

**"Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice, Israel shall be glad."** Psalm 53:6

**"Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart."** Psalm 73:1

## **ISRAEL - GOD'S WITNESS PEOPLE**

by Ray Prinzing

"YE ARE MY WITNESSES, saith the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen: that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He: before Me there was no God formed, and neither shall there be after Me. I, even I am the Lord; and beside Me there is no Saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore you are My witnesses, saith the Lord, that I AM GOD." Isaiah 43:10-12.

In presenting this message we would like to borrow the words of Paul, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." (1 Corinthians 11:23). The truths which we are sharing have not come to us out of books, nor from other men, but that which the Spirit of God has made real to us personally, and then has so gloriously confirmed through others who have likewise been so dealt with by God. We trust it is a blessing.

While it is true that men are often very confused concerning the purpose of God, Acts 16:18 states, "KNOWN UNTO GOD ARE ALL HIS WORKS FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD." When God set forth the purpose of the ages to progress through its course, fulfilling the counsel of His own will, He knew exactly the way it would go, for He fitted the ages in their measurement to bring forth that purpose, and HE has never been behind schedule.

Oftentimes man becomes mixed up concerning God's purpose. But as God makes know the "mystery of His will", we see how wonderful and glorious are His ways, and KNOW THAT HE IS GOD.

Not only has God definitely set the timing arrangement for the fulfillment of His plan, HE also has very definitely chosen a people through whom He shall actually become a TIME FACTOR in the earth. Even as it is written, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities..." (Isaiah 33:20). The word "solemnities" could be given, APPOINTED TIME.

Now Zion is more than a place, it is a PEOPLE, even as we read, "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory." (Psalm 102:16). God is now moving by His Spirit in this "building up" process, as He calls out of Babylon His chosen ones, and purifies and prepares them for the outworking of His purpose. Thus these apprehended ones are actually becoming God's own TIME-PIECE in the earth, for future events are closely aligned to them. God has blended together His purpose and His people - they are indeed A PEOPLE WITH A PURPOSE, and through whom His purpose shall be executed.

### **Israel, God's Firstborn Nation**

"Thus saith the Lord, Israel is My son, My firstborn." (Exodus 4:22)

"For that art an holy (separated) people unto the Lord, they God; the Lord thy God hath CHOSEN thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people: BUT BECAUSE THE LORD LOVED YOU, AND

BECAUSE HE WOULD KEEP THE OATH WHICH HE HAD SWORN UNTO YOUR FATHERS."  
(Deuteronomy 7:6-8a)

Sovereign grace was manifested in the choosing of this people, they had no merit, but they were receiving the call of God because of HIS love, and because of an oath which God had made to Abraham in former times.

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."  
(Deuteronomy 32:8).

Now we begin to see the unfolding of the truth, how God blended a people into His time. For when God separated the sons of Adam, scattering them over the face of the earth, and marked out the bounds of their inheritance, HE DID SO ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. This was long before Israel was a people, it was by His wisdom and foreknowledge in accordance with His purpose of the ages. God knew HE would bring them forth at the appointed time, and knew what they would do, why they would do it, and when they would do it. So He set the bounds of all other nations in proportion to the number of the children of Israel. What a great revelation of the wisdom of God and His fore-planning.

"HE... hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their inheritance." (Acts 17:27).

That this choosing of a people, and their place in His purpose, is a mystery to most of Christendom, we know. Even Paul wrote, "But 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 fulness of the NATIONS be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved..." (Romans 11:25-26a). We ought not to be ignorant of this mystery, how God chose a people, brought them into being as His nation, then diminished them again, scattering them in every corner of the earth, ALL BY DIVINE PURPOSE. But He shall also gather them again, and complete the work through them which HE began.

Paul realized that by his day it has been a long time since the scattering of Israel, via the dispersions of the tribes, and he knew that by now it has become much of a mystery to those who were then beginning to walk by and in the Spirit, but he did not want them to become ignorant of all of God's purposes for Israel, of how God chose a people; what He did with them; and how they were yet to be used. and so we find that he used three full chapters of the book of Romans dealing with this blessed subject. It cannot be disannulled by doubt, or unbelief. And we thank God's Purpose. Blindness IN PART is happened to Israel, but not all Israel has been blinded, for a remnant has been left. The Spirit has kept a remnant, BY HIS GRACE, and they are making up those who could be called THE SPIRITUAL REMNANT OF ISRAEL. A "little flock" who shall receive the kingdom of God.

