many questions from the Christians. Therefore, it became necessary to present teaching, which explained the whole situation on the basis of God's word.

And surely enough, after 50 years since that war, I can see again and again how these teachings are as true today as they were when first written.

Now that we are missionaries in Denmark, there are also many here, who are in doubt about what attitude we ought to take towards Israel. The media here in our own country and other western countries often misinform us. Many have encouraged me to write about Israel. I hope that what I write here, will be a help in better understanding the situation in the Middle East today. We do not want to bring down God's judgment on ourselves and our nation because of a wrong attitude towards the Jews, God's chosen people and the apple of His eye. We should not merely accept the media's attitudes, which are often influenced by anti-Israeli powers and are not objective. We see that in so many ways the media is a weapon in a war rather than a true information service. And so, believers who are un-informed or even deceived with regard to Israel, instead of being led by the Bible in accordance to God's will and the Holy Spirit, are deprived from serving God in what is His plan of salvation and become tools in the hands of the enemy.

Recently, there have been many good books written about Israel. I hope and pray that this little book will also be a good complement to other positive books on the subject.

At this point I would like to thank Victor kalisher, a dear friend and brother in faith, for his contribution to the content of this book.

***P. L. Madsen***

All bible verses are taken either from the New International Version (N.I.V.) or from the New American Standard Bible translation (N.A.S.B).

## Chapter 1

# *The Apple of God's eye*

In the Bible, Israel is spoken of as the apple of God's eye (Deut. 32:10, Zech. 2:8). Why should this little country and the people who live there be the apple of God's eye?

God's own Word gives us an answer to this question. In these days it is important, that we are aware of, what God's Word says. Otherwise, we can very easily adopt wrong points of view in relation to Israel. As a result, we can find ourselves struggling against God's plan and will.

God has a plan and reason for all that He does. I will show you from God's Word what God's thoughts and intentions are for Israel and for all other peoples. Israel is the apple of God's eye. To understand what this means, think of the human eye! This is the most delicate, venerable and vulnerable place in the whole body. What I treasure and protect most, is the apple of my eye.

I know that it is the eye, which makes it possible for me to see. If my eye is damaged, I risk losing my sight.

From the Creator's hand come many security systems to protect the eye from damage. The eyebrows prevent sweat and dirt running down into the eye. The eyelashes likewise hinder dirt and the like from getting into the eye. The eyelids move up and down at intervals spreading the eye's liquid over the whole eye and keeping it moist. The tear ducts allow a constant and appropriate amount of liquid to reach the eye so that it is kept clean and moist.

If you study the functions of the eye, you will be seized by God's greatness. There are no accidental happenings. Through the natural eye, the whole of God's great wisdom and wonderful creation can be seen.

If something outside threatens to damage my eye, I react instantly to protect and shield it. In the same way, God reacts when someone threatens to damage the apple of His eye, Israel. God has chosen the

smallest nation on earth to show and reveal His plan and who He is to all mankind.

## How Did It Happen?

**Dt. 32:8-14.** *"When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel. For the Lords portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance. In the desert land he found him, in a barren and howling waste. He shielded him and cared for him, he guarded him as the apple of his eye, like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young. That spreads its wings to catch them and carries them on its pinions. The Lord alone led him; no foreign god was with him. He made him ride on the heights of the land and fed him with the fruit of the fields. He nourished him with honey from the rock and with oil from the flinty crag, with curds and milk from heard and flock and with fattened lambs and goats, with choice rams of Bashan and the finest grains of wheat. You drank the red blood of the grape."*

**Dt. 7:7.** *"The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples"*

In spite of Israel's small size, wretchedness, obstinacy and inferiority, God by His sovereignty chose her. He has taken this people to Himself. He shields Israel and works to form her into that, which He had Himself conceived. God's plans and our plans are very different. We cannot understand God's plans for they are much higher and larger than ours (Rom. 11:33-34). His thoughts are as far and different than ours as the East is from the West and as the distance He removed our transgressions away from us (Psalms 103:12).

**Isaiah 55:8-13:** *"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways"*

*And My thoughts than your thoughts. "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. "For you will go out with joy And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap their hands. "Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up, And instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up, And it will be a memorial to the LORD, For an everlasting sign which will not be cut off."*

God works to fulfill His plan for His people, the apple of His eye. He does it for His own sake! (Isaiah 58:11) and there is nothing that can or will change it. We humans tend to draw quick conclusions and make superficial judgments of what we see at the present moment. For God, all things are eternal. God is not limited by past or future; everything is present before His eyes. He sees everything from the perspective of eternity. God has an aim, which shall be reached and He works until He has reached His goal. For God, one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years are as one day.

The only way we can understand God and His plans is through His Word, the Bible, and by asking God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit, to reveal God's thoughts and will for us.

Therefore, I ask you to pray while you read this book. Lay your own opinions aside as you read and you will find "the veil" drawn away. Then you will see better God's aim and plan for Israel. You will also be able to understand God's inexpressible love towards all people on earth. God has promised to shield Israel and to fight against her enemies:

**Zech. 2:8-9.** *"For this is what the Lord Almighty says: "After he has honored me and has sent me against the nations that have plundered you - for whoever touches you touches the apple of his*

*eye. I will surely raise my hand against them so that their slaves will plunder them. Then you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me."*

We should remember this verse. When we read Israel's history in The Old Testament, we see that time and again, God struggled against Israel's foes. When the Israelites listened to God's voice, God put their enemies to flight, though Israel's army was always much, much smaller than the enemy forces. We have seen the same in our own time, and the same thing will be repeated in the future. God tolerates Israel's mistakes in order to show, that He can fight for His people and triumph over all of their enemies. Today the outlook for Israel seems hopeless. It is surrounded by foes on all sides.

**Zech. 12:3.** *"On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves."*

As it is prophesied, the whole world will turn against Israel. The nations shall come to be judged before God for their attitude towards Israel: whether for or against?

God allowed Israel to go through sufferings and judgments and will continue to do so until He brings them back to Himself, just like a loving father who disciplines his son. But wow to those who will try to use that as a reason to and opportunity to destroy Israel.

**Amos 3:2.** *"You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."*

**Zech. 1:15.** *"But I am very angry with the nations who are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they furthered the disaster."*

### **Our attitudes are very important!**

As Christians, it is vital that we have the right relationship and the right attitude towards Israel. If God is on Israel's side, then we, who believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and received the Word of God and our salvation through her, must also be on Israel's

side. As ordinary citizens in our country we only know the conditions in the Middle East from, what the media tell us. As Christians, we must judge the whole matter based on what the Bible tells us. We cannot as Christians be anti Jewish nor anti-Israel. If we are, we will incur God's curse, wrath and condemnation on our lives. According to the Word, God's judgment and punishment will result.

**Gen. 12:1-3.** *"The Lord had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'"*

As Christians, we must remember that our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, comes from the Jews and has the same ancestors as all Israel has. Salvation stems from the Jews. When we deny the Jews, we deny our own roots as Christians. We rebel against God and His plan.

Let us again remind each other that Israel is the apple of God's eye. You shield your eye. You protect those you hold dear as you would the apple of your eye. In the same way, God will protect Israel, because he loves her.

### **God's Own People**

**Dt.14:2.** *"For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. Out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, the Lord has chosen you to be his treasured possession."*

The meaning of the Hebrew word Holy ("Kadosh") is to be separated for the purpose and service of God.

In the Bible, Israel is also called God's own people. Because they belong to God, He has the right to do with them as He wills.

God rears them, disciplines them and leads them. If someone will destroy God's property, God will destroy him. God's promise to Israel has not yet been fulfilled, but He works tirelessly for it to happen:

**Ex.19:5-6.** *"Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all the nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."*

Some think that since this is written as a conditional promise, God is not committed to it anymore as Israel failed to keep her part. This is a great misunderstanding of God and His plan. God knew that Israel would surely fail (Deut. 31:27, 29) exactly as He knows that we, all humankind, fail. He was not surprised or caught without a plan when Israel failed. In fact, His promises were never meant to be given as a reward for good behavior on the part of Israel. His plan was established upon His grace in Jesus Christ, before the foundations of the world, just as Jesus, our savior existed from eternity. God's plan of salvation reflects His unconditional love, which He demonstrates through His dealings with Israel, and depends on Him alone. He will bring Israel into His covenants and according to His promises because He can and will purify them and change their hearts (Jer. 31:31-33).

Therefore, if we question God about these words, we tread upon dangerous ground. God wins and His judgment shines forth as clear as day!

There is a difference between Israel and all other nations. God loves us all, but He will demonstrate His power through the little land of Israel, His property:

**Dt.9:29.** *"But they are your people, your inheritance that you brought out by your great power and your outstretched arm."*

**Ps. 135:4.** *"For the Lord has chosen Jacob to be his own, Israel to be His treasured possession."*

**Dt. 4:20.** *"But as for you, the Lord took you and brought you out of the iron-smelting furnace, out of Egypt, to be the people of His inheritance, as you now are."*

## Chapter 2

### *The land*

The Middle East has been in existence from the Creation. It has lain there waiting to be used and God chose the ME as the territory where the events of His plan of salvation will take place. It is a piece of earth on the globe which God had His eye on as a place for that people, which He would choose. The land was hidden until the fullness of time came. The moment came when God's plan had developed so far that the people were there to possess it.

Abram, who was later to be named Abraham, was called God's friend. He trusted God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. He became an example of trust for both Israel and for Christians. To understand all about the selection of Israel, as God's own people and the apple of God's eye, we must look at what God said to Abram.

#### **ABRAM**

God saw right into Abram's heart and knew that he was a man who had an upright heart, pure motives and willingness to do His will. God asked Abram to leave the land he lived in and forsake all in order to follow God's voice. God wanted to lead Abram to a country, which He had chosen as His own. There God wanted to place those who would be His people.

**Gen. 12:1-3.** *"The Lord had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your fathers household and go to the land, I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you, I will curse, and all people on earth will be blessed through you.'"*

Abram received an order from God; something completely new lay before him. This order consisted of the following:

1. He must leave his homeland without knowing where to go.
2. He must leave his family.
3. He must leave his father's house.

Abram was willing to follow God's call whatever it might cost. Abram trusted and believed in God. This means that Abram understood that God is the creator of the world and therefore the source of ALL life. Abram took God at His word, and left his land, his family and his father's house. Because of his obedience, his life was blessed. God reckoned Abrams faith as righteousness. He became an example to us all both in obedience to the call of God to the individual man, and in trusting God's Word. He was also a testimony that only through faith in God one can receive God's righteousness.

Abram was sensitive to the call of God; he was obedient and trusting. He relied upon God's Word without doubting even when it was a very difficult situation for him.

Therefore, God made Himself known to Abram and called him His friend. Obedience also shows us the way to be a friend of God while dis-obedience makes us God's enemies.

God wanted to give Abram a new place, and another country, which would be a homeland for himself and his progeny. He wanted to give him more than a country. He wanted to bless him.

### **God's Covenant with Abram**

God made a covenant with Abram, which we should mark well. He said to Abram, that he will be a blessing to all the families of the earth, *"in you all the families of the earth will be blessed"*. God also promised Abram that *"I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse..."*.

This promise is given to Abraham and his promised seed as a strategic act of God in order to protect them from Satan who will now try to destroy them (Gen. 3:15). In this way God protects and fulfills His plan of salvation to all of mankind.

God would make from him a "great nation" so his posterity could

occupy the land and take it into their possession. God would cause this people to be a blessing for the other nations and peoples. God asks for obedience and His reward is: "I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing;"

When we look back on Abram's life, we see how he was blessed by God, but we also see, that Abram took great care of his family and of the people he was looking after. We see how he helped other nations when they asked him for help. He was blessed by God, and he spread that blessing to others. God's promises to Abram were clear and specific.

1. God would bless Abram.
2. God would make him a blessing for others.
3. God would protect him from his foes.

This is the first reason why the world cannot do whatever it wishes with Abram's people.

### **God's Promise to Abram and his Seed.**

Abram journeyed to the land, which God promised to give him: the land of Canaan. He traveled through the land and then the Lord revealed Himself to him again. It is important for us to remember the message from God to Abram in Genesis.

*Gen. 12:7. "The Lord appeared to Abram and said: 'To your offspring I will give this land!' So he build an alter there to the Lord, who had appeared to him."*

Here we see how God reckons. What He promised to Abram was also promised to Abram's offspring. Although God made the promises to Abram, He saw in Abram all of the future Israelites (Heb. 7:10).

## God Repeats the Promise.

**Gen. 13:14-18.** *"The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had parted from him. 'Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you'. So Abram moved his tents and went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he build an altar to the Lord."*

It was not Lot who received the prophecy. Abram perhaps doubted if he had been right to give Lot first choice. Or perhaps he was lonely and needed comfort from God just then. He could have been a little uncertain about the future. God tells him once more about the great country, which he shall call his own. Even though Abram and Sarai had no children at that time, yet God encouraged them to go forward in faith. God promised to make their descendants as countless as the stars.

God chose to give Abraham and Sarai the promised son, the seed of the promise, only when they were too old to have children by themselves. It had to be through a divine interference, a miracle of life from death (Isaiah 51:1-2), in order to show Abraham and every living person of faith, that God can and will surely fulfill and accomplish ALL the promises He made to Abraham and through Abraham. Promises that are fulfilled in life from death to all of mankind - salvation from sin - through the promised seed of Abraham.

## Chapter 3

# *The frontiers shown to God's servants in The Old Testament*

### The promises given to Abraham:

**Gen. 13:14-15.** *"The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, 'Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever.'"*

**Gen.15:18.** *"On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates.'"*

The covenant God made with Abram about the frontiers and the land, were passed on to Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua and to Ezekiel. To determine four borders of Israel, one can study the following passages:

Dt. 11:24. Jos. 1:3-4. 1.Ki. 8:65. Nu. 34:3-5. Jos. 15:3. Ez. 47:19.  
Ex. 23:31. Dt. 34:2. Jos. 13:3. Amos. 8:8. 9:5. Ge. 15:18.

## HOW THE INHERITANCE CONTINUES

### The promises descend to Isaac.

We read in **Gen. 26:1-6**. *"Now there was a famine in the land, besides the previous famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham. So Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines. The Lord appeared to him and said, 'Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you. Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.' So Isaac lived in Gerar."*

God's promises to Abraham endure. God is trustworthy and righteous. Even today, Abraham and Isaac's descendants have not yet received all that great territory which God promised them, but when God's time is ripe, it will happen. Later we will examine why it was Isaac and his descendants who were to receive the promises. In order that there should be no doubt among Isaac's descendants, God repeated the promises to Isaac's son, Jacob.

### The promises descend to Jacob.

**Gen. 28:10-15.** *"Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down*

*in that place. He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, 'I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.'*"

It is quite clear through these words to Jacob that God has not altered His plan.

Many people might not see and understand the great meaning of this dream. It is not only a promise for a land but more importantly a promise of salvation to Jacob's (Israel's) descendants.

In John 1:51 we read that Jesus is the ladder to the presence of God: *"And He said to him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.'*"

This promise was given to Nathanael (whom Jesus call *"an Israelite indeed in whom there is no deceit!"*) at the occasion that Jesus calls him to be His disciple and promises that he will see *"greater things"* – meaning more Israelites, Jews, that will be saved.

The fulfillment of the promise in the dream of Jacob is that his descendants will be saved through Christ Jesus, the ladder to the presence of God.

It is also important to note that this promise was not given to Jacob when at his best spiritual maturity. It was given to him when he was running from his brother Esau who wanted to kill him for deceitfully(\*) taking the firstborn blessing from Isaac their father.

*\* Although Jacob lied to his father when coming to receive the firstborn blessing, it is a fact that this blessing was planned and designated to Jacob already from his birth (Gen. 25:23) and was later sold to him by Esau Himself (Gen. 25:30-34). Esau, when coming before his father to receive the blessing of the firstborn, is not entitled to it. He did not have any claim to it anymore.*

The blessings that were Abraham's go on to Isaac and Jacob. Jacob was treacherous and stubborn, but God led him through spiritual and physical trials. Jacob's strong will was broken and brought under submission to God's will.

When God has a plan, He works with men until His plan is accomplished. Today Israel also can be hard and stubborn in many ways but God continues to work with His people. He leads them through many hard crises, right up to the point where He can glorify His name through them.

### **The promises descend to Moses.**

In Numbers 34 and Deuteronomy 34:4 God talks to Moses about fixing the land borders. Men were chosen to separate the land and divide it among the tribes. God gave this task to Moses, before Israel's people had reached The Promised Land. For Moses, it was a matter of trust to divide up the land so that every tribe got its portion.

God gave the same promises to Moses, which He gave to Abraham:

**Deut. 34:4.** *"Then the Lord said to him, "This is the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants'; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there."*

That must have been a great day for Moses as he gazed into the land he knew God had promised to his forefathers. But it must have been a very great sorrow to him to hear that he was not allowed to enter the country himself. We know that it was disobedience, which

prevented Moses from entering and possessing the land. Moses led God's chosen people for many years, received many revelations from God and had been together with the Lord. He received the Ten Commandments from the Lord and wrought many signs and wonders. Yet God would still not let him enter the land. Obedience to God's Word was a condition. However, God did let Moses see and understand that His promises to Israel's people stood fast: One day they should possess the land!

