

The UNION

Get Ready to Meet the King!

God Calls His Church to
Truth, Faith and Holiness

Joan H. Richardson

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CHAPTER 22

The Faithful God

Many but not all theologians have lacked faith. In 1876, Alfred Edersheim elaborated on the Jews' return to their promised land in his book, *Bible History, Old Testament*. Though he didn't live to see it, Edersheim was faithful to the Word: "Jehovah once more renewed to [Abram] the promise of the land, as far as his eye could range, bestowing it upon Abram and his 'seed for ever.' For the terms of this promise were not made void by the seventy years which Judah spent in the captivity of Babylon, nor yet are they annulled by the eighteen centuries of Israel's present unbelief and dispersion. The promise of the land is to Abram's 'seed for ever.' The land and the people God has joined together; and though now the one lies desolate, like a dead body, and the other wanders unresting, as it were a disembodied spirit, God will again bring them to each other in the days when His promise shall be finally established. So Abram must have understood the word of Jehovah." ⁵⁰

⁷ Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

⁸ Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

⁹ Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth and shut *the womb*? saith thy God.

¹⁰ Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:

¹¹ That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

¹² For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. (Isaiah 66:7-12)

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For nearly two thousand years, it had been unimaginable; yet on November 29, 1947, thirty-three countries, a 59% majority, voted in favor of UN General Assembly Resolution 181⁵¹ and created a nation for the Jewish homeland. How uncanny—its borders lay within ancient Israel and fulfilled the prophecies!

Then, on May 14, 1948,⁵² Israel reclaimed her independence from Britain. As though raised from the dead, the dry bones God had shown the prophet Ezekiel, Israel sprang to life again! The land Mark Twain called barren and god-forsaken now abounds with fruitful orchards, foliage, and vineyards. Those who refuted the Jewish right to their nation had developed misinterpretations and opinions that distorted the obvious truth of the clear Word:

⁷ Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

⁸ But, the LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land. (Jeremiah 23:7-8)

The LORD redeemed Israel *from the hand of him that was stronger than he.* (See Jer. 31:11) Shocked by what they saw, the Allied troops rescued the nearly dead Jews from Nazi holocaust camps. The remnant, *like them that dream* (See Ps. 126:1), reached their homeland shores that reassured them of His faithfulness: "*Hath God said ...?*" (See Gen. 3:1) Of course He has!

⁷ For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. ⁸ Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. ⁹ They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel and Ephraim *is* my firstborn.

¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare *it* in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel

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will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.¹¹ For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand *of him that was stronger than he.* (Jeremiah 31:7-11)

Abraham delivered the blessings by faith to Isaac who bestowed them by faith to Jacob who wrestled the Lord for a blessing and received the name *Israel* by his tenacious faith. The generational bestowal concerns their lineage: i.e., the genealogy of Israel who fathered twelve tribal leaders, establishing a chosen people and nation, memorialized forever and remaining today.

⁶ O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen.

⁷ He *is* the LORD our God: *his* judgments *are* in all the earth.

⁸ He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations.

⁹ Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;

¹⁰ And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant: Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance:

¹² When they were *but* a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it. (Psalm 105:6-12)

The Sign of Israel

Teachers often distort the ancient covenant by redefining its words. Spiritualizing the promises, they receive the subtlety of the serpent's deceit, agreeing that God did not mean what He said. False teachers obfuscate the truth and indoctrinate others to believe them. The day will come when God will laugh at their wisdom; He will hold them in derision. He will scatter their proud thoughts and humiliate the mighty, putting them to shame. Proud Goliath will topple, struck by one small stone.

Why do we, who come from all nations, entrust our lives to a Jew for our salvation? Why did eyewitnesses testify that He rose from the dead after three days, a fact for which they suffered and died? Why was the blessing of Abraham's seed given to the gentiles? How did a Jewish Galilean perform such astounding miracles while calling God His *Father*? How can these things

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have happened, yet Israel does not believe in Him? But God did not forget or forsake His chosen people.