## **Divine Loss and Recovery**

"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the nations, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the nations: how much more their fulness?" (Romans 11:11-12)

That which was wrought out in our Lord Jesus Christ is also portrayed in God's dealings with this entire host of Israel. Compare it. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for Your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." (2 Corinthians 8:9). Likewise you behold the grace of our Lord in choosing a nation, Israel, called

them into favour with Himself, bestowed great mercy on them and blessed them exceedingly and then diminished them - they became poor, scattered, losing their place among the nations of the earth, their identity erased, yet God ordained that through their fall shall come to all nations the glory of His grace. GOD HAS A PLAN IN OPERATION: IT MOVES RIGHT THROUGH HE MIDST OF NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL LIFE, the way into lasting riches comes via the work of the cross, becoming NOTHING, stripped - all temporal gain completely reduced to ashes. But HE never leaves it thus, but has promised "to give them BEAUTY FOR ASHES..." (Isaiah 61:3). Hallelujah.

This is God's working, this is God's glory. He reveals it through a nation, and unfolded it through the life of our Saviour. And now today HE once again is causing His "called out ones" to pass through the same process of diminishing, till all that was once counted as gain becomes nothing, and stripped of all human accomplishment and reputation, we find that out of our nothingness begins to arise THE NEW LIFE OF HIS FULLNESS.

O' the wonder of the ways and power of God, He is able to sow the very seeds of gain in loss itself. Divine purpose is not frustrated by this temporary action of death and desolation, He merely takes away the first, that HE might establish the second. Fear not the Hand of God at work in thee, its work is for true reality.

## **Identity Removed, but God Remembers**

Israel was chosen of God, elect of God from among all the nations of the earth, brought forth out of Egypt, led to mount Sinai, and as a nation, there she was betrothed unto Jehovah. "- the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the and of Egypt; which My covenant they brake although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 31:32).

Israel, at Mount Sinai, took her vows unto the Lord to be unto Him a peculiar people - was married to Jehovah. "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: AND ALL THE PEOPLE ANSWERED WITH ONE VOICE, AND SAID, ALL THE WORDS WHICH THE LORD HATH SAID WILL WE DO." (Exodus 24:3).

But there came a day when Israel violated this "union" with the Lord, and finally the Lord told Jeremiah that "for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had her put away, and given her a bill of divorce..." (Jeremiah 3:8).

According to God's sovereign purpose during Rehoboam's reign, Israel was divided into two parts. The northern ten tribes were very quick to turn towards other gods, and the serving of idols after the ways of the heathen nations about them. This was ADULTERY, and God dealt a heavy hand against these tribes, and sent them into captivity. The southern kingdom of Judah saw all this happen, and yet we read on "yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also". Thus eventually all twelve tribes became corrupt, away from God, and He had to put them all away, as a wife that is divorced from her husband.

But for all this, God did not forget His own people of Israel, nor did He utterly turn His back on them, but His mercy and purpose were still manifested, as we read "And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember Me in far countries..." (Zechariah 10:9). It is a marvellous record of the mercy of God as we trace God's dealings with His people so utterly scattered.

God knew they had sinned, played the harlot, been very adulterous, so He broke up the union which He had with them, and sowed them throughout all the nations, "For lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." (Amos 9:9). God did not "sow" Israel to lose her, HE placed her

where He wanted her fulfilling His purpose. God knew where He could place Israel even in her state of adultery, so that all of His purpose would be completely fulfilled. He sowed her into an appointed and prepared place, and thus Israel lost her identity, becoming number with the nations everywhere.

In Christendom's mixed up and confuse terminology, we often hear reference made to the "ten lost tribes". As far as God is concerned they have never been lost, not one kernel shall fall upon the earth. Jesus brought this to view again when He said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matthews 10:29:31)

If God marks the fall of each sparrow, HE surely knows every one of His chosen people, when He said, "Israel is My son, My firstborn." You might not know who you are today, unless the Spirit has so revealed it, since God had a purpose in erasing the identity of Israel, but He knows where everyone is, and watches over them. And you will know who you are when God finishes all of His purpose and inworkings in your life.

