

# Israel's Messenger

Fall 2016

*Publishing Salvation to Zion - Isaiah 52:7*  
A Ministry of Jewish Awareness Ministries

"OF A TRUTH IT IS, THAT YOUR  
GOD IS A GOD OF GODS,  
AND A LORD OF KINGS,  
AND A REVEALER OF SECRETS.  
SEEING THOU COULDEST  
REVEAL THIS SECRET."

DANIEL 2

"BEHOLD A MAN WITH A  
MEASURING LINE IN HIS HAND.  
THEN SAID I, WHITHER GOEST THOU?  
AND HE SAID UNTO ME,  
TO MEASURE JERUSALEM..."

ZECCHARIAH 2

"HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE LORD OF HOSTS:  
THE WHOLE EARTH IS FULL OF HIS GLORY."

ISAIAH 6



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Israel's Messenger is a quarterly publication of Jewish Awareness Ministries, a Christian ministry proclaiming the Messiah to Jew and Gentile, preaching the Word of God, and praying for Israel.

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Dan Bergman designed the cover of this issue. The focus of this issue is an overview of the books of Isaiah, Daniel, and Zechariah. One major passage from each of these books – the glory of God in Isaiah 6, the image of Daniel 2, and the measuring of Jerusalem of Zechariah 2 - is illustrated by Dan.





# From the Director's Desk

FALL 2016

Greetings in our Savior!

**A**s I write this it is not long after FBI Director James Comey pronounced Hillary Clinton guilty of many charges but then, in a completely moral, ethical, and legal vacuum, said he does not recommend an indictment on any charges. In the July letter to supporters of this ministry I wrote:

“The ongoing presidential contest is an interesting snapshot of the spiritual health of the United States. I believe it is a window into the soul of this country – and it is not a pretty picture. The candidates for both major parties have a lot of the same characteristics – liar, prideful, unethical, immoral, greedy, selfish, lawbreakers, etc.

“The spiritual health of this nation can also be seen in the type of laws being passed (especially in the last year), with the legalization of homosexual marriage, the foolishness of transgender rest rooms, and the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling against common sense sanitary requirements and protections for the patient for abortion clinics in the state of Texas.

Our country is doing the exact opposite of what wisdom and truth would dictate. Our politicians regularly lie to us and very few seem to care. Where is righteousness in our leaders?”

The above was written prior to Comey's decision. Without a biblical view and understanding of our world and country it is easy to become bitter, angry, and disillusioned. Let

me remind you that we are citizens of heaven, this world and its political systems belong to Satan, and what we see happening is what the Bible teaches us will happen. Focus on the LORD and His Word. Ken Overby has written the *Shadows of the Tribulation* article for this issue and touches on a number of recent events setting the stage for the coming Tribulation period. Space didn't allow for his comments on the U.S. but they were an indictment of this country. Come Lord Jesus!

This issue of *Israel's Messenger* focuses on three books from the Jewish Scripture that have some of the most amazing prophecies in the Word of God - Daniel, Isaiah, and Zechariah. The intent of each article is to help you get the “big picture” of what the book is about.

Dan Bergman introduces us to the book of Daniel. As a young man Daniel was taken into Babylonian captivity. His internal fortitude in honoring God in the midst of a pagan society is a challenge to young and old. He also brings us some of the most amazing prophecies of the last days. Dan, reflecting his namesake, gives you an illuminating overview of the book of Daniel.

Keith Megilligan has written about the book of Zechariah. Keith will help in your understanding of this book. For example, we are informed that in the first 7 chapters a Q & A format is used and mostly features Zechariah “forth-telling” about the fate of Jerusalem and Israel. Starting with chapter 8, there is an abrupt change with the phrase “thus says the LORD of hosts” repeatedly used. The focus is still Jerusalem and Israel, but it now focuses on the “future-telling” role of a prophet. The prophecies of these last 7 chapters are fascinating. Enjoy



Keith's article as he helps you to get an overview of Zechariah.

I have the privilege of providing an overview of the book of Isaiah. The 66 chapters of this book are unparalleled in the rest of the Jewish Scriptures, as well as the later revelation of Matthew through Revelation. As I comment in the article, “His writings will take you from the depths of sin, hypocrisy, and political and religious degradation to the heights of righteousness, holiness, and Messianic grandeur. Isaiah is the *prince of prophets*!” Two themes energize this book – the need of individual salvation and the promise of a kingdom for those who trust in Jehovah. There is a flow to this book that should not be missed. I trust my brief article helps in your understanding of the book of Isaiah.

In the *Sowing the Seed...Reaping the Harvest* column Dan Bergman used his knowledge of Hebrew to start a conversation with an Israeli couple. The story is a reminder to all of us that there are oftentimes opportunities to talk with people about the Lord if we look for those opportunities. In the *Apples of Gold* column, Moshe and Shoshana Gold share how God has blessed them through the fellowship of a believer during the last couple of years of Moshe's health trials. Perhaps it will remind you that little acts of kindness bring large amounts of joy.

Keep the faith! He IS coming! ☞

In Messiah,  
Mark Robinson

# Isaiah

by Rev. Mark Robinson



It is certainly not hyperbole when many commentators refer to Isaiah as the *prince of prophets*. His writings will take you from the depths of sin, hypocrisy, and political and religious degradation to the heights of righteousness, holiness, and Messianic grandeur. Isaiah is the *prince of prophets*!

The themes of this book include Messiah and His kingdom; God's judgment on the nations; the call and uniqueness of the Jewish people and their nation Israel; the Tribulation period; the unsurpassed attributes of God of omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence; salvation through faith alone in Messiah; as well as many other themes that are developed throughout the rest of Scripture.