It was all foretold by the Jewish prophets. Neither Jew nor gentile is complete without the other because God gave His Word for all the families of the earth to be blessed, and His salvation extends to the nations.

The seed sown is not what it will be; the corruptible seed cannot inherit the incorruptible. First the corruptible appears; after its destruction, the incorruptible; however, everything that exists has its assigned order. (See 1 Cor. 15:35-50)

Apart from the Jewish nation, the kingdom of heaven would not arrive. Unless our Savior reigns for a thousand years, His everlasting kingdom will not come. But His kingdom will come, and the kingdom of David will endure without end because no one can thwart the plans of Israel's God.

²⁰ And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

²¹ Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and *let* not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

²² For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. ...

²⁴ And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (Luke 21:20-22, 24)

Don't you know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingship over Israel to David and his descendants forever by a covenant of salt? (2 Chronicles 13:5 HCSB)

²⁵ So that you will not be conceited, brothers, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery: a partial hardening has come to Israel until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written:

**The Liberator will come from Zion;
He will turn away godlessness from Jacob.**

²⁷ **And this will be My covenant with them,
when I take away their sins.**

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²⁸ Regarding the gospel, they are enemies for your advantage, but regarding election, they are loved because of the patriarchs, ²⁹ since God's gracious gifts and calling are irrevocable. ... For God has imprisoned all in disobedience, so that He may have mercy on all. (Romans 11:25-29, 32 HCSB; cf. Isaiah 59:20-21)

Yeshua prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem, as well as the dispersion of Jews to all nations, and later, their return to the ancient city in the Promised Land.

Many scholars deny the right of Israel to exist, teaching an appealing deception, "replacement theology." See Chapter 13. Although it was once a compelling argument, the fact that God has done what He said He would do must be disconcerting to theologians who come from a long line of cynicism. Though He promised to re-gather them from all nations and re-establish the Jews in Israel, their homeland, some still refuse to believe God. When He returns, *shall he find faith on the earth?* (See Lk. 18:8)

⁷ And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, ⁸ and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ...

¹³ And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male *child*. ¹⁴ But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. ¹⁵ And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood. ¹⁶ But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. ¹⁷ So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. (Revelation 12:7-9, 13-17 NASB)

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Jews have suffered wars and captivities for millennia. In a world opposed to goodness, today genocide is rampant, and its frequent victims are without intervention from a single righteous nation. Since the resurrection, believers in the Scriptures have been crucified, beheaded, and slain along with Jews. Why?

According to the *Revelation*, there was warfare in heaven after the ascension of Christ. Michael and his angels routed the devil and won the victory over Satan, casting him to earth where he continues his rampage against those whom God has chosen for His divine plans. In a vision or by foreknowledge, Yeshua said He saw the devil cast from heaven to earth. Jews have endured persecution since the serpent is furious, and his time is short.

Invisible forces of evil, fallen celestial beings, used Rome to crush Israel. Jews who believed in the Savior fled Jerusalem, warned by messengers of God just weeks prior to the siege that lasted from AD 66-70. They found safe haven in a city across the Jordan River, Pella⁵³ in Perea, while the battles against Rome continued in Judea. The war ended with the deaths of multitudes of Jews, crucified by troops under Titus in AD 70. Possibly over a million Jews were slain in just three years. According to the prophecy, the devil persecuted them who had given the world a Savior. This peaked during the holocaust, but America, the great eagle, spread her wings and helped Israel. Well, that infuriated the dragon, who went to war against those who hold onto their testimony in Jesus. He pursues all the sons of Israel, even them who have faith in the atonement:

⁴⁰ 'If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me—⁴¹ I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies—or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity, ⁴² then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land. ... ⁴⁴ Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor will I so abhor them as to destroy them, breaking My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their

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God. ⁴⁵ But I will remember for them the covenant with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God. I am the LORD." (Leviticus 26:40-42, 44-45 NASB)

Then Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment and cast lots. (Lk. 23:34) Roman soldiers, *dogs*, did this. Has the Father not heard His prayer? He forgave His persecutors; why do we judge them?