### **The promises descend to Joshua.**

*Jos. 1:1-5. "Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying, 'Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel. Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun will be your territory. No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you.'"*

Even though Joshua surely knew that God had given these promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses, God confirmed it to Joshua so that he could cross over into the land with confidence. Perhaps Joshua could have believed that God had regretted His promise because Moses, and surely Israel, had been disobedient to God, so Joshua needed to hear a repetition of the promise. God stood by His promise. It is interesting to see that even though God had promised the Israelites the land, they had to win it piece by piece. God said: Every place where you set your foot I will give to you. They had to go,

trusting God's Word and win the land. They had to live and practice their faith in God just like we have to as believers. We need to live and inherit the promises that God has for us.

There were many enemies and many battles for each portion of land they took, but the Lord was with them and helped them to overcome their enemies.

After Joshua's day a long time elapses before God repeats His promises about the great territories given to Israel. However, God has not forgotten what He promised. Just like He did not forget His promise to Abraham to free his descendants from Egypt after 400 years of slavery.

### **The promises descend to Ezekiel.**

Ezekiel had many visions and revelations from the Lord. He had a revelation about the waters that came out of the temple and He tells Ezekiel how the territories promised to Abraham shall be divided among Israel's twelve tribes:

**Eze. 47:13.** *"Thus says the Lord God, 'This shall be the boundary by which you shall divide the land for an inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel; Joseph shall have two portions.'"*

God declares exactly where the frontiers of Israel's land shall run. God shows that He remembers that He has held up His hand and sworn that Israel should enter into possession of this land. This is definitely a physical land with physical borders.

Let us see again where God has set the borders according to Ezekiel 47:

### **The Northern boundary:**

**Eze. 47:15-17.** *"This shall be the boundary of the land: on the north side, from the Great Sea by the way of Hethlon, to the entrance of Zedad; Hamath, Berothah, Sibram, which is*

*between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; Hazer-hatticon, which is by the border of Hauran. The boundary shall extend from the sea to Hazar-enan at the border of Damascus, and on the north toward the north is the border of Hamath. This is the north side."*

**The eastern boundary:**

**v.18.** *"The east side, from between Hauran, Damascus, Gilead and the land of Israel, shall be the Jordan; from the north border to the eastern sea you shall measure. This is the east side."*

**The southern boundary:**

**v.19** *"The south side toward the south shall extend from Tamar as far as the waters of Meribath-kadesh, to the brook of Egypt and to the Great Sea. This is the south side toward the south."*

**The western boundary:**

**v.20** *"The west side shall be the Great Sea, from the south border to a point opposite Lebo-hamath. This is the west side."*

**v.21** *"So you shall divide this land among yourselves according to the tribes of Israel."*

What about the people who live in these territories? Are they to be rooted out? No! We read in:

**V.22-23:** *"You shall divide it by lot for an inheritance among yourselves and among the aliens who stay in your midst, who bring forth sons in your midst. And they shall be to you as the native-born among the sons of Israel; they shall be allotted an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. And in the tribe with which the alien stays, there you shall give him his inheritance," declares the Lord God."*

From these verses we can see that Israel is to possess large territories. However, it is God's will for Israel to allow other people who are living in the land to have their inheritance as well. We all shall live together in peace and there shall be a sharing which each one must accept without complaint. This is the time we are soon to reach ourselves. There will be no talk of eradicating Israel or of expelling other people from the land. God has a solution, which will enable all of the people of the Middle East to live together in peace.

It helps to remember here that when Israel went out of Egypt, there were many non-Israelites who joined them. We read in **Ex. 12:39**: *“A mixed multitude also went up with them, along with flocks and herds, a very large number of livestock”*.

This multitude experienced the plaques upon Egypt and understood that the true God is the God of Israel! They most likely put the blood of the lamb on their doorposts, just like the people of Israel, and expressed their faith in the God of Israel. They were with the people of Israel throughout their wanderings, miraculous journey in the desert and entered the Promised Land with the people of Israel. Yet, we do not hear much about them. God's dealings were with Israel for the purpose of all mankind. When Israel in the future posses all of her promised land, it will also be a blessing to the other nations.

## Chapter 4

# *God's plan and the name "Israel"*

For God there are no coincidences. God has a plan. In order to understand God's plan, we have to look back to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

God created humans in order to have people He could love and who would freely love and obey Him. God had wonderful fellowship with Adam and Eve in the beautiful garden before the fall.

### **Disobedience to the Word.**

God spoke to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. He had given them guidelines, for what they might and might not do. But they sinned against His Word. Therefore, they were cast out of the Garden of Eden. We read about this in Genesis Chapter 2-3. Already in Chapter 3, God began to rebuild His relationship with mankind. He did not reject man, but He hates the sin of disobedience. Therefore, He says to the serpent, which led Adam and Eve astray, that one day there shall be restoration for mankind through the seed of the woman.

God sent His Word to the people again and again through Moses and the Prophets, but there were only a few who would listen. Therefore, God decided to send His own Word, Himself, down to mankind through a human, Jesus Christ. All, who listen to that Word, believe and obey it, are saved. The full restoration of mankind occurs through faith in God's living Word, Jesus Christ.

In order that Jesus, God's holy Word, could be born to the world, God had to have a plan:

1. A country had to be chosen (God chose Israel)
2. A people had to be chosen (God chose the Jews)
3. A tribe in that country had to be chosen, through which Jesus, God's holy Word, could be born (God chose the tribe of Judah).
4. Out of that tribe a person had to be chosen to bear God's Word into the world (God chose the virgin Mary).

## **GOD'S PLANNING AND TIMING**

We see God's exact planning through the ages when we study what happened after Adam and Eve were shut out of the Garden of Eden:

God used 6 days to create the world and used the seventh to rest. He used 6 "working days" where each day lasted 1000 years to restore mankind, so that we could return to a right relationship with Him again (Psalms 90:4). We believe through the Bible that God will use the 7th day, the last 1000 years of this "week" to hold a Sabbath, when The Thousand Years kingdom comes.

**Rev. 20:1-3.** *"Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time."*

**Isaiah. 2:4.** *"And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war."*

**The week looks like this:**

1st day: From Adam to Noah was approx. 1000 years.

2nd day: From Noah to Abraham was approx. 1000 years.

3rd day: From Abraham to Moses was approx. 1000 years.

4th day: From Moses to Jesus was approx. 1000 years.

5th and 6th day: From Jesus to the close of our time has now  
been approx. 2000 years.

7th day: Peace on earth for 1000 years.

**2nd Peter 3:8.** *"But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day."*

**Ps. 90:4.** *"For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Or as a watch in the night."*

**Hosea 6:2.** *"He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day, That we may live before Him."*

The two days here are the two thousand years from Jesus to the close of our time (above 5th and 6th days) and the third day is the 7th day of 1000 years of peace on earth.

No one can say exactly when God will close His "working week" and the thousand years will begin. That is hidden from us. We can only see that the time is getting close. All prophecies about the end are being fulfilled in our time. The greatest sign is the establishment of the state of Israel, the return of the Jews and the growing number of Jews, in Israel and beyond, who believe in Yeshua (Jesus) as their personal and national saviour. The Lord will use these long working days to lead man back to Himself in faith and obedience to His Word. This process will soon come to an end and our heavenly Father and Creator will then fetch the remnant, who live in His Word, home to Himself. Then the fellowship with God shall never again be broken.

**Rev. 21:1-2.** *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband."*

## **GOD'S WORKING DAYS**

Let us look at these epochs of time briefly so we can understand better why God chose Israel and is accomplishing His will to happen through that little country and nation.

### **First day, from Adam to Noah.**

In the first 1000 years after the fall, mankind was allowed to live according to their conscience. Our Creator gave us all a conscience, that little, sensitive, inner feeling. It is like a bell that rings every time we go against God's will. Mankind could choose whether to be guided by God's voice or by Satan's voice. God could have created us as robots, which would do all He said without question. But He wanted a people who would freely do His will. After Adam, there was a long time, when pride, envy and murder guided man's thoughts and deeds. Mankind should have lived in fellowship with God in peace and harmony. Instead, our relationship with God was broken through sin and uncleanness. Sin was master because mankind had fallen and sought its own will instead of that of God. Satan, who had fallen from heaven because of pride, influenced man to be proud and disobedient to God. He tirelessly worked to destroy mankind. Caine, the first baby of mankind, through the influence of Satan, killed his own brother and became also the first murderer. Therefore, God had to take a stand and defeat the evil. The Lord regretted at one time that He had made man, because man became corrupted and loved sin and selfishness more than God's Word.

**Gen. 6:5.** *"Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."*

This was the result of the intermarriage between the sons of God with the daughters of man, against the will of God, and thus contaminating humankind.

God intervened to judge sin and yet save humankind by sending the deluge on the earth. There was one righteous man, Noah, whom God protected. Through him and his family, a whole new time began when God again could work to restore the relationship with mankind in peace and joy.

### **Second day, from Noah to Abraham.**

About 1000 years passed. God blessed Noah and promised him and his descendants that there would never again be a flood. If mankind would live according to God's word, His blessing would be upon them. But only a short time after Noah and his family left the ark, sin again increased in power. Noah's son Ham sinned (Genesis 9), and brought a curse upon his descendants.

Noah and his three sons Shem, Ham and Japheth left the ark. Noah planted a vineyard and drank the wine. When he became drunk, he bared himself inside his tent. When Ham saw his father's nakedness, he went out and told his brothers about it, instead of covering his father's nakedness. This made his father angry when he came to his senses and he cursed Ham's tribe:

**Gen. 9:25.** *“Cursed be Canaan (Ham's son); A servant of servants He shall be to his brothers.”*

The other two brothers, Shem and Japheth, had covered up their father and Noah said of them:

**Gen. 9:26-27.** *“Blessed be the Lord, The God of Shem; And let Canaan be his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, And let him dwell in the tents of Shem; And let Canaan be his servant.”*

When we read of Noah's three sons, we see in Genesis 11, that Shem's tribe was chosen by God. Out of Shem's tribe, Abraham was born. God saw that Abraham was upright in his heart. So through him God could form and create a whole new people, who were willing to live by faith in God's Word. We shall hear much more about this. But first we shall see God's order and "working days" through further generations.

### **Third day, from Abraham to Moses.**

Through Abraham a new nation was born to fulfill His promise to Abraham in Gen. 12:1-3. God used many trials and tribulations to fulfill His plan for mankind, so there would be a way for us all to be saved. In order to protect His plan and promise of salvation for all mankind, God also gave a promise that will protect the carriers of His salvation to the nations – the people of Israel (Gen. 12:3). These descendants of Abraham were the beginning of the people of faith.

### **The Name Israel**

This name also came through Abraham and his descendants. Abraham had the son Isaac whom God had promised him. Isaac and Rebecca had two sons, Jacob and Esau.

It was in fact Esau who was the firstborn and should have inherited the blessing, but because he had sold his birthright for a meal, his younger brother Jacob inherited it.

Esau was angry with Jacob when he discovered that Jacob had inherited the blessing and wanted to kill his brother. Then Jacob fled to his uncle Laban. Jacob married Rachel and at God's call returned to his land. Though he greatly feared his brother Esau he humbled himself and prayed to God for help.

In Genesis 32:24-32 we read of how the treacherous Jacob is alone with God and struggles with Him. Jacob's hip goes out of joint and he loses the battle with God. Then Jacob calls on God for grace:

**Gen. 32:26-29.** *"Then he said, 'Let me go, for the dawn is*

*breaking.' But he said, 'I will not let you go unless you bless me.' So he said to him, 'What is your name?' And he said, 'Jacob.' He said, 'Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed.' Then Jacob asked him and said, 'Please tell me your name.' But he said, 'Why is it that you ask my name?' And he blessed him there."*

Jacob's humbling before God brought him blessing and redemption. That is God's principle. All His promises came to pass for Jacob and his descendants after that night when Jacob became an Israel. Therefore his descendants are called Israelites.

In Exodus 1, we read that Israel (Jacob) and his sons came to Egypt with their families. They were mistreated and made slaves. God then started a new epoch in order to get the Israelites out of Egypt and out of slavery. Moses was born as the one who would lead Israel's people out of Egypt into The Promised Land.

#### **Fourth day, from Moses to Jesus**

In order to help Israel, God gave His Word, the law, to Moses. God would use the law to protect Israel's people so that with it, they would keep themselves free from sin and ruin. We read through the rest of The Old Testament how through the law and the prophets He taught His Word to Israel's people in order to lead them into that land, which He had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It was a long process during which God had to punish the people of Israel time and again because of sin and disobedience. But He kept His promises to Israel. God had decided that, in the end, He would succeed in making a holy people out of Israel's sons and daughters.

Many kings and prophets taught Israel, that God had chosen them, but that it was only when they obeyed Him that they could receive God's blessing. Even though He gave them the law and His holy Word through the prophets, the majority of Israel went on sinning and serving other gods.

God promised them then, that He would send them the Messiah who would save and redeem them. Israel believed and still believes, that the Messiah is a great and just man that shall come and help Israel out of their difficulties. They do not yet believe that the Messiah is Jesus. Only a remnant of Israel's people has discovered Him, but one day they shall all see it and praise Him.

**Rev. 1:7.** *"Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen."*

**Zec.12:10-11.** *"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo."*

**Dan.7:13-14.** *"I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed."*

**Rom. 11:25-27.** *"For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery — so that you will not be wise in your own estimation — that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB. THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS."*

**Jer. 31:31-34.** *“Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the LORD, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”*

John says in:

**Jn.1:17.** *“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

**Table of Generations from Adam to Jacob**

Adam - Genesis 5:1-2  
 Enoch - Genesis 5:22  
 Lamech - Genesis 5:28-29  
 Noah - Genesis 5:29  
 Sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, Japheth

**In Gen 9:26** God is identified with Shem: *"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem"*

Shem's sons Genesis 11:10_26	Ham's sons Genesis 10:6	Japheth's sons Genesis 10:2
Arphaxad Shelah Eber Peleg Reu Serug Nahor Terah Abram Isaac Jacob	Cush Mizraim Put Canaan	Gomer Magog Madai Javan Tubal Meshech Tiras

Shem's sons also include: Elam, Asshur, Lud and Aram.  
 Gen. 10:22

## Chapter 5

# *The days of mercy and the holy day*

### **Fifth and sixth days**

God spoke His Word to Adam and Eve. He spoke to Israel through Moses and the prophets. Israel's people were stubborn and only a few would obey God's words. In God's last two "working days" He speaks through His Son, the Living Word, who became flesh and blood and lived among us. He was born to the virgin, Mary, lived among us, was crucified, buried, had victory over sin and death and was raised from the dead. He now intercedes for us at the right hand of God. (Rom. 8:33-35; Psalm 110:1; Eph. 1:19-22; Heb. 12:1-4).

He will return one day on the Mount of Olives.

**Isa.9:6.** *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders."*

**Isa.11:1-3.** *"A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him - the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of Power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord - and He will delight in the fear of the Lord."*

**Mat.1:18.** *"This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother, Mary, was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she found to be with child through the Holy Spirit."*

**Isa.53:1-6.** *"Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? He grew up before him, like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his*

*appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."*

**Zech. 14:4,8-9,16:** *"In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south... And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. And the Lord will be king over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be the only one, and His name the only one... Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths."*

**Matthew 26:64.** *"Jesus said to him, 'You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.'"*

**Rev. 1:7.** *"Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen."*

(See also Zech. 12:10; Numbers 24:7-9; Isaiah 63:1-2; Rev. 19:11-16; Acts 1:9-11).

**Dan.7:9.** *"As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze."*

**Dan. 7:13-14.** *"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."*

**Rev. 14:1, 21:1-4, 22-27;22:3-5:** *"Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion..."*

God, in His great mercy, has given all mankind a last chance to hear His word and to obey it.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews 1:1-3 there sounds a mighty message to us all about God's plan for redemption. He desires to lead us back into fellowship with God such as Adam and Eve had from the beginning. God will, by way of our faith and free will, lead Israel and the Gentiles into His presence if they ask Him...

**Heb.1:1-3.** *"God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high"*

"In this the final age" (at the ends of days) is the phrase used. This refers to the present. God is about to complete His work by restoring the relationship between Himself and mankind.

## **What is Happening to Israel Today?**

Through the whole Bible we see that God has punished Israel severely for their disobedience and stubbornness. But the whole Bible resounds with God forgiving them and blessing them when they turn again to Him. At the end of time, God will gather Israel again in order to fulfill those promises, which He gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This is stated by all the major and minor prophets in The Old Testament (Isaiah 40:10-12; 51:9-11; 52:8-10; Jer. 23:6; Zeph. 3:14-17; Zech. 2:10,14-16; Ezek. 37:14, 21-28; Hos. 3:5). In our time, God is gathering Israel. This is a great miracle and the greatest confirmation for us that God's Word is true. He is gathering Israel's people from east, west, south and north. Other people who, in the course of time, have immigrated to other countries, have been integrated into the communities they have come to live in, and they have become like the people they have settled among. But the Jews, because of God's choice, have been able to retain their identity while living in the gentile nations.

Some have now returned to their land voluntarily. Many will, in the end, be compelled to return to their home. God has decided it should be. God has given them their land again and gathered His people from more than 100 different countries. This process will continue in our time. God will not give up before He has completed His holy intention. This physical return is for the purpose of the spiritual restoration of Israel.

God wishes to redeem Israel. As yet, most Jews cannot see the way of redemption. However, there exists a growing remnant of believing Jews both in Israel and among the nations. This remnant has believed God and trusted Jesus as their Messiah and Lord. Hallelujah! It is written in scripture that God has allowed the time to stretch out so that all Gentile nations can have an opportunity to be redeemed through belief in God's Word, Jesus Christ. That is grace, grace, grace to all nations!