Isaiah's book will take us from the Assyrian captivity of the northern kingdom, Israel, to the Babylonian invasion and destruction of the southern kingdom, Judah, through the world-wide captivity of 70 A.D. at the hands of Rome. Ultimately we are shown the final re-gathering of the Jewish people back to their land, in a re-established nation of Israel, headed by the promised Messianic king sitting and ruling from Jerusalem.

The book was written around 740 B.C. to 690 B.C. It covers the reign of Judah's kings, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh. The historical background of this book is found in 2 Kings 15 - 21. Isaiah's ministry takes place primarily in Jerusalem (1:1; 2:1; 52:2; 62:1).

In the original manuscript the scroll of Isaiah had no chapter or verse divisions. With the addition of chapter and verse divisions about 800 years ago, in the providence of God, the division of Isaiah mimics

the word of God. As there are 39 books in the "Old Testament" and 27 books in the "New Testament," so the natural division of Isaiah is the first 39 chapters and the final 27 chapters. Isaiah 40 - 66 develops in great detail God's promised *goel*, Redeemer, just as the 27 books of the "New Testament" develop in detail the Redeemer (Jesus).

The word *Isaiah* means "*Jehovah is salvation*." The meaning of Isaiah's name is captured better in this book than any of the other Old Testament books. God's promise of blessing to all nations, both Jew and Gentile, in Genesis 12:3, is vividly demonstrated in this amazing book.

Along with Abraham, the patriarch; Moses, the lawgiver; and David, the king; Isaiah, the prophet, certainly stands as one of the towering figures of the Old Testament.

## A JADED PROPHET - CHAPTERS 1-5

The first five chapters of this book introduce us to a message of a disillusioned, jaded prophet. I say this because of the 115 verses that make up the first five chapters, no less than 104 of them could be considered "negative;" "negative" in the sense that what is addressed is the sin and hypocrisy of the people and the coming judgment as a result. The condemnation culminates in the 6 "woes" of chapter five that Isaiah lists against the people.

Of the 11 verses I have identified as "positive," a couple of them are just introductory facts, i.e. 1:1 and 2:1. In the first 115 verses there is very little in the way of a message of hope. That Isaiah has become jaded in his outlook is corroborated from the events of chapter 6.

What I believe are the two main themes of this book are mentioned in the first two chapters. In Isaiah 1:18 we have the challenge to listen/reason with Isaiah so they might find forgiveness of their sin, "*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*" The second theme is the promise of a kingdom and the Messianic King ruling, which is mentioned in Isaiah 2:2-4.

## A CHANGED PROPHET - CHAPTER 6

This chapter brings an amazing change in the attitude of Isaiah. It is a pivotal point in the prophet's ministry. "*In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple,*" Isaiah 6:1. When the seraphim cry "*Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory,*" God's holiness and glory became a reality perhaps for the first time in many years to Isaiah.

The impact on Isaiah of the holiness and glory of God can be seen in his response. No longer is it "Woe is you," but now it is "woe is me," Isaiah 6:5. Isaiah confesses that he is unclean/sinful. Yes, "*he dwells in the midst of a people of unclean lips,*" but when his focus is on the LORD, "*for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts*" he sees himself compared to the holy God of Israel.

When the seraphim take a coal from the altar and touch Isaiah's lips, "*And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and*

*Continued on page 6*



*Continued from page 5*

*thy sin purged,*” the only reasonable explanation is that Isaiah’s jaded imbalance of sin and judgment in his message needed to be changed. He needed an attitude adjustment so he could carry out the ministry God had called him to – reasoning with the people about the forgiveness of sin through Messiah. His confession was the equivalent of 1 John 1:9 in a believer’s life today. And, what was the result?

God asks, “*Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?*” Isaiah had been going for years, but with a wrong attitude. When Isaiah answered God’s call in the affirmative, he is told that he is going to go to a people that have ears that can’t hear and a heart that can’t understand. And, as he preaches, they are going to become deafer and denser. Isaiah’s response was, “*...Lord, how long?*” God’s answer was, “*your entire life.*” Yet, this did not deter Isaiah as he faithfully carried out this calling emphasizing the grace found in Messiah. His attitude and message changed.

## A RE-FOCUSED MESSAGE - CHAPTERS 7 – 12

In the 6 chapters following chapter 6 we see the change of emphasis in Isaiah’s message. Yes, he continued to address the sin of the people and the ultimate judgment coming. But, he had a much greater focus on “*come let us reason together*” in that their sins could be forgiven and there is a promise of a better kingdom.

In chapter 7 we have that great promise of the coming of Immanuel through a virgin birth. And this promise of hope was graciously offered initially to the wicked king Ahaz. What grace!

Chapter 8, verses 5-22, develops the hope of Israel which is “Immanuel,” vs. 8, 10. Any other alliance will lead to destruction – “God with us,” *Immanuel* is the only hope.

In the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter we have that great promise of “*a child born*” and “*a son given.*” That He is man is seen in that He is a child born; that He is also God is seen in that He is a Son given. And He will rule the kingdom – “*Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this,*” Isaiah 9:7.

In the midst of a prophecy against Assyria in the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter, there is a reference to the future end time deliverance of Israel, vs. 20-23, and the “mighty God” (see Isaiah 9:6), who is the Angel of the LORD. Isaiah again promises deliverance and hope.

Chapter 11 and 12 are a unit. Together they speak of the coming righteous reign of Messiah and His kingdom on earth. The LORD is said

to be their only salvation, “*Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.*” Isaiah 12:2-3.

Isaiah’s clear change of emphasis from the first five chapters is because his focus is on the LORD, not on the people.

## THE NATIONS – CHAPTER 13-39

This section of Isaiah is parenthetical to the flow of the book in one sense, but in another way it is logical, as well as needed, as it addresses the nations of the world. We shall see that the teachings of chapter 11 and 12 are picked up in chapter 40. But now, in light of the promised kingdom and reign of Messiah in chapters 11 and 12, God addresses the nations of the world. If Israel is going to be the lead nation of the world, ruled by Messiah in His world-wide kingdom, what happens with the nations?