"Behold, how happy is the man whom God reproves,
So do not despise the discipline of the Almighty."
(Job 5:17 NASB; cf. Hebrews 12:5) –Eliphaz, to Job

For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.
(Proverbs 3:12; cf. Hebrews 12:6)

The Envied Nation

The restoration of Israel is essential to the redemption of our own bodies. The reason? God kept His part of the covenant even when Israel broke it, and He keeps His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob even though they sinned. Now our love and desire for them to gain their inheritance reveal our love for God the Father.

⁶ He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for Ahab's daughter was his wife. He did what was evil in God's sight, ⁷ but because of the covenant the LORD had made with David, He was unwilling to destroy the house of David since the LORD had promised to give a lamp to David and to his sons forever. (2 Chronicles 21:6-7 HCSB) [This passage refers to Jehoram, a wicked king of Judah]

The ongoing warfare against Israel is perpetrated by a spirit of covetousness. Satan first envied his Maker and coveted His throne; now his followers envy the Jews, His chosen ones, and covet Jerusalem, the city of the great King, the place God chose for His own name.

Already the Lord is grafting Israel's branches back into the olive tree, spiritual Israel, which thrives by the nourishment of its

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root, the Word of God. When we look at Abraham, we see both a physical and a spiritual man who lived by faith in the promised seed, our Savior; and He makes us Abraham's children by the same faith.

⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

(Galatians 1:8-9 NKJV)

The devil is a liar, disguised as an angel of light. If he could, he would use a man to change the name of God, but no man can imitate the righteousness or the love of God in Messiah. Yeshua came in His Father's name and in His Father's authority, and His name has been changing lives ever since. It is our turn to draw the Jews to Jesus by our love for them. They can recognize the Spirit of the Lord as He shines through believers, and envy stirs their faith to rise.

After giving the covenants and promises and declaring the good news to the Jews first, God hardened their hearts for good reasons: to show His mercies and greatness to the gentiles while keeping the Jews separate until the end in order to restore them to their land, keeping His promise. Long ago, they moved Him to jealousy by their wandering hearts. They provoked Him to open the kingdom to the nations, and He made the unclean gentiles clean—as their promised inheritance! O, the wisdom and the faithfulness of God!

They have moved me to jealousy with *that which is not God*; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities; and I will move them to jealousy with *those which are not a people*; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. (Deuteronomy 32:21)

Now He's lifting the veil from Jewish hearts, revealing the reason for their destiny, to save all of the chosen children of God. He has whittled Israel to a tiny point like a fulcrum on which the world turns. He is the Potter, the Artisan, the Creator of all things for the revelation of Himself to men and to angels,

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that we might understand the fear of the LORD, enjoy the love of Abba, and praise His glory forever! *As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for forever.* (Ps. 125:1)

Was Israel ever destroyed, or were her people ever scattered for any reason other than their sins? Never. This generation has seen God draw the Jews back home by grace. Though a terrible time of darkness and judgment is imminent, it heralds the dawn when Jerusalem will be established over all the earth

¹⁰ And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for firstborn. ¹¹ In that day there shall be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. (Zechariah 12:10-11 NKJV)

²⁷ “When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies’ lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations,²⁸ then they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them captive any longer.²⁹ And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,’ says the Lord GOD.” (Ezekiel 39:27-29 NKJV)

Centuries have changed the world but not the Word. God scattered Israel to the nations, but they never forgot the promise: “Next year in Jerusalem!” was their adage. It came to pass that they returned to their land, looking much like Jacob when he returned home to face Esau. However, Esau, seeing his brother Jacob, hobbling across the brook, showed compassion and pity, whereas the Ishmaelites hated their brothers who returned, hobbling as it were, to their homeland, and they’ve wanted to destroy them ever since.

No other nation has been scattered, destroyed, and then re-established—only Israel. Fulfilling Jeremiah 31:23, Jews in Israel speak Hebrew again though the national language was an unused national language for two thousand years.