When the gospel of the Kingdom is preached to all races, the end

will come, says Jesus in Matthew 24:14. When the number of the Gentiles is complete, when all have had the offer of redemption by faith and pure grace, then the end is at hand.

**Mat. 24:14.** *"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."*

Later we will return to see how the last days will be for Israel and the other nations.

### **Seventh day - God's last "day of the week"**

No one knows exactly when the time of God's grace will end. We only know that the time is approaching, because it is written that Jesus shall come the second time at "the end of Days", as we saw above. It is nearly two thousand years now since Jesus was born. All the prophecies of the Bible show us that we are now living in the last part of the last days.

Many have tried to fix a time for the second coming of Jesus Christ and the start of The Thousand Year reign, but only God knows the day and the hour. We know that when The Thousand Year reign begins, the devil, Satan shall be bound for a thousand years and many wonderful things shall happen. When we look at our world today we know that Satan has not yet been bound. He is doubly busy now because he knows his time is short. He knows that his near to come final defeat relates to the return of the Jews to God and the establishment of the Temple and the Kingdom of God in Israel, Jerusalem. He therefore focuses his war and battles against Israel, Jerusalem, the Jewish people and also around the temple mount. We Christian believers who know that, must not be deceived to take any part in it – actively or passively, intentionally or unintentionally, but rather go against it. For example, in recent years we see a growing incitement against Israel and the Jews that focuses around

the temple mount. In a 24-6 vote, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on Thursday the 13th of October 2016 gave preliminary approval to a resolution that denies Jewish ties to its most holy religious sites: the Temple Mount and the Western Wall. Let us not mislead ourselves or let others mislead us. Revelation 20 speaks clearly about The Thousand Year reign; the devil shall be bound.

**Rev. 20:6.** *"Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years."*

### **The 144,000**

Today many speculate about, who these 144,000 are, written about in Revelation chapter 7. Some teachers wrongly say these chosen few are the only ones who are worthy of ruling with God and that all others shall remain on earth. There are many other interpretations of who the 144,000 are.

The Bible clearly states who they are. Revelation chapter 7 tells us that they are the sealed of all Israel's twelve tribes.

**Rev. 7:4.** *"Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144 thousand from all the tribes of Israel."*

They shall be protected from the judgment, which shall fall upon the earth when the wrath of God breaks loose. God still cares for Israel, so none of the tribes shall be extinguished. There are a few out of Israel's twelve tribes, who will not let themselves be besmirched by sin. They will follow the Lamb, Jesus, wherever He goes. They have, according to Revelation 14:4, been ransomed out of mankind as the first fruits for God and the Lamb. Later, the whole of Israel's people turn to God and the Lamb. But God seals 144,000 as a sure first fruit.

The same chapter says:

**Rev. 14:1-3.** *"Then I looked, and there before me was a Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 who had His name and His Fathers name written on their foreheads. And I heard a sound from heaven like a roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth."*

God loves Israel. He has decided to bless Israel. He has chosen a few from Israel's people who shall be especially sanctified unto Him.

Revelation chapter 7 also states that together with the 144,000 there shall be a number whom none can count from all the peoples of earth who shall praise God and the Lamb for all eternity.

**Rev. 7:9.** *"After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb".*

## Chapter 6

# *The cause of the Middle East war*

Today the eyes of the whole world are directed towards the Middle East. The international news media report events concerning the conflicts between Arabs and Jews on a daily basis. The UN is totally biased against Israel as can be seen by the ratio of anti-Israeli resolutions. Let us examine the real cause of the constant unrest in and around Israel. In order to understand it, we must go back to Abraham and Sarah.

God called these two out from their land, their people and their tribe to travel to the land, which God would show them:

**Gen. 12:1-3.** *"The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people, and your fathers household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you a great nation, and will bless you; I will make your name great and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse. And all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

The land, which Abram left, was Mesopotamia, or modern day Iraq. Abram came from a land and a tribe where heathen gods were worshipped. But Abram heard God's voice and did His bidding. God promised Abram that he should become a great people.

God wanted Abram and Sarai to live their lives hearing and trusting in His Word. But they took things into their own hands. They would not wait until God fulfilled His promise to them. Therefore, the problems arose which we have today.

God wanted to give a child to Abram and Sarai. As time passed

and Sarai had still not conceived a child, they went about obtaining a son, Ishmael. When they later received the "promised son", Isaac, the problems began.

The whole world has been affected by the quarrel between Isaac and Ishmael, and there will continue to be a mighty conflict between the descendants of these two half brothers, until God finally intervenes. It is very important for us to be aware of what the Bible tells us about all this, so that we do not pass false judgment upon either party in this dispute.

God promised Abram that he would become a great people and when God showed him the large area of land, which He was going to give him, He said:

**Gen. 12:7.** *"The Lord appeared to Abram and said: 'To your offspring I will give this land.' So he build an alter to the Lord, who had appeared to him."*

God repeats His promise about the land and the offspring.

**Gen. 13:14.** *"The Lord said to Abram after Lot had parted from him. 'Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever'."*

Abram and Sarai were very old. From a human standpoint, it was impossible for them to have children. They had to trust, that for God nothing is impossible.

In the fifteenth Chapter Abram complains to God. "Who shall be my heir?" Abram asks God.

**Gen. 15:3-6.** *"And Abram said, 'You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.' Then the word of the Lord came to him: 'This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir.'"*

*He took him outside and said: 'Look up at the heavens and count the stars if indeed you can count them.' Then he said to him: 'So shall your offspring be.' Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness."*

For Sarai it was more difficult to believe. In Chapter 16 we read that she did not believe that Abram and her descendants would be born through her.

**Gen. 16:2.** *"So she said to Abram, 'The Lord has kept me from having children. Go sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her'. And Abram agreed to what Sarai said."*

The maidservant Hagar became pregnant by Abram. The son she bore later was named Ishmael. Here the conflict began in earnest. When people try to carry out God's work using their own wills, they create problems. It is Abram and Sarai's problems that still plague the people of the Middle East today.

When Hagar became pregnant, Sarai was jealous of her and began to torment her.

Sarai believed that she could take Hagar's child for her own. But when Hagar saw that she was expecting a child, she became arrogant and disregarded Sarai.

**Gen. 16:5-6.** *"Then Sarai said to Abram, 'You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my servant in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge between you and me.' 'Your servant is in your hands,' Abram said, 'Do with her whatever you think best.' Then Sarai mistreated Hagar, so she fled from her."*

Sarai chased Hagar out of the house with her evil temper and envy.

## THE PROMISES TO HAGAR ABOUT ISHMAEL

Hagar was nearly dying in the desert. But out there in the desert, God saw Hagar and showed her mercy. God sent an angel with a message to Hagar saying, that He had seen her and the child she was carrying and that He had compassion for them.

**Gen. 16:10-13.** *"The angel added, 'I will increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count.' The angel of the Lord also said to her: 'You are now with child and you will have a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility towards all his brothers.' She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her. 'You are the God who sees me,' for she said, 'I have now seen the One who sees me.' That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; it is still there between Kadesh and Bered."*

Hagar caught a glimpse of God by hearing the promise that her son would father a great people.

But it was God's will that Hagar should go back to Sarai and Abram and endure the tribulations that were the consequence of returning:

**Gen. 16:7-9.** *"The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. And he said, 'Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?' 'I am running away from my mistress,' she answered. Then the angel of the Lord told her, 'Go back to your mistress and submit to her'."*

It may seem strange to us that the angel said this, but God had a reason for Hagar's return. All the promises she received about her son were dependent upon her turning back as the angel ordered.

God's principle is that those who obey Him in faith, shall experience his promises fulfilled in their lives.

Hagar went back to Sarai and Abram and Ishmael was born. Abram gave the boy the name Ishmael in obedience to God's command.

God watched over Hagar and Ishmael. Even though Ishmael was conceived out of wedlock, and born of the slave girl Hagar, God promised that he would father a very great people. But Ishmael would not inherit the promise that Abram had received from God. God foresaw that Ishmael and his descendants, whom today we know as the Arabs, would be in conflict with other peoples and also among themselves. The history of the Arab world testify to this truth even to this day with the miserable events of the so called "Arab-Spring" and the different radical Islam related wars and terror around the world (ISIS, BOKO HARAM, HAMAS, HEZBOLLAH and others).

Abram was 86 years old when his son Ishmael was born. Abram, before having Isaac, might have wanted to alter God's plans a little so that the promises he received from God could have been transferred to Ishmael. But God would not do this. Because there is no wonder that He cannot do! Nor should we think, that we can alter God's plans today just because we may not see resolutions to today's problems and come up with our own solutions or thoughts. Let us remember that God can, and will fulfill, in His perfect time, each and every promise He made to Abram concerning His promised seed. Ishmael's descendants say that they received the promises about large areas of land because they are Abraham's descendants. However, we see that God's promises were made to Isaac who was born later:

**Gen. 17:18-21.** *"And Abraham said to God, 'If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!' Then God said, 'Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendant after him. And for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father*

*of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year'."*

The cause of the ME war, of the Arab-Israeli conflict is a spiritual one that affects the whole world. The Arab world fights to forcefully and deceitfully take the promises that God chose to give to the people of Israel. As long as the Arab world does not accept God's sovereignty by accepting His choice with regard to Israel, the Arab world will feel rejected and this rejection will reflect itself with spiritual emptiness, anger and violence rooted deeply in its ancestors – Ishmael and Esau.

In Gen. 32:6 we read that Esau is coming with 400 of his people to finally have his revenge at Jacob.

However, in chapter 33 we find a most beautiful picture of the reconciliation between Jacob and Esau. They hug and kiss each other (33:4). What an amazing change of heart.

*"And he (Esau) said, 'What do you mean by all this company which I have met?' And he said, 'To find favor in the sight of my lord.' But Esau said, 'I have plenty, my brother; let what you have be your own'."*

Esau does not any more want Jacob's blessings. He realizes that He is already blessed. He is satisfied!

What has caused the change?

The only major thing that we read about between these two events is the face to face meeting between God and Jacob (Gen. 33:25-31). A meeting that changes the heart and the life of Jacob as reflected by the change of his name from Jacob to Israel. The healing of the Arab world is closely connected to the spiritual healing of the people of Israel.

## Schematic overview of God's promises from Adam to Jacob (Israel).

Adam	Genesis 1: 26 etc.
Noah	Genesis 5:29. 6:9. 7:13.
Abraham	Genesis 12:1 etc.

Genesis 12:1. 18:10. 22:2	The call, promise and offering.
Genesis 15:5	The promise about becoming a great nation.
Genesis 17:1-27	God's covenant with Abraham. The Covenant of Circumcision.
Genesis 17:19	God's covenant goes with Isaac.
Genesis 18:10	Sarah receives the promise.
Genesis 21:1-3	Isaac is born.
Genesis 22:15-19	Abraham's obedient covenant to Isaac.
Genesis 28:10-22	God's covenant continues with Jacob.
Deut. 34:4	Moses sees the land, but does not enter.
Jos. 1:1-4.	The promise continues with Joshua
Ez. 47:13-23,48:1-29	The promise continues with Ezekiel

### Ishmael and his twelve sons.

Genesis 16:11-12. 21:8-21 Genesis 25:12-18 1 Chron. 1:29ff

1 Nebaioth	4 Mibsam	7 Massa	10 Jetur
2 Kedar	5 Mishma	8 Hadad	11 Naphish
3 Adbeel	6 Dumah	9 Teman	12 Kademah

NOTE:

**Gen. 25:18.** *Ishmaels descendants settled in the area from Havilah to Shur, near the border of Egypt, as you go towards Ashur. They lived in hostility towards all of their brothers.*

## Chapter 7

### *The promise about Isaac*

It was difficult for Sarai and Abram to learn to trust God's Word and God's promises.

After Ishmael's birth, thirteen years passed before God again revealed Himself to Abram. He repeated His promises that he and Sarai would have a son together and through that son have many descendants. To strengthen Abram's faith, God changed Abram's name to Abraham. God said to him:

**Gen. 17:4-5.** *"As for me, this is my covenant with you: 'You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham for I have made you a father of many nations'."*

**Gen. 17:15-16.** *"God also said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her'."*

God now wanted to reestablish the relationship with mankind, which He once had with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. He wanted to do this through Sarah and Abraham by faith. They were now to demonstrate their trust in God's Word by calling each other by new names. This required faith because the meaning of those names had not yet been fulfilled in their lives.

In Ge. 21:1-5 we read that God at last saw to it that Sarah became pregnant and bore Abraham a son in his old age. That was a very great miracle at the advanced age Abraham and Sarah had reached, a wonder/miracle of life from the dead, but it was a proof for them

and to all humankind, that nothing is impossible for God and that God will fulfill all the rest of the promises that He gave them. God commanded Abraham to name this child Isaac – a name that is derived from the Hebrew word for laughter. Reminding the human lack of faith and on the other hand reminding God's omnipotence. When the boy grew and was weaned Abraham held a feast. When Sarah saw her son Isaac playing together with Hagar's son Ishmael, she said to Abraham:

**Gen. 21:10.** *"And she said to Abraham, 'Get rid of that slave women and her son, for that slave women's son will never share the inheritance with my son Isaac'."*

Abraham was greatly angered by this. But then God said something to Abraham, which we should note carefully.

**Gen. 21:12.** *"But God said to him, 'Do not be distressed about the boy and your maidservant. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. I will make the son of the maidservant into a nation also, because he is your offspring'."*

So God wanted to bless both sons and their descendants, but it was still God's will, that the prophecies made to Abraham should follow Isaac. No man can alter that fact. We should not hold anything against either Isaac's or Ishmael's descendants. God cares for both of these peoples. Those, who we should oppose, are the evil powers who have embittered people with hate and envy against others. We should be against the Devil who uses these occurrences to disturb the peace of the whole earth. This we shall return to later.

## **GOD'S CARE FOR HAGAR AND ISHMAEL**

Hagar and Ishmael were sent away from Abraham's house. Hagar lost her way in the desert and ran out of drinking water. Hagar believed that the boy would die of thirst when he began to cry.

**Gen. 21:17-21.** *"God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, 'What is the matter Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation.' Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled her skin with water and gave the boy a drink. God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer. While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt."*

Today the Arabs are the descendants of Ishmael. They have become great nations, which surround the little country of Israel where the Jews live.

Through this little nation God will glorify His name and show that He is the Lord of Hosts. Had Israel been a bigger nation with more land, their power and victories in war could have been attributed to their own skill or power. But because they are few and do not have a powerful country, God can show that it is He who struggles for His people and fulfills those promises, He gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In Isaiah 43:10 and 12 God specifically say to the people of Israel "you are my witnesses". It is therefore that what God planned and accomplishes through Israel is for His own sake.

**Isaiah 48:10-11.** *"Behold, I have refined you (Israel), but not with silver; I have chosen you (Israel) in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another."*

The borders, which God has fixed for Israel, will be re-established one day. The Bible states that the people of Israel shall be gathered from the whole world and become a great nation ruling together with Christ and all the holy ones.

**Eze. 36:24.** *"For I will take you out of the nations, I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land."*

**Zec. 14:3-4.** *"Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations, (those who fight against Jerusalem) as he fights in the day of battle. On that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will split in two from east to west."*

When they see that Jesus Christ is their Messiah they shall all be converted on one day and they shall tell of the great works of God to the whole world. For they shall be a nation living righteously for God and mankind, and all God's promises throughout the whole of The Old Testament, shall be fulfilled through them.

**Zec. 12:10.** *"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced. And they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for Him as one grieves for a firstborn son."*

Today the Arab nations are dominant and have influence worldwide. The Ishmaelites demand rights to all the promises, which God gave to Isaac's descendants. Their religion demands the destruction of Israel.

The battle that started when Isaac and Ishmael were small boys has grown in strength and scope so that the whole world is divided because of it. It will not stop until Jesus Christ comes and settles with the anti-Israeli nations. Just as God carried out His plan with Sarah so that she bore a son in accordance with His will, so will God seize the situation and put everything in its place when His time is ripe. Just as God cared for Hagar and Ishmael when they were about to succumb in the desert, so will God also show His care for the Arab nations, when the time comes.

Today superpowers are trying to create peace and order in the Middle East. The United Nations has long conferences and debates

about the Middle East and believes, that it has the solution to the problems. But there is only one, who can guide and rule, so that there will be peace. That one is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ.

## **ABRAHAM'S SACRIFICE**

When Isaac was a boy, God tested Abraham by demanding the sacrifice of Isaac on God's altar. Abraham showed that his trust in God had grown so much that he placed Isaac on God's altar. He was just about to kill his son. But in his heart he knew that God would protect Isaac. Abraham had a strong belief that that little boy would become a great nation through which God would show His power and glory. Abraham believed that God is "able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type." (see Hebrews 11:17-19). At that moment, God saw that this man believed His Word.

Because of his obedience, Abraham is called the Father of Faith. At the very moment that Abraham was about to take the life of his son, God stepped in, rescued the boy and gave Abraham another sacrifice, a substitute, which he could give to God.

Today Israel is a very tiny nation. In the end, she will be taken to the very brink of the abyss of destruction. In her need she will cry out to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and in that moment God will act. God has already given another perfect sacrifice. Jesus Christ is the redeemer of Israel and of all who believe. When Israel is in her greatest distress, God will send Jesus Christ down to the Mount of Olives in order to save His people and destroy the enemy.

**Zec.12:9.** *"And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem."*

**Zec.14:3-4.** *"Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. 4 In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east;*

**JACOB'S TWELVE SONS AND THEIR TRIBAL DIVISIONS**

Genesis 49:1-28. Jacob's twelve sons.