It should be of no surprise that the first nation addressed is Babylon (chapters 13 and 14). Babylon is where Satan’s revolt against God’s order in the nations began (Genesis 11) and where it is ended (Revelation 17 and 18). The language of much of these chapters is apocalyptic – “*Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty,*” Isaiah 13:6. The introduction of Satan, the power behind the Babylonian king, in context, is his destruction, though we have information on his initial rebellion.

Chapters 13-23 primarily cover the nations surrounding Israel. Much of the material is their destruction at the end of days, prior to God establishing His kingdom on earth. Chapters 24-27 are a mini-apocalypse. Other than the book of Revelation there is no passage(s) that develops in such detail God’s coming destruction on all the



nations of the world, His judgment on planet earth, and the promised deliverance of Israel through it all. Chapters 28-35 continue this theme of world-wide judgment, as well as dealing with Israel, her sin, judgment, and deliverance. Chapter 35 – 39 addresses the historical situation at the time leading to the transition of the command to “comfort” Israel.

### **SALVATION THROUGH GOD'S SERVANT - CHAPTERS 40 – 55**

Chapter 12 began with “*And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.*” “That day” is the reign of Messiah in Jerusalem and the nation of Israel has peace and the individuals know the LORD.

The first couple of verses in chapter 40 pick up the theme of “comfort.”

*“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.”*

The rest of this chapter, and through chapter 55, develop the “comfort” offered to the Jewish people, as well as Gentiles, in the person of their God and Messiah, 40:9-10! This develops and answers the challenge of Isaiah 1:18, “*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*” Sins are forgiven through the Messiah (Jesus), not religion or good works.

Chapter 40:12 – 42 challenges Jew and Gentile to respond to the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent God of Israel and reject all other (false) gods. His proof that He is the one true God is Israel, 40:8-23. Through pre-written history, prophecy, He proves

He is God as He is the only one who knows the future, omniscience, has the power to defeat His enemies who try to destroy His plan, omnipotence, and is everywhere, omnipresence, so He can protect against all adversaries.

The Servant of God is introduced in chapters 42, 49, 50, and 53. In the first two passages we are told what the Servant will do – bring spiritual redemption to Jew and Gentile. In the last two Servant passages we are told how He will bring about redemption – through His physical and, most importantly, spiritual suffering for the sins of the world in His death, burial and resurrection, Isaiah 53:8-10.

The fifty-fifth chapter is an offering of that salvation to “*everyone that thirsts.*” This chapter is the offer of forgiveness of sins through Messiah by believing in Him and His work through faith. The entire chapter is a summation of the previous three chapters where we have the messenger of the gospel, Isaiah 52; the focus of the gospel which is Messiah Jesus, Isaiah 53; and the result of the gospel, Isaiah 54; in that Jew and Gentile will find forgiveness of sin through Him. This is the culmination of the challenge “*come let us reason together... though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.*”

### **TRIBULATION AND KINGDOM - CHAPTERS 56-66**

The final chapters of this great book speak of the coming Tribulation period followed by the kingdom of our God and Savior Jesus.

It starts with God's promise to the righteous, Isaiah 56, God's judgment on the wicked, Isaiah 57, and God's call for the hypocrite to repent, Isaiah 58.

The last 8 chapters focus on Jehovah's deliverance. The fifty-ninth chapter describes the sinful condition of the people in graphic detail. This wretched condition of the people is a reminder that the only hope they have

is in their God, Isaiah 59:20-21. The following chapters emphasize this truth.

The light of the Lord and the New Jerusalem, Isaiah 60, is the hope of the redeemed. Messiah's mission and Israel's destiny is the subject of Isaiah 61. Jehovah's vigilant concern for Israel and His not resting until Israel is redeemed is the focus of Isaiah 62. In chapter 63, Israel's Avenger and Redeemer, Messiah Jesus, destroys Israel's enemies and redeems Israel.

Isaiah has an emotional, heartfelt prayer to God in Isaiah 63:15 through all of chapter 64. His appeal to God to deliver and redeem Israel is based on the promises of a faithful God. It is one of the most moving and emotional prayers found in the Bible.

God's answer to Isaiah's prayer is found in the final two chapters of this book. God will establish the millennial kingdom where justice and peace reign, Isaiah 65, and God delivers Israel and His glory is seen in the nation of Israel, Isaiah 66.

### **CONCLUSION**

So much more could be added to the above. Isaiah is a book that should be studied by all. For believers, it will remind us of the grace of our God in Messiah Jesus and our future home with Him in His kingdom. For unbelievers, it shows you that religion is bankrupt, good works are “filthy rags” when it comes to obtaining forgiveness of sin, and all hope is found in only one place, God's Servant, Messiah Jesus, who died for your sins, was buried, and rose from the grave – that you might have your sins cleansed and forgiven.

As Isaiah began, “*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*” If you respond not only will your sins be forgiven by a holy God, but you will also be in His kingdom when He returns! ☞



# Daniel

by Rev. Dan Bergman

It was 605 BC, the third year of King Jehoiakim's reign. Daniel was a boy living in Jerusalem. Some say he was a teenager, but the Hebrew simply doesn't support it. He had to have been younger. He was most likely of royal descent. He definitely stood out as having wisdom, skill, and character. He was raised to love and serve the God of his fathers. When Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, besieged Jerusalem - Daniel was taken captive.

