

2012 Spring Newsletter

Detroit Bible Students Ecclesia

P.O. Box 51, Southfield, MI 48037-0051
biblenewsletter.org

*"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her,
that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned:
for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins."*

Isa 40:1,2



Speak Ye Comfortably to Jerusalem

Anti-Semitism is increasing throughout the world. Incidents of racial attacks have multiplied in the news, especially in Europe, but also in the Americas. The defamation of Jewish cemeteries, vandalism of synagogues, physical assaults on Jews have, heightened this problem. Are these attacks incidental—or is this a growing trend?

Jews have been a persecuted people throughout the last two millennia. The Crusaders made killing and tormenting Jews part of their mission while on their way to the Holy Land. Racking and torturing Jews to obtain forced conversions was an integral part of the "holy" inquisitions. The Middle Ages also marked the insidious accusation of "blood libel"—the belief that Jews sacrificed Christian children during their Passover celebrations. This idea was fostered by the Roman Catholic Church. As late as 1882, its *Civiltà Cattolica* paper stated that making use of the blood of a Christian child was a Jewish law "binding on the conscience of all Hebrews." These beliefs also led to "replacement theology" accepted by many Protestant churches by which God's promises, given to Israel, have been largely stolen.

For awhile after the Nazi genocide, anti-Semitism eased up somewhat as the world reeled at the barbarity of the Holocaust. For a brief window of time, in an atmosphere of sympathy world leaders allowed for the establishment of a State of Israel. But now, some sixty years after the opening of the extermination camps, time has blurred the images of unimaginable cruelty and old prejudices once again are raising their ugly heads. The question now arises, what should the Christian's position be with regard to the Jews?

The "blood libel" fiction requires no treatment for a rational thinking person. It was a fiction meant to sway ignorant, superstitious minds. But did not the Jews kill Jesus? Did the Jewish people have this responsibility? Yes, but the Apostle Paul says that it was in ignorance that they crucified him (1 Corinthians 2:8).

On the day of Pentecost, the Apostle Peter charged the Jewish crowds for killing the "Prince of life" (Acts 3:17). He called upon them to repent. However, he also called their attention to the scriptures which prophesied that Christ should suffer and die. The

central feature of the Gospel is that *"God commendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8).

The Psalmist wrote: *"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."* (Psalm 76:10) God uses the forces of man to accomplish His purposes. In this case, He used the jealousy of the Pharisees to accomplish the Messiah's prophetic mission (Isaiah 53; Psalm 22).

Time and again, Old Testament prophecies pointed to the Messiah's being put to death. His death was foreshadowed in the coats of skins given to Adam and Eve after sinning; in the lamb sacrificed by Abel; in the symbolic sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham; and in the sacrifices of the animals in the Tabernacle and Temple services (Genesis 3:21; 4:3-5; 22:1-13; Hebrews 9, 10; 11:4,17-19). God's standard of justice, *"a life for a life,"* (Deuteronomy 19:21) is reflected in Paul's statement, *"The first man Adam became a living being. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit."* *"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive"* (1Corinthians 15:45, 22–NKJV). However, for their role in the death of Christ, the nation of Israel was cast off from God's exclusive favor and scattered among the nations. Yet, God did not intend that their exile from His grace would be forever.

The Apostle Paul in Romans, Chapter 11, says, *"Have they stumbled that they should fall God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles....Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness?"* (vss 11,12) *"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes....For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all."* (vss. 25-32)

Furthermore, the Apostle Paul after referring to Israel's experiences concludes by saying, *"Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come"* (1 Corinthians 10:11 NKJV). Christians, however, should not make the mistake of thinking that, because there are prophecies and lessons in the Old Testament that apply to events in our Lord's day or to Christians during the Gospel Age, the promises to Israel are no longer applicable to Israel.

God cannot lie (Titus 1:2 Numbers 23:19). Therefore, what God through Jeremiah prophesied for Israel is certain: *"Behold the days come...that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt... But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel...I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people"* (Jeremiah 31:31-33).

To further validate His promise, *"Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for light by day and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar...If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever...."* (vss 34-37). Can there be any doubt that the Jews and the nation of Israel are here to stay when assured with such incredible certainty?

So what then does the Isaiah 40 text mean when it says that *"she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins?"* The nation of Israel was God's exclusive people for 1845 years—from Jacob/Israel (Genesis 32:28) to Jesus. During that time God gave them His Law and sent them His prophets. He showered them with blessings when they were faithful—and punished them when they were not. *"You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities"* (Amos 3:2). Shortly before his crucifixion, Jesus wept over Jerusalem and declared their house left "desolate" **knowing they would have him killed** (Matthew 23:37,38). Still, the opportunity to come into Christ was offered exclusively to the Jewish people until God sent Peter to Cornelius (Acts 10)—and then Paul to the Gentiles. The Apostle Paul describes Gentiles as grafted olive branches into a "good olive tree" (Romans 11:17-24). God's favor did not fully leave the nation until A.D. 70 when the Romans under Titus laid siege to Jerusalem, destroyed the city, and slew or scattered the Jewish people.