1 Reuben	4 Judah	7 Dan	10 Naphtali
2 Simeon	5 Zebulon	8 Gad	11 Joseph
3 Levi	6 Issachar	9 Asher	12 Benjamin

## Chapter 8

# *A warning to the nations and their leaders*

God makes Jerusalem a dangerously intoxicating cup for all the peoples on earth.

**Zec. 12:2-3.** *"I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves."*

**Joel 3:1-2; 7; 12.** *"For behold, in those days and at that time, When I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations And bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there On behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; And they have divided up My land... behold, I am going to arouse them from the place where you have sold them, and return your recompense on your head... Let the nations be aroused And come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, For there I will sit to judge All the surrounding nations."*

See also Ezekiel Chapters 38 and 39.

God will make the Jews very strong, and those who oppose them will be defeated.

Psalm 2 gives us a prophetic picture of our time. Let us see what it says and pay heed to its warnings:

**Ps. 2:1-4.** *"Why do all nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against His Anointed One. "Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters". The One enthroned in heaven laughs, the Lord scoffs at them."*

This is exactly what we see today. These alliances are getting so irritated by God's anointed (chosen) Israel, and that irritation will increase and end in the whole world turning against Israel. They will say, as we find in Verse 3:

**Ps. 2:3.** *"Let us break their chains", they say, "let us throw off their fetters!"*

People wish to destroy Israel and her influence. Their enemies would like to drive them into the sea. But there are the words in Verses 4-6, which we should consider:

**Ps. 2:4-6.** *"The one enthroned in heaven laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. Then he rebukes them in His anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill."*

God laughs at mankind's big words! We are like little ants in His sight. We believe that we can find solutions and carry out tasks without asking His advice. God has a plan. He has already established His King, Jesus. Soon the King will come to rule with righteousness. God said to His Son:

**Ps. 2:7-9.** *"I will proclaim the decree of the Lord": He said to me. "You are my Son; today I have become your Father. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery."*

We all ought to be very careful not to think ourselves wiser than God. This is especially true with regard to the relationship of the gentiles towards Israel after receiving salvation through the Jews (see Romans 11:17-26). All God's love and righteousness are in Christ. Only those that believe in Him, and ask His advice and submit to His will, shall stand firm when God's judgment falls on the nations.

**Psalm 2:10**, gives good advice to all the world's kings and leaders:

*"Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for His wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him."*

One can protest and resist God, but in the end He will carry out His will. It is hard for humans, especially for leaders, to submit to God's holy will. One sometimes thinks oneself wiser than God. But our pride will end in a mighty fall. God's will shall come to pass whatever we think or say. Therefore, let us submit to God because His will shall be fulfilled.

God's word warns the heathen nations sternly and urgently against fighting against Israel. Therefore, it is important to advise our governments against opposing Israel and agreeing with Israel's enemies. Let God judge and punish! None shall lay extra burdens upon the Jews' shoulders and go unpunished. They have been through frightful sufferings, some of which were not sent to them by God. Those people who martyred them will be severely punished.

God says through the prophet **Zechariah. 1:14-15**:

*"Then the angel who was speaking to me said, "Proclaim this word: This is what the Lord Almighty says: "I am very jealous for Jerusalem and Zion, but I am very angry with the nations that feel secure. I was only a little angry, but they added to the calamity."*

In Ezekiel 25:3-4 there is a greeting to the Ammonites, who fought against God's people:

*"Say to them, "Hear the word of the Sovereign Lord. This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Because you said "Aha!" over my sanctuary when it was desecrated and over the land of Israel when it was laid waste and over the people of Judah when they went into exile, therefore I am going to give you to the people of the East as a possession."*

The rest of the Chapter deals with how God will punish all the enemies of Israel.

During our time as missionaries we have seen that when governments and nations curse Israel, curses gradually fall on these nations. These curses include famine, lack of rain, plagues, increase of violence, drug usage and breakdown of the family.

This judgment includes all of the nations of today, which are behind dividing up the physical land of Israel and giving it to various Arab nations and groups. Joel 3:2.

1 Kings 8:35, states that when people sin against God, He can close the skies so no rain falls and the same is spoken of in Deuteronomy 11:17. In Zephaniah 3:19 it states that a day will come when God will destroy all who have resisted Israel.

Zephaniah Chapter 2 speaks also about God's judgment against those who exalt themselves and scorn the people who belong to the Lord of Hosts.

The words God spoke to Abraham when He called him out from his land, his people and his father's house, are still valid today: *"I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you, I will curse."*

It is a blessing to live close to God and to do His will, but it is fearful to fall into the hands of the living God!

In Matthew 25:31-46 Jesus Himself says that when the Son of Man comes in all His glory and all the angels with Him, then He shall judge all peoples. I believe that the judgment will be determined according

to how each nation has treated Jesus' brothers, the Jews. This is because God chose Israel to be His witnesses (see Isaiah 43:10,12) and therefore, one's relationship towards Israel reveals this person's faith and understanding of God's nature and character. Israel therefore becomes a test and a challenge of faith that no nation can ignore and no believer can disregard. God will judge nations, as well as individuals, also according to how they received or rejected God's revelation through Israel. In this regard God, in His plan of salvation, has established a parallelism between Israel and Jesus the Messiah (see Isaiah 49:3,6).

All those who have stood by passively and not helped Israel when she was hard pressed, hungry, naked, in prison or sick, will not be received into God's kingdom. They will be cursed for evermore. Jesus says it very clearly and firmly in Verse 41: "*... Depart from me, you who are cursed, into eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*"

We would rather not believe the harsh reality of God's words. But we will all be tested against them in our relations with Jesus' smallest brothers. We cannot stand by passively and say: "That I cannot decide about. I will stay neutral." God will test every single nation, people and leader regarding their attitudes towards Israel.

Many nations do not wish to take a stand either for or against Israel because economic and trading consequences for them would follow. If one is for Israel, it will cost something. God will see if we are willing to pay that cost, just like He tested the faith of Abraham. In Denmark, when King Christian X, risked his life for the Jews, God blessed and protected our nation. It is told, that the king was willing to make himself a Jew and put on the armlet, which identified Jews during the war. The king said then: "If Jews have to wear the armlet, so shall I!"

This influenced Danes to such an extent that the majority were willing to risk life and limb to rescue the Jews from Nazi persecution. Many Danish freedom fighters risked their lives to save Jews by ferrying them to Sweden.

This courageous act is still remembered today by all Jews. But more importantly it is remembered by God.

It is a very great responsibility to be a national leader and to deal rightly before God. It is also a great responsibility to be leader of a church. The people follow the leader. In all nations there are individual persons who disobey the government's laws and act according to their inner convictions. But as nations we will all have to settle our accounts.

It must be our prayers that our leaders will in the future go ahead and help Israel even though enemies may threaten and rage. God sees it and He blesses the countries, which dare to help His people.

This is also why Israel is in the center of a spiritual war. Many forces come together to paint and illustrate Israel as an evil and un-just country so that people, including Christians, will take a stand against Israel or at least not be actively stand for Israel. In the past, before Israel was established as a state and for generations, this evil effort was done through anti-Semitism – much of it in the Church. After the birth of the state of Israel in 1948 and especially in the recent 20-30 years, this same hatred is focused against Israel. However, in it's essence it is the same old story. We, Christians who love the God of Israel, must be aware of this and be very careful not to be caught and affected by this spiritual disease – hatred to the Jews or to Israel.

## Chapter 9

# *What is Semitism and anti-Semitism*

It can be difficult to understand when words like Semitism and anti-Semitism are used today.

If we wish to understand them we can find out much from a study of the family trees recorded in the Bible. Sometimes, when we wanted to read the Bible from beginning to end, we thought that we could skip the family trees (the "begats"). They are boring, we may think, and many think it was unnecessary to include in the Bible.

We have learned from our African friends that the family trees in the Bible are very exciting. After studying the family conditions among the first generations in the Bible one finds that there is nothing haphazard about God our Creator.

God wanted men to live righteously before Him and bring blessings to the world's peoples. But as we have read, it was difficult for God to find upright men who would listen to His words and follow His ways.

In the end, God had to send the Flood as judgment upon sin. The only people left on earth, after the flood were Noah and his family.

God did not choose Noah by chance. Noah was the only righteous man who could then be found. His great grandfather was the righteous Enoch. Enoch walked with God and was taken home to God in a supernatural way.

Noah's father Lamech spoke prophetic words over Noah when he was to be named:

**Gen. 5:28-29.** *"When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. He named him Noah and said, "He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the Lord has cursed."*

God made sure that from Noah's own life and family there would come comfort to a world, which lived divided from God. A division which was a result of Adam and Eve rebelling against God and submitting to Satan at the Garden of Eden. However, already then God started to reveal His plan of salvation. A plan to restore God's relationship and fellowship with a fallen human race through the Messiah that will come as the Seed of the Woman (Gen 3:15).

**Gen 3:15.** *“And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”*

This is a key verse and sheds much light on the events to follow and on God's plan of salvation.

Satan, the serpent, knowing that his final defeat will be carried out through the Seed of the Woman, will now do anything to save himself by the destruction of this seed.

We therefore see that the first baby of the human race, Cain, becomes a murderer that murders his own brother.

This was not but a scheme of Satan to bring more death and destruction upon the human race through a continued cycle of revenge (Gen 4:14). When God prevents this cycle of death by protecting Cain with a sign on his forehead, Satan sought another path to destroy the seed of the woman: the intermarriage of the sons of God with the daughters of man (Gen.6:1-4). This was an attempt to contaminate the human race as God created it – sacred unity between man and woman. The result of this contamination is described in:

**Gen. 6:5:** *“Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”.*

The spiritual situation of mankind reached the very bottom. It was so bad that if God would not have intervened with the flood,

ALL of the human race would have been contaminated. The flood was indeed a punishment but also an act of God to save humankind through one righteous man – Noah, before it is too late.

Lamech's prophetic choice of the name Noah (= comfort in Hebrew) fit the circumstances. When God wanted to destroy a ruined mankind He kept and protected only Noah and his family. Through them He would save mankind and bring a blessing to the earth.

### **After the Flood**

When Noah and his family left the ark, they began a completely new life. However, it was not long before one of Noah's sons sinned against his father Noah who became very angry with him. Noah's three sons were named Shem, Ham and Japheth.

When they started their new lives there was only one language on the earth, and that was probably Hebrew.

**Gen. 9:18-19.** *"The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan). These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the earth."*

**Gen. 9:20-23.** *"Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard. When he drank some wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backwards and covered their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father's nakedness."*

Noah blessed Shem because he covered up his father and hid his shame.

**Gen. 9:24-27.** *"When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, he said, "Cursed be Canaan! the lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers." He also said: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem! May Canaan be slave of Shem. May God extend the territory of Japheth; may Japheth live in the tents of Shem and may Canaan be his slave."*

## **SHEM'S DESCENDANTS ARE THE SEMITES**

Shem knew what was right when he helped his father and therefore he was chosen to be the instrument of bringing further blessing to the earth following Noah.

If we study Shem's family tree in Chapter 10, we see that one of his sons was named Arphaxad.

From his family later came Eber, meaning "a shoot". His name can also mean "Semer-Hebrew" and it is very likely that the Hebrew language, after the confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel, came down through his family.

Out of the family of Eber, came Nahor. He became the father of Terah, who was the father of Abraham.

So it was no accident that it was precisely Abraham who was chosen by God to go out trusting in God's Word to be the father of faith for us all. Abraham came from a righteous people.

By His wisdom and sovereignty, in **Gen 12:1-3** God instructs and promises to Abraham: *"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."*

These are verses that shed much light on God's plan of salvation. At this point God made Abraham the target of Satan and his war to

destroy the humankind. Satan knew that it is through Abraham that God will raise the seed of the woman that will defeat him forever. Satan became the first anti-Semite.

Even if many in his country followed heathen gods, God saw in Abraham a man who could bring blessing and comfort back to the world.

From Abraham and Isaac came Jacob who was later named Israel. His twelve children became the heads of the twelve tribes into which God Himself divided the Jewish people. Therefore they are descended from Shem.

Even though the Jews have been dispersed throughout the whole earth, they all learn Hebrew when they come home to Israel; one hears all of them learn to speak only Hebrew in Israel today.

They are Semites, descendants of Shem. anti-Semite means: against Shem's tribe. So that also means anti-Hebrew (people).

We know that David was a descendent of Shem and that Jesus descended from King David. So when we are anti-Semitic we are also anti-Christian, denying both our Saviour and our father in the faith, Abraham. We must therefore understand that genuine Christians cannot and must not be anti-Semitic. We must be very careful at this time when the whole world turns against the Jews. To be against the Jews is to support their enemies. Jews and upright Christians will, in the last days, become more and more closely associated since they have the same roots.

Neither Christians nor Jews are fighting against flesh and blood. We believe the fight is against spiritual powers, which are attempting to remove God's blessing from the earth. Which are attempting to destroy all of mankind.

This explains the persecution and suffering of the Jewish people throughout history, from Pharaoh to Hitler and the Arab world, through Haman and the crusades.

Because of the massive resistance from the evil powers in the last days, the upright Christians who love God's Words and God's people will be led closer together and will become one. Jesus' prayer as high priest will be fulfilled. He prayed in John 17, asking His Father that His disciples all might be one. Our common foe draws us closer to one another. Out of anti-Semitism will come an anti-Christ who shall mislead all who will not listen to God's Word and obey Him. A warning goes out to all in our time. Take a decided stand for Christ and for Israel!

I awakened one morning with this sentence quite clearly within me: FOR GOD AND FOR ISRAEL! That has since become our motto. We will never let God down and we will never let Israel down. We have nothing to fear. God is on our side. It is sad for the many who are being misled by the evil one and will not listen to God. It will be very hard for them when God's wrath falls upon the earth. God has had a plan of salvation from the very beginning. His will is that all mankind shall be saved. But as it was in the time of Noah, so it is now.

In Genesis 10:1-32, we can read about Noah's generations, and in Genesis 11:10-32 we read about Shem's generation up to Jacob.

**SHEM'S GENERATIONS Ge. 10:1-32.**

SHEM  
ARPHAXAD  
SHELAH  
EBER  
PELEG  
REU  
SERUG  
NAHOR  
TERAH  
ABRAM  
ISAAC Gen. 21:1-7  
JACOB Gen. 25:19-27

**JESUS' GENERATION**

The following are two tables of Jesus' generation and earthly family.  
Mat. 1:1-17 and the Luke 3:23-38.

Judah	Judah
Boaz	Boaz
David	David
Solomon	Levi
Ezekias	Eli
Zerubabel	Joseph
Jacob	Jesus
Joseph, Mary's husband	
Jesus	

## Chapter 10

# *What is Zionism and Christian Zionism*

The word Zionism comes from the rock fortress Zion, which King David annexed and settled upon 3000 years ago when he took Jerusalem. In that fortress, he was later crowned King. Zion is a mountain in Jerusalem. After David's coronation, Jerusalem was called the City of David.

This was, and ever since has been, a holy place for all Jews. In King David's time, the Ark of God was moved there after it had stood as a great blessing in the house of Obed-Edom.

**2.Sam. 6:12-13.** *"Now King David was told, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God." So David went down and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing."*

David's son Solomon later built God's temple on the exact place where the ark had stood. Jews call that place God's holy mountain, the place where He dwells.

Zion may signify the whole of Jerusalem as God's holy city where during all festivals in Israel people gathered for worship and festivities. The Bible calls the inhabitants of Jerusalem Zion's children and often refers to inhabitants in the city as "Zion's daughter". (see Micah 4:6-14; Zeph. 3:14; Zech. 2:10; Zech. 9:9; John 12:15)

Jerusalem was and still is the spiritual capital city for all Jews and they call the city Zion. When they meet elsewhere in the world they remind each other, that one day they shall return to Zion, their

Jerusalem, where the Messiah shall come and become their King. No one can shake their belief that Zion is their holy place because God's Word says so. (see Ps. 122).

There was great rejoicing when their land was declared an independent state in 1948. The joy was no less when they regained their Zion, the city of David, Jerusalem that was compact together, as their capital city in 1967 (Ps. 122:3). When studying the facts about the wars of modern Israel (the 1948 war of independence, the six day war of 1967 and the Yom Kipur war of 1973), one can not but admit that it is only through divine intervention and miracles that Israel, a very small and challenged nation, against all odds, won all of these wars. And when understanding the Middle East and its hostility towards Israel and the Jews, one realizes that the existence of Israel is nothing but a daily evidence of the truth of the Word of God.

Many of the Zionists believe that the Jews are specially chosen by God as His own people and that all the prophecies in The Old Testament shall be fulfilled to the letter: That covenant which God made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob stands fast and immutable and its promises shall be kept in full. They are called Zionists

Christian Zionism is not some political organization but is a large movement of Christians over the whole world, who believe as the Jewish Zionists do. They have a great love for the Jews and they help support the Jews in their struggle to rebuild Israel's land. The Christian Zionists believe fully and firmly in God's promises to Israel. They believe that Jew and Christian have the same root and are branches of the true olive tree (Paul uses the picture of Israel as a true olive tree in Romans 11). The Jews are the natural descendants of Abraham, and the Christians are Abraham's descendants by virtue of their belief in God's Word.