We have already pointed out how God marked out for all nations the bounds of their inheritance. Then He calls Israel unto Himself, establishes her as a people, and then purposely sows her among all these other nations. Sifted as corn is sifted in a sieve, dispersed according to divine placement, with full knowledge of where every one is caused to lodge. And not only that, THEY SHALL REMEMBER ME IN FAR COUNTRIES. (Zechariah 10:9). God did not "sow" Israel to lose her, HE placed her exactly where he wanted her. Why do we emphasize all this? Because whether we comprehend the full scope of this message, or not, in its truth of Israel in God's plan, there are certain divine principles we do well to seek to understand, and one of these is that GOD DEALS WITH US IN PERFECT DESIGN AND PURPOSE. When God causes you to move from one place to another, it is not a meaningless helter-skelter causation. "The steps of a man ARE ordered by the Lord." (Psalm 37:23). Sovereign purpose undergirds our life, whether we remain conscious of it all the time, or not.

## **Israelites Became Nationalized, but Not Cast Away**

Yes, Israel was scattered, with only a very small number even remaining in the land, with the law and temple. All who did not practice Judaism were called Gentiles, or today we would say, "NATIONALS". For many of those Israelites who were scattered among the nations forgot all the ceremonies of the laws of Moses, and soon took up the ways of the nations among whom they dwelt, thus becoming nationalized Israelites.

We have this in type throughout the Old Testament, for even Moses, when he fled from the face of Pharaoh, and came into the land of Midian, was called an Egyptian - though he was an Israelite, of the tribe of Levi. But reared in the culture of Egypt, and no doubt he still had the garments of Egypt on, and so Jethro's daughter called him an Egyptian." (Exodus 2:19)

There was a reason why God wanted Moses to lose all of his identity, and be stripped of so much. God was going to subdue this man until he would become the meekest of all men on earth, and then commission him to go and lead His people up out of the land of Egypt, into the land of promise. Not forever was this identity as an Israelite lost, but during that preparation process which was so needful for his development. God knew who he was all the time, but HE hid that knowledge from the people Moses associated with until the appointed time.

Another example of changed identity is found in Esther 8:17, "And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them." God caused the tables to be turned, Haman's devices failed, while the Jews were avenged of their enemies, until many of the people

wanted to be numbered with the Jews instead of with their own people, but this didn't change race.

Thus Israel, numbered with the nations, became part of this assumed identity. The word "Gentiles" is used to speak of these nations, the word is very misleading in its modern usage. People assume that a gentile means one who is not a Jew. Both the Hebrew and Greek words which have been translated as "gentile" mean "NATION". Some translations have now corrected this, giving the word "nation" where it belongs, and this is very helpful.

Likewise the word "Jew" is very misleading, since many people use the word to refer to all of Israel. This is not true. Jewry today is a religion, not a race. It is to be noted that many people of many races now have become "Jews", taking it for their religion. This does not change their blood lineage of race. Even if some would try to make this word apply to that remnant from the tribe of Judah who returned after their captivity, even so, this certainly does not include all tribes.

Nor is there any great benefit in trying to "identify" which nations today could be "Israelites", since God's purpose was to sow them among all nations, and keep in obscurity their identity until the time HE would again receive them unto Himself. Thus, ONLY AS THE SPIRIT OF GOD REVEALS IT TO YOU IS THERE KNOWLEDGE WHETHER YOU ARE AN ISRAELITE ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, or not. Man can make his claims, but GOD KNOWS THEM THAT ARE HIS.

Where ever Israel was sifted among the nations, "losing" her own identity, she became identified with the ones among whom she came to sojourn-- nationalized Israelites. All of this being part of God's purpose.

"I say then, hath God cast away His people? God forbid. God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew." (Romans 11:1,2).

Sifted, sown, but not cast away. "God hath given them a spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear." (Romans 11:6). For a decreed length of time, according to His sovereign plan Israel is asleep, not aware of who they are, nor of the callings of God which rest upon them. Like seed buried in the ground, waiting throughout the long winter's night until the time of spring, and the new life.

