

## **SESSION 1: THE MYSTERY OF THE JEWS**

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- I. Prayer
- II. Purpose of Today's Class
  - A. Provide an overview for the remainder of the course.
  - B. Discuss the unique historical record of the Jews and its relation to the Bible.
  - C. Establish the importance of a biblical understanding of Israel for Christians today.
- III. Handouts
  - A. Schedule [not a newspaper prophecy class – may disappoint some]
  - B. Historic Timeline
  - C. Resources (especially audio recording)
  - D. Heavy use of Bible—please bring
    - 1. Emphasis will be on OT
    - 2. Unfamiliar to many Christians—hence 'mystically interpret'
    - 3. What did God promise to the Jews?
    - 4. How would it have been normally understood?
- IV. The Mystery Of The Jews (to the world)
  - A. Prussian Emperor Frederick's Chaplain

"The great Prussian Emperor Frederick often would test his chaplain with theological questions. Frederick, however, said he did not have time for long answers and explanations. He wanted simple answers that he could comprehend quickly. One day he asked his chaplain if he could provide simple and succinct evidence for the truth of the Bible. Frederick asked if the chaplain could provide evidence in just one word. The wise chaplain responded that he could do just that. 'What is the magical word?' Frederick asked. The chaplain replied, 'Israel, your majesty. The people of Israel.'"<sup>1</sup>
  - B. Mark Twain

"If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one quarter of one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of star dust lost in the blaze of the Milky

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<sup>1</sup> [Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry. *Israel My Glory* <<http://www.foi.org>>. See Isa 46:13], May/June 2002, p. 17.

Way. Properly, the Jew ought hardly to be heard of; but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk. His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine and abstruse learning are also way out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers.... The Egyptian, the Babylonians, and the Persians rose, filled the planet with sound and splendour, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they were gone;... The Jew saw them all, survived them all, and is now what he always was.... All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?"<sup>2</sup>

**C.** Nicholas Berdyaev

"I remember how the materialist interpretation of history, when I attempted in my youth to verify it by applying it to the destinies of the people, broke down in the case of the Jews, where destiny seemed absolutely inexplicable from the materialistic standpoint. ... According to the materialistic ... criterion, this people ought long ago to have perished. Its survival is a mysterious and wonderful phenomenon demonstrating that the life of this people is governed by a special predetermination, transcending the processes of adaptation expounded by the materialistic interpretation of history. The survival of the Jews ... their endurance under absolutely peculiar conditions and the fateful role played by them in history; all these point to the peculiar and mysterious foundations of their destiny."<sup>3</sup>

**D.** Historian Heinrich Graetz

'a nation [Israel] which has witnessed the rise and decay of the most ancient empires, and which still continues to hold its place in the present day, deserves the closest attention.'<sup>4</sup>

**E.** Biblical Explanation

1. Jer. 31:35-37 - how to destroy Israel – destroy the sun and moon!
2. the doctrine of the remnant

**V.** The Lack of Understanding by Christians

**A.** The Jewish Religious Leaders Missed Jesus – People of God out-of-step with the Will of God!!

1. John 5:39

"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me."

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<sup>2</sup> [Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry. *Israel My Glory* <<http://www.foi.org>>. See Isa 46:13], June/July 2000, 25.

<sup>3</sup> *The Meaning of History*. London: Geoffrey Bles, Centenary Press, 1936. pp. 86-87, cited by [Fruchtenbaum, Arnold. *Israelology - The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*. Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries Press, 1989.], pp. 839-840.

<sup>4</sup> [Price, Randall. *The Coming Last Days Temple*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1999.], p 157.