In the past, Christian Zionists have not been as large in number as they are now. They will surely grow in number and influence in the future. In the beginning of this century there were not so many who thought that God's Word would be fulfilled, so far as it concerned the

Jews, as it is being now. But when we were children, 75 years ago, we heard our parents foretell that there would come a day when the Jews would get their land again. We listened and wondered when our elders told us that the scriptures stated that the Jews would be carried home as on the wings of birds to their country. We know now that our parents were Christian Zionists who believed in God's Word being literally fulfilled for the Jewish people. That seed that was sown in our hearts as children grows and fills us with joy. We must be glad when we now see day by day how all those things, which God has said in His Word are coming to pass:

**Eze. 36:24.** *"For I will take you out of the nations, I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back to your own land."*

**Isa. 11:11-12.** *"In that day the Lord will reach out His hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of His people from Assyria, from the Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the Islands of the sea. He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel. He will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth."*

In our childhood it seemed impossible to human eyes; but today, so few years later, it is actually happening!

The New Testament also speaks of rebuilding the fallen house of David (Israel and Jerusalem, the city of David).

**Acts. 15:13.** *"After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent (house). Its ruin will be rebuild, and I will restore it..."*

Christian Zionists do not wish to be a political organization, as some are tempted to call them. They are Christians who stand together with Jews believing the prophetic word. They stand against the powers of this world, which want to destroy Israel.

The Christian Zionists will proclaim Israel's right to exist and the

Jews' right to return home and take possession of their promised homeland. These include those Jews who today are hindered from returning by governments, officials and by the powers of darkness.

As Christians we will recognize and confess our roots in the faith, which come out of Abraham's obedience to God.

Abraham, our father in faith was a Hebrew and father to the Jewish people. Jesus, our Savior and Lord was a Jew. The apostles were Jews and redemption has come to us from the Jews (“... for salvation is from the Jews”. John 4:22).

We owe them respect and honor (Rom 3:1-2; 9:1-5; 11:18,29). Jesus was born in Israel. It was in Jerusalem that God commanded the blessing of eternal life (Psalm 133:3) because it was there that Jesus died for our sins and rose from the grave on Easter morning. In Jerusalem (on the Mount of Olives) Jesus took leave of his disciples and went up to the heaven. In Jerusalem the Holy Spirit came down on the first believers. Jesus promised that He would rise again and stand on the Mount of Olives as the transfigured Messiah. Jesus shall rule over the whole world during the Thousand Year Kingdom from Jerusalem. From there, the law shall go forth over the whole earth (Isaiah 2:1-4; Micah 4:1-3).

In his spiritual war, Satan works tirelessly to turn the nations, and even Christians, against Zion and against Israel. He slanders and muddies these names and anything that positively relates to and with them. Sadly, too many, including Christians, fall into this pit of Satan. We must realize that "He who keeps Israel Will neither slumber nor sleep" (Ps. 122:4) and "For thus says the Lord of hosts, "After glory He has sent me against the nations which plunder you, for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye." (Zech. 2:8)

**Rom. 4:16-17.** *"Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abrahams offspring - not only to those who are of the law, but also to*

*those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations. He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed - the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were."*

During the Second World War and other times in history, Jews experienced a counterfeit Christianity. They have not experienced God's love and mercy through Christianity as they could and should have (Rom. 11:31). Therefore, for many years they have tended to be negative and distrustful when meeting Christians.

But after discovering that there are many Christians today who seek to care for, encourage, support and comfort the Jews in their problems, they are beginning to wonder and to open up to the Gospel. Many Jews have begun to study The New Testament and found their true comfort in Jesus the Messiah and many are now ready to talk about Jesus.

As Christians, we have obligations towards Israel when many others scorn and despise her. That does not mean that we should be anti-Arabic. God also loves the Arabs and so should we. He wants to redeem the Arabs and save them. He has a plan for them, too. One day Egypt and Assyria shall also be a blessing on earth, together with Israel:

**Isa. 19:22-25.** *"The Lord will strike Egypt with a plague; he will strike them and heal them. They will turn to the Lord, and He will respond to their pleas and heal them. In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and the Assyrians will worship together. In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth. The Lord Almighty will bless them, saying, "Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance."*

Now that Israel is under world pressure, we must support her people as the chosen people of God. We must declare that God has chosen them as His special possession. We must labor together with God in comforting and helping His own people after all the sufferings they have been through.

Let us NOT be silent or passive towards the epicenter of God's plan of salvation – Israel and the Jews. Let us stand firm and true to the challenge of faith that there is in Israel and the Jews.

Today we live in a time, when evil increases, love cools among the majority and many think more of themselves than of their neighbors.

Let us, as Christians and Christian countries, be filled with God's love towards all mankind and most of all, towards Israel which has such sore need of it just at this time.

God is jealous for Zion, and we as God's people should be jealous for Zion:

**Zec. 8:1-3.** *"This is what the Lord Almighty says: "I Am very jealous for Zion; I am burning with jealousy for her." This is what the Lord says: "I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the Lord Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain."*

**Rom. 1:16.** *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."*

## Chapter 11

### *The woman and the boy-child*

The book of Revelation chapter 12 describes a woman giving birth to a boy child. Here we see a picture of the deepest course of the war in the Middle East and Israel's problems. Today many nations and countries are at war or adversity. We hear of frightful and unjust things from many parts of the world without being particularly concerned about them. Soon we forget most of what we have heard. But it is not so with Israel. In spite of the wars and gross violations of human rights happening in Libya, Iraq, Yemen, Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf countries, Iran and especially the cruel bloody war in Syria, in which tens of thousands of children are killed, the United Nations Human Rights committee by far and continually issues more resolutions condemning Israel, the only democratic country in the Middle East, than against any other country. The gross bias of the United Nations against Israel is overlooked, dismissed and being used as a fig-leaf to hide and ignore the real human rights issues and atrocities that are taking place in many countries in the ME and beyond.

All that happens to this little nation is noted and talked about. The eyes of the whole world are directed towards Israel, and today most countries in the world are against Israel. Why?

It is not people who are Israel's enemies. The devil himself is Israel's worst enemy. He is the cause of the great trials and problems, which have always beset the Jews. This is true for Pharaoh who charged his people to cast every baby boy of the Hebrews to the Nile in Ex. 1:22. It is also the case with Balak, the king of Moab, who called Balaam,

the pagan priest, to course Israel when they were just about to enter and inherit the promised land in Numbers 22:2-6. We find the same pattern in the book of Esther when Haman is convincing king Ahasuerus to destroy the Jews (3:9). This is true not only for Biblical times but also in modern human history. It is sad and true that the Holocaust of WWII rode the long wide road of religious Christian anti-Semitism.

As long as God continues to fulfill His plan of salvation to people of every tribe and every nation, and His plan to establish His kingdom of Peace here on earth, in the midst of the People of Israel, Satan will continue to try and destroy the people of Israel who are the key in this divine plan of God.

The Book of Revelation shows this to us in an exciting parable in Chapter 12:

**Rev. 12:1.** *"A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth."*

Israel is often compared to a woman in the Bible. In this scripture, it is clear that it is Israel which is the subject. Israel lies in the middle of the earth where the sun stands high in the heavens. Israel has twelve stars on her head: Twelve tribes into which God Himself has divided the people. The description of the house of Israel as Sun, Moon and stars is found also in the second dream of Joseph, in Gen. 37:9. It is because God chose them to be a source of light and guidance, a blessing, to the nations. The Sun, Moon and stars are sources of light and guidance by which people used to navigate. In **Isaiah 60:3** we read about the future glory of the house of Israel, the daughter of Zion: *"Nations will come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising"*.

As we have seen all the way from Abraham's time, God worked with this country to bring about reconciliation between God and mankind. Through Israel, the Messiah, Jesus Christ, was to be born. When we see the list of tribes who are part of Jesus' earthly family, we see a part of men and women who wished to live to the honor of God.

*"She was pregnant, and in the anguish of her labor she cried out to be delivered",* we read. Before Jesus was born, Israel was in the greatest distress it had ever been in.

A similar picture of deliverance we find also in Isaiah 52. There we read about the messenger who will return from the battle to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to the daughter of Zion, with a message of Peace and Victory: *"How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!" (52:7).*

Reading this chapter it is clear that the prophet speaks of a spiritual victory. He speaks of the Comfort, Redemption and Salvation of Israel in Christ Jesus that God will one day establish and reveal to the world:

*"Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices, They shout joyfully together; For they will see with their own eyes When the LORD restores Zion. Break forth, shout joyfully together, You waste places of Jerusalem; For the LORD has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has bared His holy arm In the sight of all the nations, That all the ends of the earth may see The salvation of our God." (v. 8-10).*

This victory is so great and God's way to achieve it – through His suffering servant - is so much beyond human thoughts and understanding, then and to this day, that chapter 53, starts with the words *"Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?"*.

Because of these prophecies and others (such as Isaiah 7:14), many looked forward to the Messiah being born and freeing the land from the hand of the enemy. There was prophecy about this time also in:

**Mic. 4:8-10.** *"As for you, O watchtower of the flock, O stronghold of the Daughter of Zion, the former dominion will be restored to you; kingship will come to the Daughter of Jerusalem. Why do you now cry aloud - have you no king? Has your counselor perished, that pain seized you like that of a woman in labor?"*

Here we see a prophecy, which matches the words from Revelation 12 about Israel's situation:

**Rev. 12:2.** *"She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth."*

The Jews themselves did not discover that the Messiah had been born. They had not reckoned that He would be born in a stable.

But there was someone else who discovered it and from the first was watchful: the devil! he knew that this baby is his greatest enemy and the one who will defeat him once and for all. He therefore tries to destroy him. It is written about the devil in

**Revelation 12:3.** *"Then another sign appeared in heaven, an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born."*

From the dawn of time when the devil, the old serpent, deceived Adam and Eve, we know that God had a plan to save mankind from sin and the devil. Before God punished man for his sin in Gen. 3:16, He revealed His plan to restore man back to Himself.

God said to the devil in **Genesis 3:15**:

*"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers. He will crush your head and you will strike his heel".*

Israel's land and the Jewish people were chosen by God to give birth to a woman, who later gave birth to Jesus, the Messiah who should destroy the devil's works. So Satan raged already from the moment that God revealed His plan and definitely from the moment that Jesus was born. He tried, from the beginning, to "devour" the boy child who was to be born.

When Satan was in heaven in the beginning, he was called Lucifer. He was like the largest and brightest of "the stars." But he was ambitious and rebelled because he wanted to be greater than God. So he was cast out of heaven and fell down to earth (see Isaiah 14:12-15). Together with him, his tail swept down a whole army of other "stars," a third of all those which were with him in heaven.

They are now his angels and messengers and they try to destroy the earth. They work upon and through people who will not have anything to do with God. It says in Verses 7-9 that there was great strife in heaven. The Archangel Michael and his angels struggled against the dragon and the dragon and its angels struggle with them:

**Rev. 12:7-9.** *"And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But the dragon was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down, - that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him".*

When Jesus was to be born, Satan did all he could to hinder the woman Mary and the woman Israel from giving birth to Jesus. "And there was no room for them at the inn." The evil one tried to prevent the birth.

**Rev. 12:5.** *"She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter."*

The King of Kings was born in spite of the devil's resistance. King Herod heard that Jesus had been born in Bethlehem and that the wise men had come from far away to worship the child. So he tried to destroy Jesus by slaying every male child in the land.

Herod asked the wise men to tell where the child lay. "I will also worship him," he said. But his intention was to kill Jesus, the boy-child. Just like Pharaoh, Haman and others before him, who failed to destroy Israel and thus prevent the birth of the savior, Herod failed as well! However, the devil continues with his efforts. He uses the same trick today. The devil appears as an angel of light in order to kill all who have anything to do with Jesus. He hates Israel because the boy-child, the Messiah was born there and came to the world through the people of Israel. It was in Israel and amongst the Jewish people that the tree of Golgotha was raised where Jesus destroyed the works of Satan. Through His resurrection, Jesus vanquished Satan and brought reconciliation between God and mankind. Through His death on the cross and His resurrection, Jesus abolished death once and forever. All who believe experience the blessed contact with God through Jesus Christ.

It was in Israel, that Jesus rose from the dead. While today all nations make pilgrimage to Israel to see the places where Jesus died and rose again, Satan rages. He does his utmost to prevent people from remembering and understanding what Jesus did for us.

On the Mount of Olives, the glorious risen Jesus took leave of His disciples and promised that one day He would return in the same way that He departed. Satan hates the land and the people whom God used to bring the Saviour to the earth. Satan knows that when Jesus comes back He shall come as ruler and shall bring peace and reconciliation. In Rev. chapter 12, we read about the dragon and now the boy-child was snatched up to God and His throne. Yet one day He will rule all mankind with an iron rod.

## Why Does't God Rescue the Whole World Now?

It is written that when Satan fell down from heaven together with his angels, yet Jesus triumphed over them. **(verse 10)**

*"Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down"*

But then come the conditions for the triumph of mankind.

**Rev. 12:11.** *"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death."*

All who believe that Jesus died for the sins of the world, confess Him by the words of their mouths, and are willing to die for Him, are those who will triumph over the evil one.

The time that lies before us now will be difficult for those who do not stand on God's side. In **Rev. 12:12** it says

*"Therefore rejoice you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury because he knows that his time is short."*

It says a couple of times in this chapter that when the dragon rages against the woman Israel, God will soften His heart and carry off His people to a place where they can hide themselves for a time.

**Rev. 12:14.** *"The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to a place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpents reach."*

We have seen throughout the ages how the people of Israel have been dispersed among the nations and have been led or driven out into the wilderness. Yet God has always kept His eye on them and preserved them as one people. Now they can live in their own promised country. God struggles and fights for His people. The serpent cannot conquer Israel.

It is written in the Book of Ezekiel that Israel's enemies will one day fall on God's people who live in security but the wine of God's wrath will be poured out over their enemies and they will be sorely punished. We see the same in **Revelation 12:15**.

*"Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent."*

There will always be other people or situations, which come to the rescue of Israel when she is in her greatest danger.

When the dragon cannot overcome the woman it will turn against "the rest of her offspring," as it says in the last verse of the chapter, "those who keep God's commandments and maintain their testimony to Jesus." It can only be genuine Christians who are referred to here. Just as God guards Israel, He will guard His people, those who believe in Jesus' name and do not deny God's Word.

## Chapter 12

# *The Dragons head = Israel's enemies*

In the Book of Revelation chapter 12 we read about the dragon, Satan, the old serpent in verse 3.

*“Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads.”*

It was that dragon which would fight against the boy-child, the woman would bear.

Think of this picture when you read about or hear of the struggle in the Middle East. Basically, it is not humans who fight each other. From the very birth of Jesus, men tried to kill Him. In the end they succeeded. It is the devil himself who uses many different men and means to get rid of Jesus and His people. However, God is using Satan’s own actions to promote His plan of salvation and defeat Satan forever.

The rejection and death of Christ on the cross became God’s victory over death forever!

It is written that the dragon had seven heads. That means that he shows himself in seven different ways in his struggle against Jesus and His people. He changes his appearance in order to adapt to circumstances. In that way, he misleads that whole world and all those people who will not acknowledge God and His will.

### **Herod**

Satan came in the form of Herod to kill Jesus. Herod tried to get the wise men to reveal the place where Jesus had been born. Herod said

that he too wanted to see the child and worship Him. A lying spirit filled him and he had the single purpose of killing the child so that Jesus would not become king in his stead. But God rescued Joseph, Mary and the little Jesus-child and allowed them to escape. It was the devil, the dragon, who fought against Jesus but was defeated.

### **Hitler**

The devil came in the form of Hitler to destroy the Jews, those whom the evil one knew would some day return to Israel's land to fulfill many of the end-times prophecies and to be the beginning of the restoration and salvation of Israel and the return of Christ to establish His kingdom. Satan knows the Bible and God's many promises to Israel about Messiah, who will come to rule from Jerusalem. Therefore the devil in the form of Hitler, his followers and helpers, wanted to destroy the Jews. In spite of the devastating disaster and calamity, probably the biggest in human history, Satan was defeated. The state of Israel, the homeland for the Jewish People was established in 1948 in the same ancient and Biblically Promised Land. There is only one such case in human history and it is the one that is written in the Bible. The return of the Jews and the establishment of the state of Israel after 2000 years is a witness to the truth of the Word of God!

### **The Communist Leaders**

The devil came too in the guise of powerful communist leaders who wanted to kill all Jews and Christians or take them as prisoners. They wanted to eradicate those who thought that God existed. They wanted mankind to be in the center, as gods, to rule the world. The war against Israel will become more vigorous in the future, according to the Bible. (Ezekiel 38:1-16). And here too we read how God will intervene in a mighty way to judge and defeat the nations that come against Israel. He will reveal Himself to the people of Israel to establish His everlasting covenant of peace with them, to bless them and dwell amongst them in the sight of all the nations (Ezek. 37:20-28; 38 - 39).

## **A spiritual battle over Jerusalem and the Jewish people**

The Bible reveals that Jesus the Messiah shall return and sit in God's holy temple in Jerusalem amongst His people; It is not a mere coincidence therefore that an Islamic holy site stands at the same location and being used as means to unite the Muslim world, as well as many other nations, against Israel and the Jews and to deny any historic and biblical connection of the Jews to the Temple Mount.

This is nothing but a spiritual battle against the true God and His Word. The nations, including Christian nations, shamelessly spearing the eyes of God.