In the parabolic dealings of God, God told the prophet Hosea to take a "wife of whoredoms" as an example concerning what they, as a nation, did toward Him. Then, when children were born, God gave the prophet names to call them. One was name "Loruhamah (that is, Not having obtained mercy): for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away." Another child was called "Loami (that is, Not my people): for ye are not My people, and I will not be your God." (Hosea 1:6,9)

Don't let the seeming austerity of these words mislead you. God said He would utterly take them away, and HE would no more be called their God, but this was all a part of His plan and purpose, for in scattering them as seed that is sown, out off from their own land, joined to the heathen nations elsewhere, and serving their gods, yet this word of promise we read, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all." (Romans 11:32). All Israel was shut up in to unbelief with the other nations that in due time HE might have mercy upon them all combined. Praise God.

Israel was sown among the nations, yet Paul declared a hope was still resident in their hearts, something for which "our twelve tribes, instantly serving God night and day, hope to come." (Acts 26:7). Would you notice that though this was hundreds of years after God sowed Israel among the nations, leaving but a remnant in the land, yet Paul knew there were still OUR TWELVE

TRIBES serving God, though in their blindness and scatteredness. What was the hope and promise? That of the resurrection, which to all Israel included the restoration of their nation. For they believed that God would yet raise up again the tabernacle of David and there would be peace and victory in that renewed kingdom. It was the undergirding of this hope that gave them courage.

O, they also had their troubles with their doctrines - they tried to interpret the promises of restoration of the greater life to come. And there was a sect called the Sadducees which were a thorn to the Pharisees, "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both". Yet underneath all the traditions and interpretation dwelt a hope that was passed on from father to son, how some day there would be a restoration of Israel's kingdom.

## **Out Of Israel Comes God's Ensign, His Name**

"God at the first did visit the nations, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:14-18).

FIRST God is taking out from among the nations a people for His name, a firstfruits company who BECOME HIS NAME. AFTER THIS, not before, nor during this time, but following this work of the Spirit, then HE shall return and build again all the tabernacle of David, which will be the establishing of the governmental kingdom of His people Israel. THIRDLY, then shall all the residue of men be ingathered. The word "residue" used here comes from a Greek word meaning "thoroughly left". After HE has taken out His firstfruits son-company, followed by gathering in the nation of Israel, then every creature that is left upon the earth shall be gathered in, too. Every man in his own order shall return into our God - (1 Corinthians 15:23) None shall be lost!

Why did God sow Israel among the nations? that they, as a little leaven, should leaven the whole lump, even all nations among whom they had been scattered. But-- before this can be accomplished HE must first take out from among them a company to be brought into SPIRITUAL UNION with Himself. Then in turn they shall be used of God to bring salvation to all Israel, and all nations. What a marvellous purpose God marked out for the ages, and what a tremendous using of a people whom He has so called and chosen.

Likewise we see this very thing fulfilled in our lives today. God takes us and places us in localities where we feel so cut off from fellowship of others of "like precious faith", and alone with God we have to become HIS leaven to leaven the lump wherein He has mixed us. God isn't building "holy cities on earth", a gathering of only those who believe the same thing, cut off from the world, isolated to themselves. IN THE REALM OF THE SPIRIT THE BONDS REMAIN UNBROKEN, AND WE ARE ONE, but in the natural, we are separated and placed into those corners where, at the appointed time, HE shall be able to freely minister His life to the needy of that area.

We need to know that we are WHERE GOD PLACED US, ready to fulfill His will, for the hour approaches when God shall manifest His purpose openly. To where we can begin to bring the presence of God to man. Perhaps you do not like your placing in the natural, but let flesh become subject to the will of God. Maybe your area is exceedingly dark, void of the knowledge of God, why do you think God placed you there? HE WANTED LIGHT THERE. That at His appointed time HE can manifest the Christ within, "To give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the

dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death." (Luke 1:77-79).

Yes, there is purpose in God's movings, there is design in His directions, divine order, not confusion. Only with a knowledge of God's purpose behind these things can we begin to make sense out of today's dealings for His "called out ones", but it is altogether wonderful.

"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles (nations) seek; and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Isaiah 11:10-12).

First there is the bringing forth of an ENSIGN, chosen ones prepared by God to become a living example of the redemptive work of God. They are the sign of what God shall ultimately do for all groaning creation. Christ Jesus being the initial Forerunner, followed by all of the anointed ones of whom HE is the Head. To this ensign shall the nations seek. For all of the nations, out of whom God is taking this ensign, shall in turn seek after this ensign to receive what they possess of God, and their rest shall be glorious. These entering into their rest in God shall be able to give that rest to others. Glorious cycles of peace expanding. Amen.