## A BOY WITH CONVICTION – CHAPTER 1

Having been given special portions of the king's food and drink that were forbidden by the Torah, Daniel made his choice to humbly request exemption from eating and drinking what was given him. His request was respectful, but resolute. He ought to obey God rather than men. We know the story, how he and his Hebrew companions were allowed to eat pulse (likely vegetables, from the Hebrew word for "seed") instead of the meat, and drink water instead of wine for ten days. They proved that they were ten times better than all of the others to the king. He had no mother or father with him reminding him of what was right. He was a child - and yet he defied (with permission) the wishes of the most powerful man in the world. It is certainly a noble aspiration to "dare to be a Daniel."

## THE DREAM OF A WICKED KING – CHAPTER 2

Daniel has been apart from his home and family for three years now. He would never see them again, on this side of glory. King Nebuchadnezzar had a



dream that none of his wise men could recount for him, or decipher. He was furious. He expected much of these wise men. He railed on them, promising that if they could not tell him his dream, and its interpretation, that he would cut them in pieces, and make their houses into dunghills! His wise men's response in a nutshell was this:

"No one on earth can do this, only the gods can do such a thing! Kings never ask this of anyone! It's impossible!"

This made Nebuchadnezzar's blood boil with rage. He declared that all of the wise men in all of Babylon were to be killed! This included Daniel and his friends. When Daniel heard of the decree, he stood up to Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who was the very man sent to kill all of the wise men! Daniel then went to the king to request that he be given some time

to interpret the dream. The king agreed so Daniel and his friends besought the Lord to give Daniel the interpretation of the dream, and God did!

Nebuchadnezzar saw a great image, or statue. The different parts of this image were made of different materials. These materials represent the four major world powers that would come and go, ending with the revived Roman empire under Antichrist, that will be destroyed by the "stone cut without hands", which is representative of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, as He destroys it at His second coming at the end of the seven-year Tribulation period.

As a result, in verse 47 and 48 of chapter 2, King Nebuchadnezzar declares *"Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret. Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon."*

## FACING AN ULTIMATUM – CHAPTER 3

Have you ever been brought to a point of decision to follow God, or men? Daniel's companions were about to have their faith tested in just such a way. Nebuchadnezzar had made a huge statue bearing his likeness, and ordered all to bow down at the appointed time and worship it. Daniel's three friends would not. It was previously decreed that whosoever would not worship the king's image was to be bound and thrown into a raging furnace. Let the Hebrews'



response sink in, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”<sup>1</sup>

Nebuchadnezzar becomes perhaps the most enraged that we see him in the entire book of Daniel! He commands to heat the furnace seven times hotter than its normal temperature. This would easily be thousands of degrees, as this is likely the furnace that was used to melt the gold for the statue! The heat from the flames was so intense the men who threw the Hebrews into the furnace died!

But God protected the young Hebrew boys! In fact, the pre-incarnate Son of God, Jesus the Messiah appears in the furnace with the three Hebrews! The boys are loosed from their bands, walking around in the midst of the furnace! Their hair was not singed, and they didn’t even smell of smoke! The king commands them to come out, and proclaims “*Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.*”<sup>2</sup>

## NEBUCHADNEZZAR’S SECOND DREAM – CHAPTER 4

Later the king had another troubling dream. This dream begins by pronouncing the greatness of the king, but largely focuses on his coming judgment. Within this chapter, there is an amazing example of how the

sovereignty of God is balanced with the free will of man. God’s sentence of judgment is pronounced against king Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel, after giving the interpretation of the dream, gives the king counsel. He tells the king to “*break off thy sins with righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility.*”<sup>3</sup> God is sovereign - but he reacts to how men respond to him (repentance). As prophesied by Daniel, the king ends up going mad for seven years, living in the wilderness, and eating grass like an ox until the seven years are fulfilled. At the end of chapter four, Nebuchadnezzar praises the “King of Heaven,” and proclaims that He is able to abase those who walk in pride.

## HANDWRITING ON THE WALL – CHAPTER 5

We find a new player introduced into the drama that is the book of Daniel. His name is Belshazzar. He is the son of Nabonidus, and grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. He is sitting as king while his father was on expeditions in Arabia. Belshazzar was a wicked, prideful, heathen ruler. He had thrown a huge party, using the sacred vessels from the Temple in Jerusalem as common vessels for use in their drunken pagan ceremonies.

The celebration was interrupted by a hand writing four words on the wall: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and UPHARSIN. In a panic, the king scrambles to find answers. The queen suggests that Daniel could tell him what it means, so he brings Daniel in. This is a paraphrase of what Daniel tells him: “God has finished your kingdom. It’s over. God has judged you to be inadequate. Your kingdom will be given to the Medes and the Persians.”

Belshazzar’s final act as king was to honor Daniel, and give him a third of the kingdom of Babylon. That night, Belshazzar was murdered, and Darius of the Medes took the kingdom.

## LYING WITH LIONS – CHAPTER 6

Being close to the Lord does not eliminate trials. Darius’ princes whom he set over the kingdom were jealous of Daniel, for Darius had promoted Daniel above all of them! They set a trap for Daniel by prompting Darius to forbid prayer to anyone but him. The penalty? A night in the lions’ den, which most certainly would be your last. Knowing this, Daniel still prayed as he had every day, preferring rather to die praying than to live without prayer. He was cast into the lions’ den by a sorrowful king who could not retract his law. Would Daniel survive? The God of heaven sent an angel to shut the mouths of the lions! It was a miracle! Darius then makes this decree “*I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end.*”<sup>4</sup>

## BEASTS, BEWILDERMENT, AND BLESSINGS – CHAPTERS 7 AND 8

Now Daniel has dreams of his own. He sees four beasts which parallel the image seen in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, representing the Gentile kingdoms of the world. The fourth beast represents both what we know today as the old Roman empire, and the prophetic revived Roman empire under which the Antichrist will come to power.