In recent years, the radical Islam is using the grounds of the temple mount and the so called danger to the “Dome of the Rock” and “Al-Aqsa” mosque, to incite people in Israel and around the world to commit atrocities and terror against Jews and Israelis. The result of which is a growing hatred towards Jews and Israel and more Jewish blood that is being shed in Israel as well in other countries. Jews have recently been brutally attacked and murdered in France, Denmark, Sweden, England, Germany and the USA. However, God, by His divine sovereignty and eternal faithfulness, uses these events to bring more of the Jewish people back to Israel and to give the world a testimony of Himself so that they can still make the right choice regarding Israel, while there is still time.

The Bible speaks clearly about the coming of Jesus, King of Kings, as He has promised. The King Messiah will not dwell in a Mosque. He shall rule a thousand years from Jerusalem and the temple, which shall be built for Him and shall stand exactly where the Word says that it shall stand. Blessed be they that are not against God's Holy Word but are faithful in holding fast to it and living by it.

The devil fights, as the dragon, through different people in order to obtain for himself all the honor, which Jesus shall receive some day. Revelation Chapter 12 closes with a verse, which clearly shows the aim of that struggle.

**Rev. 12:17.** *"Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring - those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus."*

At this the dragon grew furious with the woman, "Israel" and went off to wage war on the rest of her offspring, that is, on those who keep God's commandments and maintain their testimony to Jesus, "the Christians."

If we keep this in mind when we look at the world situation, we can understand better why there is war. We can also know in advance the outcome of that violent battle because it is all prophesied in the Bible. It is predicted that this battle will come. All the prophets in The Old Testament foretell it. Jesus predicts in The New Testament what we can expect to happen.

### **The Result of the Battle**

Our Lord, the Saviour, will appear on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

He will come to comfort His people by revealing Himself to them and pouring His spirit upon them, and He will come to judge the nations and establish His Kingdom.

**Zec. 12:10.** *"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn."*

**Zec. 14:3-4.** *"Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as He fights on the day of battle. On that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem."*

**Zec. 14:9.** *"The Lord will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name."*

There He will destroy all those who took up arms against Israel. Whatever mankind says or thinks, God stands by His promises. He loves Israel and will rescue them from their enemies and restore to them The Promised Land. God loves all mankind but He hates the devil, sin and the great pride, which fills Satan and mankind. Those who will not listen to God's Word and will, but confront Israel in battle, will experience God's terrible wrath. God is love, but His love only reaches full expression through His Son Jesus Christ. No one can believe in Jesus Christ and at the same time hate God's chosen people, Israel.

In the last days, everyone will have to make a decision concerning Israel. We saw it in "mini-format" when our businesses would not trade in Israeli goods because of the conflict in the Middle East. We will see it in the future on a much larger scale.

Those who do battle against Israel battle with God! The dragon will also persecute and battle with those, who are *"of the woman Israel's offspring,"* as it says in Revelation 12:17, *"those who keep God's commandments and maintain their testimony to Jesus."*

But they too are God's chosen people those who by faith in Jesus Christ have been born again, the apple of His eye and His possession, and He will take action to rescue all those who believe in Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Even if they face great resistance and struggle with the evil one, God will rescue them for eternity.

We also read in the Book of Revelation that there shall be two kinds of men before God's throne, who shall sing and praise God in all eternity. They are the hundred and forty-four thousand out of Israel's people together with a mighty host, which no one can count, drawn from all peoples and races and languages, those who believe in His name and do not deny His Word. Rev. 7.

## **The Center of the World - "The Navel."**

Israel dwells at the center, "the navel", of the world it says in the Book of **Ezekiel 38:12b**.

*"People gathers from the nations, rich in livestock and goods, living in the center "the navel" of the land."*

It is written, that the intentions of Gog, who is also the enemy of Israel, will be disclosed by God Himself.

**Eze. 38:10-11.** *"This is what the Sovereign Lord says: "On that day thoughts will come up into your mind and you will devise an evil scheme. You will say, "I will invade a land of unwalled villages; I will attack a peaceful and unsuspecting people..."*

The earth's navel, Israel, will be that great arena wherein the last great battle between God and Satan will be fought out, and which God will win. The whole world will be able to see on their TV screens and other devices how God fights for His people, and the whole world will have to admit that Israel's God helps His people.

**Eze. 38:23.** *"And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord."*

When we were children our parents suggested that all people seeing with their own eyes what was happening in the Middle East, should be interpreted in a spiritual sense. Television was not yet known then. Now we know that it is possible to see all that happens on earth not only by television but also through a variety of computers and hand held devices.

All who live in a large circle around the earth's navel will be able to follow all the events in the Middle East, that great arena. All will come to declare that the Lord is God.

## Chapter 13

# *The reason for God's wrath*

### **IN SUMMARY**

Lucifer wanted to be more powerful than God. He rebelled against God. We can clearly read about that in Isaiah 14:12-14: *“How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’”*

This pride led to a complete separation from God. Lucifer was shut out of Heaven. To sin is to rebel against God and it always brings separation from God, which without Christ, this separation is eternal death. It is taking side with Satan.

In the Garden of Eden, God instructed and warned Adam that *“from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”* (Gen. 2:17).

Adam and Eve surely died in that they were separated from the presence of God. Physical death is not the end. If we are reconciled with God, we will continue to enjoy fellowship with God and be in His presence for eternity. We shall live forever! But if we physically die when we are not yet reconciled with God, then we shall be separated from God forever. We shall die forever. Death is separation from God. We can be physically alive but dead spiritually, separated from God. We can also be physically dead but alive forever at the presence of God. God gave us this short time on earth so that we can know Him and chose LIFE, eternal life with Him.

When Adam and Eve listened to the voice of Satan, rather than to God's voice, the result was a separation from God and expulsion from the Garden of Eden.

Esau, the son of Isaac and grandson of Abraham, despised his birthright, which only God can give, and that carried with it a special favor and blessing. Esau chose to sell his birthright and with it God's blessing, for a dish of food. This led to God giving Esau's blessing to Jacob, Esau's twin brother. Jacob, although he was the younger, received God's blessing and favor in his life. Through him and his tribe God would glorify His name.

Therefore, Jacob's sons, the twelve tribes of Israel, inherited God's promises from their father. As we know, God has not changed because of that decision.

God sent His son Jesus Christ into the world through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Holy Spirit caused the Virgin Mary to bring God's son, Jesus Christ, into the world.

There has always been a battle between God and Satan about who should have honor, power and glory. As soon as Jesus was born, Satan tried to eradicate Jesus so that He could not become the world's Saviour by giving His life on Golgotha.

That battle continues today. The places and faces have changed, but the struggle is the same.

When Jesus rose from the dead, the Kingdom of God defeated the Kingdom of darkness. Jesus ascended to Heaven and sent us the Holy Spirit as helper, guide, comforter and empowerer. Now we can live a victorious Christian life and triumph over evil.

Many ask today: "Can God really be loving when He allows war and so much evil on the earth?"

God is love. God wishes everybody well. God provided and shows us the way, the truth and the life – in Christ. He even demands us to choose life. **In Deut. 30:19** we read *"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants"*.

But the choice is ours. Where people and governments choose to follow evil, God cannot allow His blessing to fall. We all have freedom of choice. Only in Jesus is there freedom and grace. Those who believe in Christ are under God's blessing. There is no other way to God's heart. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.

**1.Ti. 2:5-6.** *"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ, who gave himself as a ransom for all men".*

In Acts, it states clearly whom we should believe in:

**Acts. 4:12.** *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."*

**Jn. 17:3.** *"Now this is eternal life; that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."*

## Chapter 14

### *Israel's other enemies*

It is clear that the spirit of darkness has created many enemies to Israel. I think the whole world can recognize many of Israel's enemies. These enemies battle together against the State of Israel. Even if we hear about peace negotiations, beneath the surface there lies a constant enmity and struggle between these powers against Israel as an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital city.

The most remarkable thing is that many Christians are also turning against Israel. Some Christians believe that biblical promises for Israel are really intended for the Gentile churches or "spiritual Israel". People think that because the Jews killed Jesus and rejected Him as their Saviour, God has rejected Israel. Therefore, those who believe in Christ as the world's Saviour are the new Israel. That part of Christianity is the most hurtful enemy to think about.

The biblical fact is that Jesus came first of all to restore Israel, the Jewish people, back to Himself. And together with it and through it God provided His salvation also to the gentile world and thus He united the Jew and the Gentile in Christ, in Himself.

Isaiah 53 indeed speaks about Jesus the Messiah, but first of all to the Jewish people.

Yes, it is true that *"...He was pierced through for our transgressions"* and that *"He was crushed for our iniquities"*. The transgressions and the iniquities are of the Jewish people whom are the immediate target of these words. But at the same time, they are also the immediate address of the rest of this verse: *"The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us (Jewish people first) like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all (Jewish people first) To fall on Him"*. **Isaiah 53:5-6.**

God has out of pure grace allowed Israel to reject Jesus as Messiah so that the Gentiles too, could have a possibility of salvation. We therefore have no right to believe that God has rejected that people, Israel, whom He loves so dearly. God's Word will never pass away and those promises He gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are still valid.

In the Epistle to the Romans, and especially in chapters 9-11, it is explained to us very clearly what status Israel has in God's eyes:

**Rom 1:16.** *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to every one who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."*

The reason for the focus and priority to the Jews is NOT because of God's favoritism to the Jew. It is an important strategy in God's plan of salvation to the world. The complete defeat of Satan will take place when God will establish His Kingdom! This is the ultimate power of the Gospel, to defeat Satan once and for all and redeem the whole world from his curse. However, the establishment of the Kingdom of God is closely connected with the spiritual return of the Jews to God through Christ.

**In Math. 23:39** Jesus says: *"For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ' BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"*

This is why the Gospel priority is given to the Jews – their return must precede the establishment of the Kingdom of God! A Christian who is not biased and affected by false teachings will have a heart and desire to reach out to the Jew first. Jesus taught us to seek first the Kingdom of God. Reaching out to the Jews is one important way to do so.

**Rom. 3:1-4.** *"Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of*

*all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, "That You may be justified in Your words, And prevail when You are judged."*

**Rom. 9:1-5.** *"I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen."*

These words of Paul are not influenced by personal emotions. We read that it is "the truth in Christ" and that the "Holy Spirit testifies" to these words. If we have the same spirit of Paul, we should understand and identify with His desire for the salvation of the Jews – if not ourselves have the same desire for them.

**Rom. 9: 6.** *"But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel;"*

Many Christians arrived at wrong and false conclusions by misunderstanding this verse. To understand this verse, we need to realize that from the time that God established Israel as a nation, at the occasion of the Exodus, amongst and within the people of Israel, there was a mixed multitude who were NOT part of the Jewish people: "A mixed multitude also went up with them, along with flocks and herds, a very large number of livestock". Exodus 12:39.

In fact, this verse in Rom. 9:6 comes to enhance the physical election of Israel as a nation. The apostle goes back to the beginning of Israel

as a nation to say that not all who are called Israel are included in the physical Israel that God elected. The true people of Israel are the physical descendants of those that God specifically chose and to whom He gave His promises and covenants. It is specifically the physical line that Goes from Abraham to Isaac and to Jacob and not to Ishmael or Esau. That is because of God's sovereignty to elect according to His good will. We must not think that we are smarter than God or that we can or should "fix" what God has done in his divine wisdom. We must obey God and trust that His plan is the best for everyone.

**Rom. 11:1-2.** *"Did God reject His people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God did not reject His people, whom He foreknew."*

Paul declares throughout the whole of this chapter that God, who has chosen Israel, will always allow a remnant of Israel's people to survive. They will worship and trust Him. He explains in Verse 11 the reason why God allowed Israel to backslide:

**Rom. 11:11-12.** *"Because of their transgression, salvation has come to the gentiles to make Israel envious. But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss mean riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring!"*

Paul gives us a clear correction further on in the Chapter if we believe that gentile Christians have become greater than Israel because we have come to believe in Christ. He compares Israel with the true olive tree onto which through pure grace we have been grafted, and we should be careful not to be proud.

**Rom. 11:17-21.** *"If some of the branches have been broken off and you though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in*

*among others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either."*

The whole Bible deals with the Jews' history and future. God has chosen the Jews as His own people. At the same time, God has given to all mankind the possibility of enjoying the same covenant and promises as the Jewish people do. They only need to believe in God's Word, Jesus Christ, who came to earth to lead all back into the presence of God as was the case in the Garden of Eden. But God has not changed His relationship with the Jews. He goes on working with them until all His promises to them are fulfilled. Some of these promises are reflected in the continually growing community, remnant, of Jews who believe in Jesus Christ as their personal saviour.

It is true that the Jews were involved in the crucifixion of Jesus. But the Gentiles helped too, and all are under the same judgment and need the same grace from God.

It is very important that we understand that Israel has not been spurned or rejected by God. Israel has been divided and dispersed throughout the whole world among the generations of Gentiles, but God has never rejected His people. The fact that the Jews have been spread out over the whole earth, and that God in His Word promises them that He will gather them up again from east and west, south and north, is precisely strong evidence of God's love for them. It is the greatest miracle one can imagine which is now happening before our very eyes. The Jews are still God's chosen people and they will go on being so.

Today, Israel has more enemies than friends. In the past, the people of Israel experienced much evil from Christianity but they also now see a blessing. There are some among the Christians who love Israel

and do what they can to show them God's love and the Jews are aware of it at this time. When they see this love of God displayed by the Christians then faith in God will grow stronger.

On the other hand, many Christians despise God's people Israel and are adding to the load, which is hindering rather than helping to support God's people.

Today there are many Jews who buy both The New Testament and The Old Testament in order to find out what the truth is, and many come to believe in Jesus Christ. Not all dare to admit their faith, but they believe in their hearts. When they believe in Jesus as their Saviour, they are born anew in the same way that we are. God has given us all the same way to Salvation, namely by belief in Jesus Christ and the events of Golgotha.

Even if we have been grafted on to the true olive tree because of our faith in Jesus, we must not be proud. God can easily lop us off again.

**Rom. 11:22-24.** *"Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God; sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in His kindness, otherwise you also will be cut off. And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. After all if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!"*

It is only because of our faith that we receive God's grace and goodness. Faithlessness and pride call forth God's anger.

### **God Has No Regrets!**

God takes the wide view. When as many Gentiles have been saved through belief in Jesus as God sees can be saved, a change will occur. We are already beginning to sense this. The time approaches when things will change so quickly that we will hardly be able to follow

what is happening. When the time of grace for the Gentiles is about to run out, God will work strongly with His people Israel.

**Rom. 11:25-32.** *"I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited; Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins." As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies on your account; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, for God's gift and His call are irrevocable. Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you. For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all."*

God saw that if all should go in accordance with what mankind deserved, then none of us would be saved. So God decided to let all find grace and salvation through faith.

In this way, there will be at last one flock and one shepherd. Let us never speak disparagingly about Israel's people. Leave it to God, who judges righteously, to take care of His people. God is using the establishment of Israel as a democratic state in order to bring His people to the Promised Land and in order to establish in it a remnant of Jews who believe in Jesus. It is necessary for the Jews to defend themselves. If they do not guard the tiny country they possess, the large Arab nations will attempt to destroy them and their land.

Let us remember that the Jews are not Christians. They do not know what Jesus said about the love, which fulfills all the other

commandments in the law. Some live according to the law of Moses, others are totally secular and do not believe in God at all.

Note that Israel only responds when they themselves are threatened or attacked. We do not hear of acts of war from the Jewish side against the Arabs unless they have been attacked first. If they are threatened, they respond without hesitation.

We were invited to dinner at the Knesset, together with Israel's Defense Minister in 1988. He said then that:

"Israel is strong enough now to win a war without external aid." He said: "We are neither dependent on the West nor frightened of the East. We can win a war with the weapons we have. This country, which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob's God has given us, we will keep and struggle for. For forty years I have been in the battle to get Jerusalem back for the Jews.

Now that we have our capital city back, we will not let it go again." The Jews believe that their Messiah, who shall suddenly appear and come to their aid against their enemies, is an ordinary man equipped in a special way to lead them in a war against their enemies.

As yet they do not believe that the Messiah is God's son and that He will come and destroy their enemies merely by breathing upon them. But when they see Him they will without reserve serve and follow Him. That will be a day of victory for the Apple of God's Eye!

### **The Old Testament**

The Old Testament is filled with promises that the people of Israel shall experience God's blessing in a special way. God has been very angry with them because they were a rebellious and disobedient people, and harsh punishments were decreed for them. All the prophets in the latter half of The Old Testament speak of God's terrible wrath over the Children of Israel. But all the prophets end their prophecies of wrath by saying that God will soften His heart towards His people and forgive them. God will send them a prophet and Saviour, the Messiah, who shall free them from all their troubles.

## Chapter 15

### *God chooses the humble*

It is strange that God should choose a small country precisely on the navel of the world and give it so much attention.

God shows the whole world through His relationships with Israel and the history of Israel that He loves us all. Through Israel's history, God shows us that He is the Lord and teach us His character and nature. God wants to tell you, too, how much He loves you. Even if you feel like the least of all on earth God is willing to work with you till you become that, which He wishes you to be.

Israel's people have disappointed God so much that He should long ago have given them up, but He goes on helping and saving them. God says: "I love so deeply that I will do everything to get that people to become the best in the world." In the same way He says: "I love all mankind so much that I give myself for them so that every one who believes in my word shall be saved."