Then, this ensign having been raised up, the Lord will SET HIS HAND AGAIN THE SECOND TIME TO RECOVER THE REMNANT OF HIS PEOPLE. After apprehending, laying hold of the firstfruit company, HE returns to build up all this tabernacle of David which is fallen down. All the outcast of Israel, and the dispersed of Judah - gathered, restored according to His perfect plan.

## **God's Callings Are Without Repentance**

"As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your (the nations) sakes: but as touching the election, beloved for the father's sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Romans 11:28-29).

relative to the gospel, i.e. the good news of how Jesus is the Christ, the Redeemer, Israel is an enemy of the nations because she is not witnessing to this glorious truth. They fought the Christ, and crucified Him, as though He was a transgressor. Nor does the church lift HIM up today as the SAVIOUR OF ALL THE NATIONS, rather they pervert the gospel with their own preconceived and carnal ideas. There are so many aspects today where we find "religious enemies" of the truth, and not bringing light to those sitting in darkness. But for all of this God shall use the situation to accomplish His will, and their enemy ship will yet result in God bringing out of them a remnant through whom all men shall be blessed.

But as touching the election, Israel is beloved for the father's sake. All that God purposed through the election of Israel shall be fulfilled, for the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. He shall completely accomplish through Israel what He said He will do. Thus they are beloved, because of the oath which God swore unto their fathers, which oath cannot change nor be turned aside. "Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments TO A THOUSAND GENERATIONS." (Deuteronomy 7:9)

God has never repented of the great call with HE gave Israel, that calling is still there. God has never yet changed His mind concerning His purposes for Israel.

Here's a thought which we would like to weave into our message. The law was given to Israel, not to the rest of the nations. God did not thunder out His law from Mount Sinai to all the nations of the earth, He gave it to Israel, and then in turn gave ISRAEL to the nations to be His witness. Thus all this sifting and sowing of Israel among the nations was according to His specific purpose. God wasn't thwarted by Israel's backsliding, and her adulterous ways. He foreknew this would come, and He used it all as part of His great plan of salvation for all mankind. He always makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of it He restrains, as we read in Psalm 76:10. What glorious wisdom is openly manifest as we behold this triumphant power of God.

Thoroughly righteous and just are all God's ways. And knowing that Israel would not keep His law, He used it as the proper occasion to sift her among the nations - scattering her according to His perfect design, making her His witness in all parts of the earth. And though very misguided in her efforts, the witness continues.

"Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I AM HE: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, that I AM GOD." (Isaiah 43:10-12)

God's judgments were meted out to Israel according to the law, and to the nations according to their receiving the witness of Israel. Thus the whole world comes under the guilt of sin, standing in need of a Saviour. The world isn't condemned because of Israel's law, but because of Israel's witness of the one true God. Thus God told Israel, before they had opportunity to take up with all the strange gods around the, He gave them a sovereign work of salvation in delivering them out of Egypt, shewing forth His might power, that they might be true witnesses that HE alone is GOD, and none else.

Israel is a witness-- of personal reality in Jesus as Saviour? No, for thus far, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not..." (John 1:11). But they are a witness of GOD, the almighty. To this day, let real trouble engulf them, and what does Israel do? Falling on her knees she cries out for God to save her. It can be in a tavern, on the street corner, or some miserable fox hole in the thick of the battle, but still as deep trouble approaches they know where to turn. It might take a tremendous shaking, but they will witness that God is GOD for they know how to pray, and where to go with their prayers.

Seven times the cycle is completed in the Old Testament book of Judges. Israel turns from the Lord to serving other gods, and God delivers her into the hand of her enemies. Then she calls on the Lord, and He raises up a deliverer. When all is well, she goes her own willful way until the Lord arrests her, and sends her into servitude until she repents, and then victory again.

Once again we see this rapidly taking place. Even our beloved nation is going its own way, and we are rapidly being sold into servitude of modern bondage to our enemies. But, praise God, this much we believe, there is inherent in the hearts of our countrymen that knowledge of where to turn, and though we make our bed way down in hell, from thence we shall cry and find that GOD is there, and He shall deliver His people again.

"Ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein. Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our heart with food and gladness." (Acts 14:15-17).