We would be amiss not to mention Daniel’s amazing vision of the Son of man speaking with the Ancient of days! “*...one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days ...and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*”<sup>5</sup>

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# Zechariah

by Dr. Keith Megilligan

**Z**echariah is simply identified to us as a “prophet” in 1:1. His time for living and ministry are given in Ezra 6:14 - *“And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo.”* His own reference of two specific dates for his (initial?) word of prophecy, Zechariah 1:1,7, date him in the second year of Darius in 520 BC. These references help give us not only his time of ministry but indicate who his contemporaries were: Haggai, Daniel and Ezekiel.

Zechariah (as a prophet and the book) has the following “themes” in his writing:

- 1) His evident concern for the 70-year prophecy of Jeremiah (1:12; 7:5; cf. Jeremiah 25:11; Daniel 9:2)
- 2) Jerusalem (mentioned 37 times)
- 3) Joshua the high priest and Satan (chapters 3, 6; mentioned 6 times)
- 4) A series of visions prefaced mainly by the phrase “word of the Lord.”

There are a variety of “personages” mentioned: Lord [of Hosts] (46 times), LORD God, Angel of the Lord, angel (sometimes referred to as “man”), Joshua the high priest, Zerubbabel and “the” shepherd and shepherds. Zechariah offers two specific dates for his word of prophecy: 1:1,7 (519 B.C., 3

months after the first prophecy – 520 B.C.). These dates help give us not only his time of ministry but indicate who his contemporaries are (indicated above). Similarly, each of these prophets have specific (personal and prophetic) concerns for Jerusalem.

His visions (word of the Lord) are:

- 1) The horsemen (1:1,7)
- 2) Horns and craft-men (1:18)
- 3) “Man” and measuring line (2:1)
- 4) Joshua, the high priest (3:1; 6:11)
- 5) Golden lamp stand (5:1)
- 6) Woman (women) in basket (5:5)
- 7) Four chariots (6:1)

*Continued on page 11*

*Continued from page 9*

The kingdom was given to the Son (who comes in the clouds of heaven) by the Father! This very passage is quoted by Jesus at His trial before being crucified, when asked if He was the Christ, the Son of God. Daniel then sees two more beasts which represent the Medo-Persian and Greek Empires.

## PRAYER AND PROPHECY – CHAPTER 9

The longest prayer in the Hebrew Scriptures belongs to Daniel. It has served as an example for a model of Jewish prayer. It should be noted that nothing negative is ever said about Daniel in all of Scripture, and yet the theme of his entire prayer is confession and repentance. We could do much to learn from Daniel. His prayer is interrupted in verse 20 by Gabriel the angel. He tells Daniel of the amazing timeline that begins when Jerusalem is decreed to be rebuilt. This timeline gives the exact timing for the Messiah’s coming, and also speaks of His substitutionary death! The timeline

ends with a brief description of the seven-year Tribulation period.

## IN THE COMPANY OF THE SAVIOR AND ANGELS – CHAPTER 10


This chapter provides an amazing glimpse of Jesus the Messiah that parallels Revelation chapter one. Daniel is terrified. He is then comforted by a number of angels who appear to him one at a time.

## THE HISTORY OF THE FUTURE – CHAPTER 11

An amazingly accurate prediction of the events of world history, from approximately 500-175 B.C., is recorded here. Daniel writes the words of Gabriel, as he tells of world powers rising and falling, of specific conflicts and alliances, as well as the resulting actions on this stage of worldwide drama. The second half of this chapter is prophetic. It speaks of the Antichrist. Christ referenced this passage as a yet-to-be fulfilled prophecy known as the

abomination of desolation. When we consider the many prophetic details of Daniel 11 that were fulfilled as predicted, we can have confidence that the remaining prophecies of this chapter and others in the Bible that are yet to be fulfilled will likewise occur as God has ordained!

## THE FINAL CHAPTER – CHAPTER 12

Daniel ends with the same prophetic treasure that it has continued in from the beginning. He continues with the words of Gabriel (who is by the way, the very angel that appears to Mary to announce the birth of Jesus in Luke 1). Gabriel speaks to Daniel of the Tribulation period, and of the final resurrection. We will meet Daniel someday, if we are trusting in Jesus, the Messiah that Daniel prophesied of! We will with Daniel *“...rest, and stand in thy lot in the end of days.”*<sup>6</sup> 

End Notes

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Daniel 3:16-18 | 4. Daniel 6:26    |
| 2. Daniel 3:28-29 | 5. Daniel 7:13-14 |
| 3. Daniel 4:27    | 6. Daniel 12:13   |





*Continued from page 10*

The following are not necessarily visions in that they are not preceded by the phrase “word of the Lord.”

- 8) Coming King (9:9ff)
- 9) Ask for rain (10:1)
- 10) Shepherds 10:3; 11:4 culminating in 13:7-9
- 11) Lord returns to Jerusalem (salvation) (12:1) with the spirit of grace (12:10)
- 12) Day of the Lord (14:1)

It would be helpful to distinguish the role of prophet from the “prophecies” in this book. Briefly, a prophet in the Old Testament was referred to as a *nabi*. Basically he was a spokesman on behalf of another. For example, Aaron was Moses’ *nabi*, (Exodus 4; 7:1). Prophets were spokesmen on behalf of God. However, their word from the Lord may be “forth telling,”

or “foretelling.” That is, the word may be for a contemporary audience of the prophet, and/or the word could be for future audiences. In Zechariah, there are a variety of “prophecies,” at least as far as the impact of the timing of the message was concerned. The following summary is not iron clad: the first two-thirds (of the book) is mainly for the immediate context/audience of Zechariah and the latter third is for future audience(s).