There is a very special text in the book of **Ezekiel, ch. 16**, about how God's eye fell on Israel and He took her side:

**(from verse 4)** *"On the day you were born your cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to make you clean, nor were you rubbed with salt or wrapped in clothes. No one looked on you with pity or had compassion enough to do any of these things for you. Rather you were thrown out into the open field, for on the day you were born you were despised. Then I passed by and saw you kicking about in your blood, and as you lay there in your blood I said to you "Live!" I made you grow like a plant of the field. You grew up and developed and became the most beautiful of jewels. Your breasts were formed and your hair grew, you who were naked and bare.*

*Later I passed by, and when I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love, I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness. I gave you my solemn oath and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Sovereign Lord, and you became mine. I bathed you with water and washed the blood from you and put ointments on you.*

And in **Isaiah 49** we read more of God's faithfulness to this small rejected nation of Israel:

*13. "Shout for joy, O heavens! And rejoice, O earth! Break forth into joyful shouting, O mountains! For the Lord has comforted His people And will have compassion on His afflicted.*

*14. But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, And the Lord has forgotten me."*

*15. "Can a woman forget her nursing child And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.*

*16. "Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.*

*17. "Your builders hurry; Your destroyers and devastators Will depart from you.*

*18. "Lift up your eyes and look around; All of them gather together, they come to you. As I live," declares the LORD, "You will surely put on all of them as jewels and bind them on as a bride...And those who swallowed you will be far away.*

*20. "The children of whom you were bereaved will yet say in your ears, 'The place is too cramped for me; Make room for me that I may live here.'*

*21. "Then you will say in your heart, 'Who has begotten these for me, Since I have been bereaved of my children And am barren, an exile and a wanderer? And who has reared these? Behold, I was left alone; From where did these come?'"*

*22. Thus says the Lord GOD,*

*“Behold, I will lift up My hand to the nations And set up My standard to the peoples; And they will bring your sons in their bosom, And your daughters will be carried on their shoulders.*

*23. “Kings will be your guardians, And their princesses your nurses. They will bow down to you with their faces to the earth And lick the dust of your feet; And you will know that I am the LORD; Those who hopefully wait for Me will not be put to shame.*

*24. “Can the prey be taken from the mighty man, Or the captives of a tyrant be rescued?”*

*25. Surely, thus says the LORD, “Even the captives of the mighty man will be taken away, And the prey of the tyrant will be rescued; For I will contend with the one who contends with you, And I will save your sons.*

*26. “I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh, And they will become drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine; And all flesh will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”*

These texts show God's pity for a small, despised country and nation, which nobody cared about. It also shows you, if you perhaps feel unwanted and think you should never have been born, that God does love you. "I came by," says God, and: "I decided that you should live and grow up and be beautiful!"

It says further in that description that Israel grew up and found grace with God in spite of all of her mistakes and failings. God carries out the work in his chosen people. God saves, rescues and makes perfect!

This is the way God is! He picks out that, which is nothing in order to show His love, omnipotence and strength. He entered a covenant with Israel and that covenant He will not abrogate. Even if the whole world rages against that little nation and it looks as if it will go under, God will still fight for His beloved nation, the apple of His eye. He has worked with her and struggled for her throughout all the generations from Adam's time. He has brought up, chastised and struck His

beloved people, as a father punishes his child. He rescues, bandages up and heals them time after time.

It says in **Ezek. 16:10** that God clothed and adorned Israel with the finest jewels and clothes and made her into a nation known to all for the sake of her delights. Yet she despised the Lord's salvation and love and trusted in her own beauty and cleverness instead of in the Lord. Even so, God took pity on His people again and again. He chose them and He will carry out His purpose for them to be a witness for all the world. God's love towards Israel is a sign to us all that we should turn to God and let Him do His will with us also.

God decided to make Israel as His bride, and out of all nations to make a people who would also be a bride for His son Jesus Christ. Some Christians believe today that God has abandoned Israel and instead chosen the church as His only bride. But in His great mercy to the gentile people we are allowed to come in under the same love as the Jews. There will be one flock and one shepherd. God's love is for Jew first and then for the Gentiles.

**Rom. 1:16.** *"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God, for salvation for everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile."*

**Eze. 16:60.** *"Yet I will remember the covenant I made with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you."*

**Eze. 16:62-63.** *"So I will establish my covenant with you, and you will know that I am the Lord. Then, when I make atonement for you for all you have done, you will remember and be ashamed and never again open your mouth because of your humiliation, declares the Sovereign Lord."*

God will forgive Israel all the evil she has done in order to show His love. God will forgive all Gentiles who will accept His forgiveness!

**Eze. 18:31-32.** *"Rid yourselves of all the offences you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will*

*you die, O house of Israel? For I take no pleasure in death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent and live!"*

Many of Israel's people were killed during wars and persecutions but God always rescued a remnant so that they would not be wiped out as a people. The greater part of the Gentiles will have nothing to do with God. But among all peoples, races and language groups there is also a remnant who will turn to God. He will save and rescue this remnant as well.

### **Israel Disperses**

In the year 70 AD, the people of Israel were dispersed among the Gentile nations. Jerusalem became a Gentile city. Jesus looked out over Jerusalem and wept because He had tried to gather and rescue her. "But you will not," said Jesus. They would not listen to Jesus but crucified Him and turned their backs on Him. God's harsh punishment struck the Jewish people. Over the years, the Jews' enemies have been an instrument of God's judgment. In many places where Jews have lived, they have been persecuted and put to death, despised and insulted. It was not God's will that they should be mistreated as they were. The executioners who have exacerbated God's judgment on Israel will be punished harshly. God alone has the power to judge and to punish.

The suffering of the Jews has been many times interpreted by gentile nations as license and excuse to bring upon them more sufferings. It was a proof in their eyes that the Jews "deserve it" and so they joined and added more suffering to the Jews.

In the Word of God we read that Israel is also described as the firstborn son of God and that God, as a loving father, disciplines his son because of His care and love for him. More than that, in Amos 3:2 we read that God punishes Israel more than other nations NOT because other nations were better than Israel but because Israel were chosen to be the ones through whom God will teach the nations about Himself.

**Amos 3:2.** *“You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.”*

Through God’s punishments upon Israel, the nations should have learned that God is Holy, sovereign, faithful and loving. They should have been thankful for the election of Israel for their sake. Instead, many times they wrongly looked at and interpreted God’s dealings with Israel as if God hates the Jews. They did not thank God for His revelation and grace for them through Israel.

**Ex. 4:22.** *“Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Israel is My son, My firstborn.”*

**Prov. 3:12.** *“For whom the LORD loves He reproveth, Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights”.*

**Zech. 1:15.** *“I am very angry with the nations who are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they furthered the disaster.”*

‘My firstborn son’- is one of the words that express God’s love for Israel and that Israel belongs to God. He remains faithful to His people.

**Hos. 11:1.** *“When Israel was a youth I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son”.*

God elects Israel as His son because God works, not ‘according to the flesh, but to the promise’ (Rom. 9:8). Abraham is called out of the (gentile) nations. Isaac is designated as son and heir of Abraham, though not at the cost of Ishmael (Genesis 21:12-13; Rom. 9:7). Jacob is chosen instead of Esau (Gen. 25:23; Malachi 1:2-3; Rom. 9:11-13). It is all about the important and decisive task that Israel has to fulfill among the nations – for the nations. The firstborn son is in The Old Testament not just the heir. He is himself sanctified. That means, he is set apart as God’s possession. He must be given to the Lord (Ex. 22:29). Because he is the Lord’s possession, he must be redeemed

(Exodus 13:12-15; 34:19). But instead of all firstborns of Israel, God now designates one tribe to be priests before Him (Numbers 3:12-13). They constitute, as it were, the link between God and the nation. So is Israel out of all nations designated to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation before God (Ex. 19:5-6).

Through this relationship – as a son to God, God sanctifies Israel. Why does God sanctify Israel? Because He wants to dwell with His people (Ex. 25:8). Therefore the people must be sanctified by the temple service. But the praise to God is the pivot on which everything hinges. How does God dwell in Israel? He is enthroned on the praises of Israel (Psalm 22:3).

At this point it is good to note that the Hebrew word from which “Jew” or “Jewish” is derived is “Judah” which means “praise to God”.

So Israel proclaims God’s name among the nations. It bears God’s name (Numb. 6:27).

This counts especially for Jerusalem. God’s name dwells there (Deut. 12:11). God’s name is God’s revealed presence. Jerusalem becomes the place where the nations, too, will call on the name of God.

### **Blessing to the nations**

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all received a special blessing from the Lord (Gen. 12:3; 26:24; 28:13-15). Israel is also blessed. In Deut. 28 blessings and curses are presented to Israel. Blessings and curses are connected to the keeping of the Torah (‘law’). But these are preceded by the fundamental blessing God has promised to the patriarchs and through them to Israel (Numb. 24:9). And this blessing guaranteed and assured by the New Covenant – Jer. 31:31-34. This blessing must be recognized by the nations. In this way the nations bless Israel and will be blessed themselves. It is the recognition that Israel is the center of God’s salvation plan for this world and thus for the nations (Isaiah 2:1-5; Romans 11:12,15).

## **Israel Is Gathered**

In The Old Testament, Jews and Gentiles have read that God will relent and lead the Jews back to their own land again, and that He will give them Jerusalem as their capital city. That has seemed impossible for hundreds of years. Only true believers have believed it to be possible. When Jews said goodbye, they spoke of their belief and said to each other: "Next year in Jerusalem!" Humanly speaking, it was impossible that they should ever possess their land again. But for God all things are possible. Today we are witnesses to the greatest marvel that has happened before mankind's very eyes. In 1948 Israel became an independent state, and we will soon celebrate Israel's 69th birthday!

On a single day the nation of Israel was born, just as God said it would happen. Jerusalem is now their capital city as God said. God shows us all that He is the Lord. He shows us who He is so that we may repent and turn to Him!

**Eze. 20:40-41.** *"For on my holy mountain, the high mountain of Israel, declares the Sovereign Lord, there in the land the entire house of Israel will serve me, and there I will accept them. There I will require your offerings and your choice gifts, along with all your holy sacrifices. I will accept you as a fragrant incense when I bring you out from the nations and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered and I will show myself holy among you in the sight of the nations."*

## Chapter 16

# *God's love does not change*

If anyone believes that God's promises and God's love to the people of Israel have altered, all doubts must disappear when they see that all the promises God gave to Israel in The Old Testament are being fulfilled.

**Isa. 51:3.** *"The Lord will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all their ruins; He will make her desert like Eden, her wasteland like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and sound of singing."*

That land area, which before was like a desert, began to blossom when the Jews returned home. The Arabs who lived there for centuries did very little to cultivate the land, which today they will sacrifice their lives to conquer. But God's promises to the Jews are being fulfilled. From the moment when they set their feet on Israel's soil and skillfully began to cultivate the land, God has allowed them to succeed. The desert has become like Eden. The most beautiful fruit is grown in Israel, which the whole world has to admit is better than any other fruit on earth.

**Isa. 14:1.** *"The Lord will have compassion on Jacob, once again He will choose Israel and will settle them in their own land. Aliens will join them and unite the house of Jacob.*  
**verse 3.** *"On the day the Lord gives you relief from suffering and turmoil and cruel bondage."*

God transforms the situation and the hearts of Israel before our eyes, today.

You see, The New Covenant, the covenant that fulfills God's plan to the world and fulfills the promise from the time of the creation (Gen. 3:15), was first of all given to the Jews as an eternal and unconditional covenant and through them to all the nations.

**Jer. 31:31-34.** *"Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*

These words should have been enough for any believer of the Living Word of God that God will never forsake Israel. However, knowing our weaknesses, God guaranteed this Covenant with another promise. We read in the following **verses (35-37)**:

*"Thus says the Lord, Who gives the sun for light by day And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; The Lord of hosts is His name: "If this fixed order departs From before Me," declares the Lord, "Then the offspring of Israel also will cease From being a nation before Me forever." Thus says the Lord, "If the heavens above can be measured And the foundations of the earth searched out below, Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel For all that they have done," declares the Lord."*

This covenant that is fulfilled in Christ is the foundation for the fulfillment of ALL of God's promises to Israel in the past and in the future.

**Jer. 32:37-40.** *"I will surely gather them from all the lands where I banish them in my furious anger and great wrath; I will bring them back to this place and let them live in safety. They will be my people, and I will be their God. I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me for their own good and the good of their children after them. I will make an everlasting covenant with them; I will never stop doing good to them and I will inspire them to fear me so that they will never turn away from me."*

The Old Testament is full of promises and encouraging words for Israel. The wilderness has become a watered garden.

Strangers come from the whole world to help them. Israel lives securely as the Lord has promised. In all the wars, the Lord has protected His people and rescued them before the eyes of the whole world in miraculous ways. God's love will be seen even more strongly in the future, when He will glorify His name through them and destroy all of their enemies. God loves Jerusalem.

## Chapter 17

# *To whom does Jerusalem belong?*

That is the question, which the entire world is asking today. The media unjustly proclaims that Israel is refusing to let the Arabs have Jerusalem back and refuses to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of the state of Israel. At the time when Israel reestablished Jerusalem as their capital city, all the other countries moved their embassies from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv to demonstrate that they felt that it was unjust that Israel should have the whole of Jerusalem. They stood in solidarity with the Arabs.

### **The Truth**

Dr. Ulla Jarvilheto, once a Member of the Finnish Parliament, writes in the ICEJ's booklet on Christian Zionism and its Biblical basis: "Is Israel's Biblical right to occupy the promised land in conflict with historic rights? No, it is not!

The Jewish nation lived in the land centuries before the Arabs occupied the area. The neo-anti-Semitic propaganda literature begin their historical studies from 600 AD and consciously ignore the fact that the land had, much earlier, had a significant history. The Jewish people had a flourishing, independent state long before the time of Christ. They were conquered by several occupying powers in succession: Romans, Byzantines, Crusaders, Arabs, Mamelukes, Turks and British. But never was it an independent Palestinian state, whereas the Jewish state is an ancient historical fact. Jerusalem has never been an Arab capital, but it has been - and it is now Israel's capital city since 1000 years before the time of Christ. The Jewish culture was born in Israel and produced outstanding gifts to the

whole world. No Arab culture, specific to Palestine, has ever existed. The Arabs who settled in that area have always seen themselves as being a part of a larger Arab people. All the cultural and spiritual treasures, which the Promised Land has given to the world have been of Jewish origin."

She writes further about something of great interest to us today: "Those who say that only the Jewish people have received a country while the Arabs have been left without their share should remember that there are more than 20 Arab states and only one Jewish state in the Middle East. The Arabs have 13 million square kilometers at their disposal. They have no over-population problems, they have oil-wealth, a common culture and a common language. In addition, they inhabit large areas in North Africa and in Asia. The land of Israel amounts to less than 1% of the Arab land area. Israel cannot be further divided on the West Bank or on the Golan Heights, without endangering her security. The Arabs have no moral, historical, legal or political right to demand the whole of the Middle East for themselves."

Let us consider in that connection that Israel is a tiny, narrow country smaller than Denmark. If the Jews do not fight hard against the external pressure to give up more land, they will be overwhelmed by the enemy.

The biblical reason for refusing to give up land is, that it is an eternal inheritance. It belongs to God Himself. He gave the land to the Jews.

### **The name Palestine and Palestinians:**

The Hebrew term "Plishtim" ("פְּלִשְׁתִּים") which literally means "people of the land of Pleshet", was used to describe the inhabitants of the land to the northeast of Egypt - the Philistines (Gen 21:32, 34). Interestingly enough, in Hebrew, the word "Pleshet" or "Plishtim" (Philistines) carries the meaning of "invaders".

In the Bible, the Philistines (inhabitants of Philistia) were an Aegean people - more closely related to the Greeks and with no connection ethnically, linguistically or historically with Arabia - who conquered,

in the 12th Century BCE, the Mediterranean coastal plain that is now Israel and Gaza.

In the 2nd century CE, the Romans crushed the Jewish revolt of Shimon Bar Kokhba (132 CE), during which Jerusalem and Judea were regained, and the area of Judea was renamed Palaestina in an attempt to humiliate the Jews by naming their land after the name of their enemies – the philistines - who invaded them from time to time, and thus minimize Jewish identification with the land of Israel.

Under the Ottoman Empire (1517-1917), the term Palestine was used as a general term to describe the land south of Syria. It was not an official designation. In fact, many Ottomans and Arabs who lived in Palestine during this time period referred to the area as "Southern Syria" and not as "Palestine."

After World war I the name "Palestine" was applied to the territory that was placed under the British Mandate. This area included not only present-day Israel but also present-day Jordan.

Leading up to Israel's independence in 1948, it was common for the international press to label Jews, not Arabs, living in the mandate as Palestinians. It was not until years after Israeli independence that the Arabs living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were called Palestinians.

In fact, Arabs cannot correctly pronounce the word Palestine in their native tongue, referring to the area rather as "Filastin."

The word Palestine or Filastin does not appear in the Koran. The term Pleshet appears in the Jewish Tanach no fewer than 250 times.

It was only after the Jews re-inhabited their historic homeland of Judea and Samaria, that an Arab Palestinian nation and identity was created. It is also a fact that there has never been a land known as Palestine governed by Palestinians. "Palestinians" are Arabs indistinguishable from Arabs throughout the Middle East. The famous "Palestinian covenant" states that Palestinians are "an integral part of the Arab nation"

Much of the Arab population in this area migrated into Israel and Judea and Samaria from the surrounding Arab countries in the past 100 years. The return of the Jews and the rebirth of Israel was

accompanied by economic prosperity for the region. Arabs migrated to this area to find employment and enjoy the higher standard of living or were sent by Arab leaders to influence the demography of the land. In documents that are about 100 to 150 years old, the area is described as a scarcely populated region and at the end of the 19th century, Jews were in fact the majority of the population in Jerusalem.