The word "double" in our opening text is the Hebrew word *kephel* meaning "a duplicate." The meaning of the prophecy is that Israel would receive not twice as much trouble—but an equal or duplicate amount to offset their time of exclusive favor. Then the time would come when the LORD's favor would once again turn toward them and He would begin to fulfill the promises He made to them through their "fathers." But when?

The prophesied re-gathering of Israel after A.D. 70—in the End Times, from all over the world—is uniquely different from their return from Babylonian captivity. *"I will accept you as a sweet*

aroma when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered....Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for which I raised My hand in an oath to give to your fathers" (Ezekiel 10:41, 42).

To father Abraham, God said, "Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward and westward; For all the land which thou seest, **to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever....the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession"** (Genesis 13:14,15; 17:8).

Though sent into a Diaspora, the Jews were kept intact as a people. The LORD did not allow them to be assimilated into the nations in which they dwelt because His plan was to re-gather them to their Land, (Amos 9:9-15; Ezekiel 36:24-28) to "plant them" with His "whole heart" (Jeremiah 32:41).

Amos prophesied, "For surely I will command and will sift the house of Israel among all nations, as grain is sifted in a sieve; Yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground...I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, And no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them, Says the LORD your God" (Amos 9:9-15).

Thus, in 1948, Israel once again became a nation—a homeland for the Jewish people! After nearly two thousand years of exile, Israel once again was a nation on its own Land. Scattered as "dry bones," Israel is gradually gathering and being resurrected—until the holy Spirit is finally given them to fully come to life (Ezekiel 37:1-14).

However, the Scriptures also foretold that Israel's right to exist as a nation would be opposed by many and the question of Jerusalem be a matter of dispute. "And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it" (Zechariah 12:3).

But Israel's re-establishment is God's work and he will preserve them in their Land. "Thus says the Lord GOD: "When I have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and am hallowed in them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they will dwell in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob. And they will dwell safely there, build houses, and plant vineyards; yes, they will dwell

securely, when I execute judgments on all those around them who despise them. Then they shall know that I am the LORD their God" (Ezekiel 28:25,26).

Jesus taught Christians to pray for God's Kingdom in which His will shall be done in earth as it is always done in heaven. In this kingdom, the prophecy says, "all nations" will come up to Jerusalem to learn about the "God of Jacob" (Matthew 6:10; Isaiah 2:2-4). Then the glorified Church ("Zion") will work with natural Israel ("Jerusalem") to bless all the families of the earth. Yes, people from "all languages of the nations" will be asking Jews how to prosper in Messiah's Kingdom (Zechariah 8:23). Truly, Israel will be a "light to the Gentiles" (Isaiah 42:6; 60:3).

Faithful Christians, therefore, instead of being participants in the anti-Semitism spreading in the world, are standing up for Israel. How? By encouraging Jews to believe their Prophets and by encouraging other Christians to realize—the "time to favor Zion is come" (Psalm 102:13-15). God is fulfilling His promises. He has set the Jewish people in their land and is acting invisibly on their behalf preparing to install His King, the Messiah, on "his holy hill of Zion" (Psalm 2:6).

"Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, **To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.'** For out of Zion the law shall go forth, **And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.** He shall judge between many peoples. And rebuke strong nations afar off. They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore...for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken it." (Micah:1-4)

Please send me the following FREE for the asking:

- Will Israel Survive the End Times?

Mail your request to:

Detroit Bible Students, P.O. Box 51,,Southfield, MI 48037-0051

Name_____

Address_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

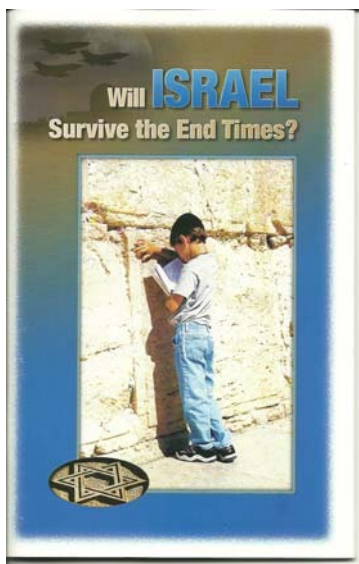
"Frank & Ernest"

Each week interesting and informative Bible Topics are discussed on the radio

A Free booklet is offered at the close of every broadcast

Sunday mornings: 10:30—11:00 AM WCHB – 1200 AM radio

Or visit us on the web at www.dawnbible.com



The Detroit Bible Students Ecclesia
is a non-denominational Christian group

We invite you to
Bible Studies & Devotions
on Sunday mornings at
10 am and 11:30 am

Mahany/Meininger

Senior/Community Center

3500 Marias Ave, Royal Oak MI 48073

For further information call
(or leave a message) at
(248) 399-8843

Detroit Bible Students Ecclesia
P.O. Box 51
Southfield, MI 48037-0051

Address Service Requested

Non Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Southfield, MI
PERMIT NO. 160