### OUTLINE AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS ON ZECHARIAH

Zechariah uses the concept of questions and answers to open his prophetic book. Most of these Q & A sessions focus on the immediate sense of prophecy (forth telling). By this method we are given a little insight to the prophet and the immediate audience of his day. This pattern is followed from chapters 1 through 7. One of

the interesting features of this “forth-telling” is the use of symbolism and object lessons to teach about the fate of Jerusalem/Israel. The use of symbols and even a touch of allegory are a familiar teaching mechanism among prophetic books (i.e. Daniel, Ezekiel and others). The Q & A is somewhat abruptly ended in chapter 8 by a series of statements: “*Thus saith the LORD of hosts...*”

The Q & A in the first seven chapters is focused upon Jerusalem and Judah:

- 1) It’s all about Jerusalem/Judah. Chapter 1 & 2
- 2) Who will oversee Jerusalem? Chapter 3
- 3) Who will build Jerusalem? Chapter 4
- 4) What is in the Land (Jerusalem/Judah)? Chapter 5
- 5) What are the chariots/spirits? Chapter 5:5

*Continued on page 12*

- 6) What is this “offering?”  
Chapter 6:10
- 7) Who is the branch?  
Chapter 6:12, 13 (future telling)
- 8) What about the crown?  
Chapter 6:10, 11, 14, 15
- 9) Shall I mourn/fast? Chapter 7

As we come to chapter 8, a significant grammatical shift takes place. We go from Q & A to the LORD of hosts making a series of declarative statements preceded with the verbal formula: “...thus saith the LORD of hosts...” Again, Jerusalem/Zion is his focus.

Chapter 9 is a summary of God against the nations of the world. In the process God demonstrates Himself as rising to the defense of Israel.

Chapter 10, by contrast, is a summary of God’s blessings upon the return of Jacob/Israel to the Land.

The flip side of this blessing is the destruction that God declares awaits Lebanon, Bashan, and Jordan in chapter 11. Continuing in this chapter, the Lord switches his concern to the subject of shepherding. He is especially critical of bad shepherds and their care (lack of) those who are doomed for slaughter. He uses the analogy of two different named staffs: *Beauty* and *Bands* to illustrate His broken relationship with Judah and Israel. He also incorporates the famous passage about “thirty pieces of silver” (see Matthew 26:15; 27:9,10 for the messianic implications).

The previous segment about the thirty pieces of silver becomes a transition of sorts in Zechariah’s book. The emphasis of his prophecy definitely shifts from “forth telling” to “future telling.” One prophetic cue (or clue), is the idiomatic expression, “*In that day...*” (Hebrew = *b’yom*). This idiom is used about 10 times from chapter 12 to the end of the book (prophecy).

Next, there is a change in tense. The Hebrew language doesn’t function the same as English, where the characteristic of time [past, present

and future] isn’t as clearly manifested. Technically, the Hebrew verbs have aspects of reference where the context helps govern the time indicated). That being said, the tense becomes future oriented, e.g. “*I will make...*” “*I will smite...*” Further, there is an introduction of a phrase like nothing that has happened to that point in Israel’s relationship to God: “...*they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced...*” Certainly this phrase is something that needs further explanation and understanding that perhaps even Zechariah didn’t fully comprehend as he penned those words.

Chapter 12 also contains certain phrases that need additional consideration.

- How do we understand the phrases, “*glory of the house of David, glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem?*”
- Is there a particular distinction between the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem? If so, what is that distinction?
- What is the “Spirit of Grace”? Should the phrase even be capitalized?
- Do we now understand better why the previous “mourning” (chapter 7) was rebuffed as it is now clearly purposed (i.e. “...*for Him, as one mourneth for his only son*”)?
- How is the phrase “*in that day*” (vs. 11) related to the mourning done in the plain of Megiddo (vs. 11)?

Chapter 13 contains some familiar themes that prophets of God are frequently told to address. There are judgments against idolatry and false prophets. The former speaks to commitment of Israel to God alone. The latter speaks to the biblical qualifications for true prophets that God had laid down during the time of Moses (Deuteronomy 13 and 18).

God likewise addresses the subject of “*My Shepherd*” by laying the context for another messianic fulfillment (vs. 7; cf. Matthew 26:31) and the matter of painful refinement for Israel in that only one third will survive “*in*

*all the land.*” Again, the concept of God refining the children of Israel is a common theme among Old Testament prophets (see Isaiah 48:10,11).

The concluding chapter 14 again implements the idiom, “*in that day*,” or a similar phrase, “*it shall come to pass in that day.*” The whole chapter is basically messianic. “*The LORD will go forth...His feet shall stand...*” are two such phrases climaxing in verse 9 with, “*And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.*” This is a distinct reflection of the unity and simplicity of God as taught in Deuteronomy 6:4. However, the language about God’s “feet” and “stand” used by Zechariah is anthropomorphic. That is, we know that God, being Spirit, does not have feet. So for God to be depicted as such would indicate that the anticipation is of the Messiah; God being incarnate in His Son (cf. Isaiah 9:6,7).

Finally, there are two physical phenomena described that must be pointing to the future because these phenomena have never occurred in Israel’s history or, for that matter, the history of the world.

- 1) A day in which there will be no light (14:6,7).
- 2) The topography of and around Jerusalem will be completely changed (14:5, 10).

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Zechariah by using his office of “forth-teller” and “fore-teller” gives us a consistent view of God’s regard for Jerusalem, Judah, Israel and His Son, the Messiah of Israel. God has cared for and even exalted each in the past and he will continue to do so today and in the future (“*in that day*”).

The consistent caution is against idolatry and careful adherence to his Word (through his true prophets). Today, the child of God is admonished to do the same. Keep looking to the Word for not only the future of Jerusalem and Israel, but your own future as well. 🌿





# Sowing the Seed...

## *Reaping the Harvest*

### GADI NEEDS GOD

By Dan Bergman

**O**n my 32nd birthday my family and I went out to lunch together. After lunch, we decided to go to a store across the parking lot, as I needed to replace some equipment for my computer at Jewish Awareness Ministries office. I was in the electronics section, and my ear picked up someone speaking Hebrew! Praise the Lord I remembered my Hebrew numbers as I overheard a woman reading some prices to her husband in Hebrew! I walked up to them and said "Shalom!"