- a) "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of **My promises and plan for Israel.**"
- 2. Luke 24:25-27 - on road to Emmaus - Messiah was predicted to die, but most did not know
  - a) Luke 2:28 - exceptions in temple in early Luke—Simeon and Anna
- B. [Newspaper exegesis disclaimer. Jesus was not political at His first coming, but God's kingdom is destined to dramatically intersect geo-political history.]
- C. Historic Persecution of the Jews By The Church ("Christendom")
  - 1. Reference the Timeline
  - 2. Crusades (1099-1244)
  - 3. Inquisition (1478-1765) - especially the Spanish Inquisition
  - 4. Holocaust (1940-1948) - relative silence among some denominations (although there were notable exceptions)
  - 5. Jews had it better under Muslims rule than Christian (e.g., Iberian Peninsula)
    - a) Strategy of Satan: Keep OT and NT revelation separated!
- D. Distorted view of Israel among Christendom Today
  - 1. Vatican
    - a) Refused to recognize state of Israel until June 1994.<sup>5</sup>
    - b) Opposes Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem
      - (1) pushed for internationalization from 1947-1994 (stopped in support of PLO desire for Jerusalem)
    - c) Pope John Paul urged a Palestinian State
  - 2. Our Presidents
    - a) Former President Bill Clinton and President Bush, both of whom campaigned on a promise to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, have avoided doing so by invoking a special security waiver every six months.<sup>6</sup>
    - b) Congress - Foreign Relations Authorization Act for 2003.
      - (1) signed into law by George Bush
      - (2) State department refuses to recognize Israel (rather than Tel Aviv) as the capital of Jerusalem and relocate embassy there.

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<sup>5</sup> < <http://www.bible411.com/currentevents/ce000325.htm>>

<sup>6</sup> < <http://www.crosswalk.com/news/1164752.html>>

- c) Arafat  
Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has signed into law a nearly two-year-old bill naming Jerusalem as the Palestinian capital. He took the action in response to a new US law which called for the city to be regarded as Israel's capital, sparking anger among Palestinians.<sup>7</sup>

(1) [Read excerpts of support from I rineos I letters]

E. A Sampling from Scripture

1. Jerusalem

- a) Lack of value (not seaport, no natural resources, not strategic shipping crossroads)
- b) God has chosen, put his name there<sup>8</sup>
  - (1) I saiah 49:14-16 – Jerusalem inscribed on God's palms
  - (2) 1 Kings 11:36 – Jerusalem chosen by God, His name there
  - (3) I saiah 62:6-7 – give Him no rest until he makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth [this is not the New Jerusalem]
- c) Eventual conflict
  - (1) Zechariah 12:1-8 – Jerusalem to be a cup of drunkenness and stone of self-inflicted damage

2. The Land<sup>9</sup>

- a) Historic timeline—this is not an issue of "native rights," but of God's sovereign promises to a chosen nation.
- b) Leviticus 25:23 – land not to be sold permanently, land is God's
- c) Joel 3:2(-17) – Nations to be judged for scattering I srael and dividing up God's land
- d) THE KORAN - Sura 5:20  
"Remember Moses said to his people: 'O my People! Call in remembrance the favour Of Allah unto you, when He Produced prophets among you, Made you kings, [722] and gave You what He had not given To any other among the peoples. O my people! enter The holy land which Allah hath assigned unto you, And turn not back I gnominously, for then Will ye be overthrown, To your own ruin.'"

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<sup>7</sup> < [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/2302961.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/2302961.stm)>

<sup>8</sup> 1Ki 8:48; 11:13,36; 14:21; 2Ch 6:6,38; 12:13; Ps 132:13; I sa 49:14-16

<sup>9</sup> Also Psalms 83:12; Joel 1:6 NKJV

**VI.** The Battle Over Biblical Interpretation

- A.** The nature of interpretation (literal vs. 'mystical')
- B.** The nature of promises
  - 1.** can they be changed after the fact? (enhanced, yes, but redirected?)
  - 2.** is the understanding of the original recipients foundational to the promises?
- C.** Has Israel been replaced by a "New Israel"—the Church — the promises going to the church and curses going to the nation?
- D.** Camano Chapel's Position [overhead]

**VII.** Understanding The Purpose Of God with Israel<sup>10</sup>

- A.** Ezekiel 36:22-23 – to sanctify God's name, so nations know that He is God

**VIII.** Implications

- A.** Historically, a lack of understanding of Scripture has contributed to "people of God" being out-of-step with what God is doing.
  - 1.** People of Jesus' day.
  - 2.** Christendom
- B.** God expects us to know and understand all His promises—including those in the OT which have not yet been fulfilled.
- C.** It is a grave thing for us to be opposed to the hand of God in our own age.

**IX.** Prayer

Israel as a witness to the reality of God in history.

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<sup>10</sup> Ex 9:16; 1Ki 8:43; 2Ki 20:6; 1Ch 17:21; 2Ch 2:1,4; Ps 31:3; 79:9; 106:8; Isa 37:35; 48:9-11; 63:12; Jer 34:16; 44:26; Eze 20:9,14,22,39; 36:20-22; 39:7; Da 9:19; Mt 6:9; Joh 12:28