### **Another Look At God's Word**

In the Second Book of Samuel, Verse 5, it says that all Israel's tribes came to David in Hebron and reminded him that God had said to him: *"You shall be shepherd of my people Israel; you shall be their prince."* Then they hailed David as King, 1000 years before the time of Christ.

The beginning of the history of Israel as a nation, was when King Saul was chosen as the first king in Israel, after him David became the King, and built Israel up as a strong nation. David was 30 at that time and he ruled for 40 years. King David conquered Jerusalem. He occupied the rock fortress of Mount Zion in Jerusalem and called it David's City. In Verse 10 it says: "So David steadily grew stronger, for the Lord the God of Hosts was with him."

During the reign of Solomon, King David's son, Israel experienced its golden age. Solomon built the temple to the Lord in Jerusalem. Since then Israel has experienced many wars, pillaging and adversities. The temple has been ruined, and many various enemies have ruled Jerusalem. However, Jerusalem has never been an Arab capital. Therefore, it is not a right of the Arabs to have a part of God's city as their capital. God Himself says time after time through the prophets in The Old Testament that Jerusalem belongs to Israel:

**Zec. 8:7-8.** *"This is what the Lord Almighty says: "I will save my people from the countries of the east and the west. I will bring them back to live in Jerusalem; they will be my people, and I will be faithful and righteous to them as their God."*

Jerusalem is God's holy city, about which He has given the Jews promises. God has confirmed this by helping the Jews in their struggle to return to their land and settle in their city. So many Jews would rather die than give Jerusalem back to other people.

Our time, which the Bible calls "the last days" - at which time God long ago promised the Jews that they would get their land and capital back, is a very fantastic time. God's Word is being fulfilled to the letter and this should make every single person turn to God and pray that His will may be done.

**Micah. 4:1-2.** *"In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and people will stream to it. Many nations will come and say, "Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in His paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."*

All nations shall one day come to recognize that Jerusalem is Israel's capital, God's city, and great and mighty things shall, according to the Bible, come out of Jerusalem. No one will ever be able to drive Israel from their soil again.

**Amos. 9:14-15.** *"I will bring back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them," says the Lord your God."*

It is also clearly written that one day God will judge all the peoples who have divided up His land:

**Joel 3:1-3.** *"In those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Jehoshaphat in Hebrew means "the judgment of the Lord"). There I will*

*enter into judgment against them concerning my inheritance, my people Israel, for they scattered my people among the nations and divided up my land. They cast lots for my people and traded boys for prostitutes; they sold girls for wine that they might drink."*

**verses 16-17.** *"The Lord will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the sky will tremble. But the Lord will be a refuge for His people, a stronghold for the people of Israel. Then you will know that I, the Lord your God, dwell in Zion, my holy hill. Jerusalem will be holy; never again will foreigners invade her."*

It is best to belong to the Lord, the living God. Mankind can protest and be wise in their own thoughts, they can set themselves up against God's arrangements and struggle against God's will. But God carries out His work in all respects, and especially His promises to Israel about their land and their capital, Jerusalem, which God calls His own city, out of which He shall reign.

King David, who was the first king in Jerusalem, sings...

**Ps. 122:1-7.** *"I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go up to the house of the Lord." Our feet are standing in your gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is build like a city that is closely compacted together. That is where the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, to praise the name of the Lord according to the statute given to Israel. There the thrones for judgment stand, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May those who love you be secure. May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels".*

**Rev. 19:19-21.** *"Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army, But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the*

*miraculous sings on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshipped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulphur. The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh."*

There will be one last time of adversity and war for Israel's people and it will be frightful for them. It speaks of this last war in the Book of Zechariah 14, this terrible day, a single day, when many people shall wander in exile, but a remnant shall remain in Jerusalem. And the Lord shall come out and fight with Israel's enemies.

**Zec. 14:4.** *"On that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the mount of Olives will split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mounting moving north and half moving south..."*

## Chapter 18

### *God's plan for salvation*

Now that we have shared God's Word about Israel, as Gentiles, we can hardly be surprised at the struggle that is going on in the world in order to save the Jews and the Gentiles. We do not understand God's thoughts but get only a little glimpse of what His will is. God's thoughts and His ways are much higher than our's.

But God shows us certain principles throughout the Bible, which reveal His will. The Devil fights against God's will, but the result is always that God carries His purposes through. Those people who submit themselves to God's will are saved and rescued for all eternity. It says time and again in the scriptures that God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. What happened during the lives of those three men form a pattern for us and show us God's will for the children of men.

#### **Abraham**

Abraham trusted God, and God reckoned him among the righteous. God blessed Abraham and His physical seed according to the promise – Isaac and then Jacob - with special promises, to bring forth His salvation to ALL the nations of the world and thus be a blessing to ALL the families of the earth (Gen. 12:1-3; Rom. 9:6-13). God fulfilled His promises to Abraham because he trusted God unconditionally (Gen. 15; 22:15-18). Abraham sent his servant out when Isaac, his son, was grown to adulthood. The servant was to find a bride for Isaac. Abraham's servant found a fine bride for Isaac after a long and eventful journey. She was called Rebecca and she had all the attributes a bride should have.

## **Isaac**

Isaac's life and marriage also show us a picture of God's will for us. In a similar way that God guided Abraham's servant to find a wife for Isaac, through a long and divine process, God was letting the Holy Spirit find a bride for His son Jesus Christ. God wished to find among the Jews and the Gentiles a humble people who would be like Rebecca, as a bride for Jesus.

## **Jacob**

Jacob was treacherous and unreliable, but through a long process, God changed him. After having struggled with Himself, 'God and men', he became so humble that his deceitful nature was transformed so that he could receive a new name, Israel. *"For you have struggled with God and men and won,"* was the meaning of his name. We learn through Jacob's life, that God's will is to glorify Himself in each person's life.

## **Joseph**

Jacob had a son, Joseph. Through Joseph's life, we see clearly a picture of Jesus. Also, through all that he experienced, we learn to know God's will both for ourselves and for the people of Israel. Joseph's story confirms to us that there is nothing that happens by chance with the Lord.

In Genesis **37: 1-8** it says how Joseph lived in his father's house. One day he had a dream about how he would be instrumental in rescuing his brothers. He told his brothers about the dream:

*"We were binding sheaves of corn out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it." His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said."*

The brothers were hard and would not be humble enough to tolerate the thought that their little brother might someday rule over them. The condition of their hearts was revealed.

The brothers raged at Joseph, threw him into a deep well, sold him to foreigners and thought that they were finished with Joseph. Later we read that Joseph's dream had been prophetic.

### **Famine In The Land**

Joseph, after many tribulations, had been promoted further and further in the hierarchy of the foreign country. He had become the leading person in the land of Egypt. God had helped him by giving him counsel from heaven so that Joseph saved not only the whole country of Egypt but all countries of the earth from the famine (Gen. 41:57). Then his brothers came to him asking for food. They bowed down before him as Joseph in his youth had dreamed that they would. He was not angry with them, nor did he turn his back on them. He had pity on them and rescued them from death. We read about Joseph and his deep love for his brothers in **Genesis 45:4-7**.

*"Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will not be ploughing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance."*

In Egypt Joseph was married to Asenath, the daughter of an Egyptian. In Egypt, Joseph was called Zaphenath-paneah, a name that can be interpreted as "World Saviour" (one who solves concealed thoughts\secrets).

How clearly this teaches us God's plan of salvation through Jesus! The one Israel has rejected, their own brother and kinsmen, has become the saviour of Israel and the whole world.

## Jesus

Jesus saw in his father's house that he would save mankind from destruction. He was born as God's son among the Jewish people as their brother. He told them that He was their brother and that through Him they should come and bow down before God. The leaders among the Pharisees, who knew the scriptures and should have known God's will, became enraged. Judas eventually sold Jesus to them. Christ had to go through tribulation and darkness so that the Gentiles in foreign countries could also be saved.

### **Parallels Between Joseph and Jesus:**

1. Joseph was rejected and cast out by his brothers and sold to Egypt.
2. Joseph went through many trials so that he could save many people.
3. Joseph was accepted in Egypt and won a bride.
4. Joseph's own brothers did not recognize him. He looked foreign to them.
5. Joseph became the means of salvation and rescue for his brothers.
6. Joseph turned back to be together with his people.
7. Joseph did not accuse his brothers. He wept with love for them and rescued them from death.

1. Jesus too was cast out from his brothers, the Jews.
2. Through many trials He became the agent of salvation for all believers.
3. In Gentile countries Jesus has been accepted and has won a bride.
4. The Jewish people, as a nation, still do not recognize and accept Jesus as their own brother.
5. Jesus has not rejected the Jews, His brothers. He loves them and He came in order to save and rescue them.
6. Jesus will return and lead His people and save them from their enemies.
7. Jesus does not accuse His brothers. He loves them and forgives them.

This is how God is. This is how we, as God's children, should be towards the Jews.

This pattern is repeated throughout the whole of God's Word.

## **Moses**

The same principles are repeated in Moses' life.

**In Exodus 2:11-15:** *"One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. Glancing this way and that and seeing no-one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.*

Moses became angry about this injustice. His people were slaves in Egypt and without thinking about it, he went into action to rescue his brother. As a result of the Egyptian's death, Moses had to flee to another country and remain there for many years.

In the land of Midian, he helped the priest's seven daughters draw water from a well for themselves and their cattle. He was made welcome in their father's house because of his helpfulness, and the priest gave Moses one of his daughters to be his wife.

Here, in the desert land of Midian Moses found his bride, was married and had children.

But then it says in verse 23 that the Israelites, who were still in captivity in Egypt, continued groaning and complaining under their slavery. Their appeal for rescue from their slavery rose up to God. He heard their groaning, and remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He saw the plight of Israel, and he took heed of it.

Then God called Moses to return to his people in Egypt and free them from their troubles. Moses did so and became an instrument in the rescue of his people.

Moses was cast out because he was striving in his flesh, his human nature and temper, but God turned it to be for the salvation of his countrymen.

He came back and became the deliverer and leader of his people. In this way God will show us His love for Israel even today. Jesus came to save His countrymen. Because they did not accept Him, He was crucified and buried, but death could not hold Him, He rose from the dead on the third day. He appeared to His disciples before He went to Heaven. He then gave His disciples the great commission to preach the gospel to all nations beginning in Jerusalem. Now, the time is nearly upon us when His own people, Israel, will be in such great need and against such opposition that their cries and prayers will reach God's heart. Once God has saved those who can be saved from the generations of Gentiles, Jesus will return to Israel and rescue them from their enemies.

Such is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. That is what He shows throughout all His holy Word. In the Epistle to the **Romans 11:25** Paul says:

*"I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; He will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins."*

That is precisely what we Christians must understand today; Jesus has found a bride among all those people, races and language groups. The number is soon to be full, and then Israel's Deliverer will come. We shall then experience the salvation of Israel and we who have come to believe in Jesus will praise God together with them as one bride for all eternity.

**Isa. 59:20-21.** *"The redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the Lord. "As for me, this is my covenant with them," says the Lord. "My Spirit, who*

*is on you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouth of your children, or the mouth of their descendants from this time on and forever," says the Lord.*

A redeemer from Zion comes and removes those who have fallen. In other words, Jesus will return with resurrection power for His people Israel.

**Mat. 24:42-44.** *"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."*

## Chapter 19

### *Our attitudes*

I will close this book by reminding you again of the following:

We must understand that the people of Israel inhabit and defend the land, which God Himself gave to them. It is the only mother country that they have. They have obtained this little country directly from the hand of God. They have no other place to flee when their enemy presses them. They attack only when they are seriously threatened. But if they are threatened, then they strike hard. They believe in their right of self defense.

Christian people must understand this. God permits Israel to be a burdensome\heavy stone for the whole world. On the basis of our attitudes and reactions to Israel, we will be held responsible by God (Zech. 12:3-4).

We should not think that God has changed His attitude towards Israel. "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? (Num. 23:19). Paul who says that Gentiles who have been circumcised in their hearts are also a sort of Jews, says in Romans 3:1-4, that in spite of that, the Jews have priority with God:

**Rom. 3:1-4.** *"What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God. What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify Gods faithfulness? Not at all! Let God be true, and every man a liar. As it is written: "So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge."*

He further explains it in **Rom. 11:28-32**:

*“From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy. For God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all.”*

### **What Shall We Do?**

Let God look after Israel! Let Him who judges righteously, judge. Let God do with His people what He wills.

At the core of the attitudes of the nations towards Israel, are found their attitudes towards God. Israel is a challenge and test of faith for the nations.

It is important that we know God's Word and take our stand in accordance with God's Word. Otherwise, we may find ourselves in conflict with God Himself. As we have seen, the battle is between God and Satan.

Since the Fall, this battle has raged throughout the history of mankind. Every person must choose which side he will be on and live his life accordingly.

### **Paul's Attitude**

All twelve apostles, including Paul were Jews. The apostles were sent with the Gospel to the Jews first and subsequently to the Gentiles. But Paul received a direct call to preach the Gospel of Jesus to the Gentiles. So the Gospel came to us through him. We should have the same attitude towards the Jews that Paul teaches us to have.

We read in the Romans 9 that Paul had great grief in his heart and unceasing sorrow that his own people, the Jews, had not all become Believers:

**Rom. 9:3-5.** *"For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons, theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen."*

Paul was willing to give his life if only it could have saved his kinfolk, the Jews.

In **Romans 10:1-2** Paul explains what it is that is wrong with the Jews and that he prays sincerely for them:

*"Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes."*

Paul himself had once been like these Jews. He was without understanding, and did not believe in Christ. Indeed, he had led them in the killing and persecution of Christians. But he had a revelation of Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus. Christ met him in a great light and with a voice that transformed Paul's life. He became one of the most devoted followers of Jesus.

In the same way, the Jews are like Paul. In their ignorance and spiritual blindness they believe they are doing right until God gives them a revelation of Christ. If God had cast out Israel, He would not go on caring for them. But God has promised to reveal Christ to them after the full number of Gentiles have come into the Kingdom of God.

**Let us do as Paul does:**

1. He had pity in his heart and wanted to help them. He loved them.
2. He prayed earnestly for them that they might be saved.
3. He taught them the Word of God and shared the Gospel with them (Acts 9:20, 13:5).
4. He called the gentiles to show them mercy and be tolerant to them.

*Isa. 40:1-2. "Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sins has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins."*

Let us comfort them with that comfort with which we ourselves have been comforted!

We must pray for the Jews, for Jerusalem and for all of Israel. God is now raising up a group of people throughout the world who are praying for Israel. While some Christians turn away from Israel, and Israel turns away from some Christians, there are some Christian believers who go into prayer for Israel with new strength. Some Jews are now turning in thankfulness to a part of Christianity.

Deeper and deeper loving relationships will arise between the Jews and the Christians who uprightly love the Lord. This love will unite us and continue into eternity until Jesus comes on the Mount of Olives.

*Ps. 122:6-9. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May those who love you be secure. May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels. For the sake of my brothers and friends, I will say: "Peace be within you". For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your prosperity."*

This is the attitude we should embrace. When we pray for the peace of Jerusalem, we are in fact praying indirectly that Jesus may soon come back and create His kingdom of peace. When we pray for

Jerusalem, help, rest and blessing descend upon us.

At the same time, we pray that those tribulations which we know will fall upon Israel in the last days may be shortened so that God's perfect will may soon be done with His people, both Jew and Christian.

God is calling some through this book to pray for Israel.

*Isa. 62:6-7. "I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem, they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord give yourselves no rest, and give Him no rest till He establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth."*

### **Jealousy**

Paul is willing to do anything to win his people for the Gospel. Romans 11 states that God has a special care for Israel, both for their own sake and also so that we who were born Gentiles can be saved.

*Rom. 11:7-10. "What then? What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened, as it is written: "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day." And David says: "May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them. May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see and their backs be bent for ever."*

*Rom. 11:11-12. "Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring!"*

God wants to make them jealous and Paul wants to make them jealous. Paul says to us in **Rom. 11:13-16:**

*"I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? If the part of the dough offered as first fruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches."*

Then Paul tells us that under no circumstances must Gentiles be proud because we have been saved.

From all we have read we can understand that Israel is something special to God.

Let us pray that Israel may today see the Messiah through us. We must never forget that we are saved through pure grace.

**Eph. 2:10-13.** *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Therefore, remember that formerly you also were Gentiles by birth and called "Uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men) remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ."*

The Christians await the coming of their Messiah for the second time. Many Jews await their Messiah for the first time. God's family will be united on the day when Jesus comes again. On that day, the blindness, which now veils the eyes of many Christians and Jews will be removed and both parties will discover their Messiah.

**Hos. 3:5.** *"Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the Lord and to His blessings in the last days."*

There will be one great people, which will be as numerous as the grains of sand on the edge of the sea.

As yet all this has not been revealed, but one day the whole will appear clearly to us. It will be a wonderful day. In John's Revelation 21-22 we get an idea of what will happen. When the new Jerusalem comes down from Heaven like a bride adorned for her bridegroom the city's foundation-stones will bear the names of the Lamb's twelve apostles. The city will have twelve gates. On the gates will be written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. There all of God's people, both Jew and Gentile, unite to serve the Lord and praise His blessed name!

**Hos. 14:4-7.** *"I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them. I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like a lily. Like a cedar of Lebanon he will send down his roots; his young shoots will grow. His splendor will be like an olive tree, his fragrance like a cedar of Lebanon. Men will dwell again in his shade. He will flourish like the grain. He will blossom like a vine, and his fame will be like a wine from Lebanon."*