They responded in kind, although somewhat hesitantly. I then asked them a question to which I already knew the answer. "Do you speak Hebrew?" It is oftentimes helpful to ask questions to engage people in dialogue as certain people may get rubbed the wrong way if you assume something about their background or ethnic heritage. I didn't want to take any chances.

Are you ready to learn a little Hebrew? Okay great! Here goes!

The man answered "Ken." (Yes.)

I reached out my hand and said "Shmi Dan," (my name is Dan.)

He responded, "Shmi Gadi," (my name is Gadi.)

I answered, "Na-eem Me-ode" (Very nice to meet you).

Gadi (pronounced "God-e") explained that His real name is Gad, like the tribe of Israel. The reason he goes by Gadi is because in Hebrew, Gad is pronounced "God." He said he wanted to avoid awkward situations in introducing himself to English speakers. I reached into my back pocket, and realized that I had a stack of tracts from our church, but no Jewish tracts on me! Gadi and his wife were Israeli. They would be going back to Israel shortly. I explained to them that I was a

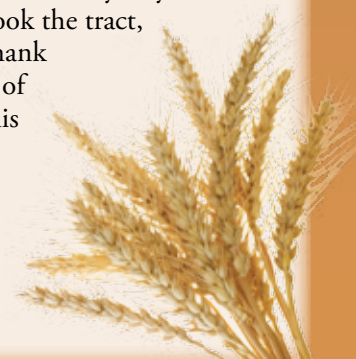


Christian, and that I work with a local ministry here in NC. I told them that we love the Jewish people, and stand with Israel. They were grateful, but also began to walk away, ending the conversation. I thought to myself, "Lord, please give me another opening with this dear couple!"

As the Lord would have it, I didn't find what I needed at this store, so I headed over to another store next door. When I got out of the car I had an urge to reorganize the trunk in case I bought something that I might need room for. I consolidated some of our ministry boxes, and found a handful of Jewish tracts in the process. I put them in my pocket. I was not going to be caught without them again! I found what I needed in the second store, and then took a look down one of the isles - it was Gadi! He and his wife must have come here right after

the first store!! I had Jewish tracts!! I thought to myself, "Thank you Lord!"

I walked up to them, and greeted them again. I asked them if I could give them something to read. I handed them our "Shalom" tract, and told them that it speaks of the only way to have true and lasting peace. They asked what it was from, and I told them that it was from the Hebrew Scriptures and the "Brit Ha-Hadasha" (The New Testament). I told them that we believe that Yeshua (Jesus) is the Messiah, and that He is the only way to have true and lasting peace. They took the tract, and said that they would read it! Thank you Lord for leading me every step of the way! Please pray for Gadi and his wife, that they would indeed read the tract, and accept Jesus as their Messiah! ☞





## A FRIEND IN DEED

*by Moshe and Shoshona Gold*

**A**fter Moshe's hemorrhagic stroke in 2013, he spent some time in a hospital named Beni Zion. He shared a room with two other men and the entire ward was filled to capacity. There were so many people around that it was virtually impossible not to interact with them on more than a surface level. One day, the LORD connected me with a caregiver named Sameria, an Arab Christian lady. Over the next few months when Moshe rested, I would spend time with her. We would speak about our shared belief in Jesus and the hope He brought. During this time Sameria would bring food made by her sister, as well as other gifts for me, such as candy and fruit.

After three months in the hospital, Moshe went back to rehab and I only spoke infrequently on the phone to Sameria. One day I was shocked and pleasantly surprised to look up and see her with Georgette, the woman she cared for sitting at the table across from Moshe! Over the following weeks, Moshe and Sameria also became friends. Even after the woman she cared for died, Sameria would show up unannounced and unexpected at least twice a month, sometimes more. She would also call me every day. One day she told us that she had found new employment cleaning at a small hospital, but still wanted to visit on her day off.

Moshe and I came to enjoy her frequent visits, as well as the delicious homemade food she would bring. Her appearance was not only welcome, but somewhat of a surprise sometimes, as we would look up and suddenly see her standing there smiling! It was as if she had drifted in on the wind. Sameria explained that we had been adopted into her family and that they were all praying for us.

During this time Moshe's trach tube was removed which allowed them to converse more easily and he and

Sameria began to talk more about the LORD. At first Moshe was skeptical of her salvation, fearing that she knew about Jesus but did not know him as her Savior.

Furthermore, he feared that she was relying on her religious affiliation with the Catholic Church for that salvation, and not in a personal relationship with God through Jesus. However, through these many discussions Moshe was convinced, as I had already been, of her salvation regardless of her church association.

After Moshe was released to come home from rehab, Sameria and I still spoke quite often, and remained in contact through Facebook. During Passover we met with her for coffee in a restaurant near the rehab facility.

We enjoyed her company conversing and catching up in person. She has a very dynamic personality and is always cheerful. The time went by very quickly and after a few hours we were ready to leave. Sameria asked for a ride to the nearest bus stop, but we insisted on driving her home.

She lives in a family dwelling on a street where many of her relatives also have homes. Her family's home commands a view of the city, port and bay of Haifa; a very beautiful three story home nested on the side of the mountain with twelve steep steps leading down to the main entrance. I was given a tour of the home, while Moshe waited in the car. It was evident that the family made great use out of the large open porch at the back of the house. Sameria continually reminds us that we have an open invitation to visit and share a meal with them; a true sign of Middle Eastern hospitality. We intend to do this when Moshe is physically able to negotiate the steps. We are hoping this will be soon! Until then, we are grateful to the Lord for providing Sameria's love and friendship. 🕊

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# Shadows of the Tribulation

by Ken Overby

**T**he freewill moves of nations played out on the chessboard of history fulfill divine prophecy. We do not know the timing or their next moves but when a chess piece like Iran's Rouhani declares "Checkmate!" we recall that history is littered with leaders who shouted "Game over!" We rest in the covenant that God made to preserve His people and His nation Israel. Our daily news reports the latest moves and intents of these nations identified by the prophets millennia ago.

These players listed by Daniel and Ezekiel in the headlines include the regional powers from Daniel's fourth empire of Rome as well as Russia which Ezekiel located to the uttermost north. Prime Minister Netanyahu's recent four trips to Moscow and a trip to Rome highlight their prophetic significance. Two headline ancients, Turkey and Iran are keeping Israeli diplomats active. A reconciliatory agreement with Turkey was just signed, and of course Iran's threats of potential nuclear war and their violations of the recent nuclear agreement saturate our news feeds.

Russia and Iran have armed their pawns, *Hamas* in Gaza and *Hezbollah* in Lebanon, to the teeth. Adding to that mix is the PLO's constant attacks of Israeli citizens, not to mention the threat of ISIS. Then there is the international movement of BDS calling for boycotts, sanctions and divestment to economically cripple Israel. Their schemes are increasing in intensity and rapidity.

**IRAN:** Fox News reported that, "The commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guard declared that Hezbollah, their Lebanese proxy, has 100,000 missiles that are ready to hit Israel to liberate the occupied Palestinian territories." The *Jerusalem Post* reported General Salami's warning, "Today, the grounds for the annihilation and collapse of the Zionist regime are (present) more than ever."<sup>1</sup>

**HEZBOLLAH:** The *Jerusalem Post* quoted Gen. Haimovich, commander of air defenses in the Israel Air Force, who said, "*Hezbollah* can cover more than 75 percent of Israeli territory with its rockets and missiles. A 'regional war' is a more realistic scenario than a single-front escalation," Haimovich suggests.<sup>2</sup>

**RUSSIA:** The Vice President of the *American Foreign Policy Council* in Washington, D.C., Ilan Berman, in an OpEd piece entitled, '*Beware Russians bearing gifts*', reported that, "strategic reorientation is underway in Israel[s]...rapidly expanding ties between Jerusalem and Moscow...ethnic Russians have become an increasingly potent – and vocal – force. Now approaching a quarter of the country's total population of eight million, this constituency (and its most prominent political party, *Yisrael Beytenu*) has emerged as something of a kingmaker in national politics. Under the direction of its strongman president, Vladimir Putin, Moscow has moved back into the Middle East with a vengeance." He has "exploited the vacuum left by the Obama administration's disengagement from the region...and Israel, energy-rich and economically dynamic, has become as an important strategic prize for the Kremlin." Berman listed reasons to remain apprehensive.

"Russia has served as ... a major enabler of [Iran's] nuclear effort... and was instrumental in securing a settlement highly favorable to the Iranian regime...Russia has signed new, multi-billion dollar arms deals with Tehran...Last fall [2015], [Russia] intervened militarily in support of Syrian president Assad." Although Putin recently withdrew the "main part of its forces from the Syrian battlefield...Russia's 'Plan B' was clearly its strategic naval presence in Tartus and its newly-erected air base in Latakia... Moscow's enduring objective in the Middle East is to become an indispensable power broker...at America's expense." He noted that, "The likely price of Russia's friendship...will be a worsening of the US-Israeli partnership." The US Administration's policy of daylight between America and Israel is being filled with the shadow of Russia's menacing comradery.<sup>3</sup>

**THE EUROPEAN UNION:** In his Blog, Martin Armstrong stated that the EU was "rocked by a political tsunami" - "Brexit" (The moniker for Britain's referendum to exit the EU). "The growing discontent comes as the EU moves forward with plans to turn the bloc into a superstate. Foreign ministers of France and Germany were plotting to unveil a blueprint to do away with individual states. This would clear the way for an EU Army, which Eurocrats have long supported." This stated goal of the 1959 "Treaty of Rome" birthing the European Common Market now the EU, is not news to prophecy students. Armstrong went on to explain, "The astounding nationalistic vote was mainly due to Europe's immigration crisis." "Now five more countries want to hold referendums to exit the EU. France, the Netherlands, Italy, Austria, Finland, and Hungary all could leave."<sup>4</sup> The fear is that this unraveling could quickly lead to saber rattling from within or even worse, make the region easy prey for the awakening Russian bear to the east. The final revived fourth empire of Daniel will stand on feet of clay and iron. Could this lead to an unstable "ten toes" and "ten horns"? There will be "little horn" rising at that point to proclaim beastly deity bent on devouring Israel. We don't know who he is or when these final moves will occur, but Israel has lost its main supporter at an already hostile EU table. It is distressing to know that both Jew and Gentile without Jesus the Messiah will undergo the impending apocalypse. The good news is the Messiah who is coming to deliver Israel is the one who already came to deliver souls from sin, hell and the Tribulation to come. ☩

## End Notes

1 Article "Iranian commander warns there are 100,000 missiles ready to strike Israel" July 04, 2016, [FoxNews.com](http://www.FoxNews.com)

2 By YAAKOV LAPPIN *Jerusalem Post* Mon, 27 Jun 2016, 02:57 PM <http://m.jpost.com/Headlines#article=6017N0E3QkQ3RkM4NkY3RUM3RjNBQUQ1MUM0NjcwQ0JFNDY=>

3 "Beware Russians Bearing Gifts," *Jerusalem Post* by ILAN BERMAN \ 06/27/2016

4 1.6K3298 Blog/European Union Martin Armstrong, *Jerusalem Post*, POSTED JUN 26, 2016

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