Israel has not always been the witness she should not have been, but God was not without witness, for the rain HE gave, and the fruitful seasons, have revealed the love of the Faithful Creator unto a sinful creation. Yet, shall not God require of Israel her lack of witness?

God has never repented of the great call which He gave Israel, that calling is still there. Though the witness has never been completed, and as a nation "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." (Romans 11:7). For God has taken out of Israel a remnant by His sovereign grace, and HE is revealing unto them WHO the true God is, even our Lord Jesus Christ. This company shall declare the age-during gospel unto every kindred, tribe, tongue - to the glory of our Lord.

## **Election by GRACE**

How did the election obtain? THROUGH GRACE. And this "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17) For God has sovereignly laid hold of a remnant of "natural Israel" and is working in them HIS will, to fulfill all that which HE has purposed to be done.

Israel, as a wife, has been without a husband, desolate and forsaken, yet the Spirit of the Lord has overshadowed her, and that SON COMPANY which is being brought forth shall be called the "son of the Highest". After she hath brought forth this firstborn son-company, she will be joined unto her husband. Concealed in the womb of Israel has been a son-company in preparation, grace chosen and grace inwrought, a remnant of Israel in whom there is no guild, for they are firstfruits unto God, A SPIRITUAL REMNANT OF NATURAL ISRAEL. Hallelujah.

Yes, Israel broke the law, and was put away. But then Christ came and "took on the SEED OF ABRAHAM", and HE fulfilled the righteousness of the law which Israel as a nation could not keep, plus HE also paid in full the debt which belonged to that wayward wife. How did He pay that debt? By dying! He tasted death for every man that He might deliver every one over whom death is reigning.

There were some other aspects of victory accomplished through His death which we also must note. For we read that "ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." (Romans 7:4).

As long as a man liveth, the context brings out, a wife is bound to her husband, but when the husband dies, it releases her to be married to another. Israel, after being joined to the Lord, was unfaithful and sought to play the harlot with many lovers - serving the gods of other nations. God put her away, but He could not let the matter rest there, for whoever married her, according to the law, would also be committing adultery. So Christ came forth-manifest expression of Jehovah, the husband of Israel, and he died. Now Israel is free to be married to another. No more bound by the law, completely free from its "letter that killeth", and there shall be a new union, even to HIM who is raised up out from among the dead, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Having risen from the dead, Christ is now able to take Israel back unto Himself--AFTER THE SPIRIT, with every part of the old realm passing away, and all things becoming new. Yes, we through the body of Christ, become dead to the law, that now we might be joined unto HIM in newness of spirit. A greater union, one that shall remain, for it is based upon His righteousness, and no more upon that of the law, with its multiplied works.

Not only did Christ die, but figuratively speaking, we find that Israel as a nation also died. For Israel was sown as seed throughout the earth. Except a kernel of wheat fall in the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, then a new life springs forth. Israel could not pay her debt-Christ fully paid it all, but now it requires this death experience, as it were, to change Israel. One might

go and pay the debt for their child who is in trouble, but unless there is a change within that child, soon there will be another debt to pay. So thought Christ paid the debt for Israel, and only JESUS could pay such a cost, yet now there is the necessity of Israel being changed through a two-fold death process. The natural phase was the dying out to identity as a nation, and the spiritual part we are also going through as we are being made conformable to His death so that our own self-will and carnal nature is ended.

Now, praise the Lord, there awaits us a two-fold resurrection. Out of the spiritual death we shall ascend with the divine nature of Christ. And out from among the nations shall Israel rise up to be married to her true husband. And the kingdom of the Lord shall be established in the earth, and all shall see and be glad.

James 1:1 "To the twelve tribes scattered abroad, greeting. My brethren..."

James was writing to his brethren, and where were they all? TWELVE TRIBES SCATTERED ABROAD. Israelites all.

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father..." (1 Peter 1:1,2).

There was a common knowledge shared by all the apostles that is seen in their writings, and that is, they knew that there were "twelve tribes" of Israel in the earth and in their day, though they were scattered everywhere - thus Peter also writes, addressing his letter to them, acknowledging that they were indeed the people "elect according to the foreknowledge of God." True, we find that "ELECTION" is not limited to the natural realm of men - in fact the scripture brings out three different phases of election, that of RACE, GRACE, AND PLACE. It does not nullify the election of race just because God also has an election of grace. Nor does the elections of God to our PLACE IN HIM do away with the grace which brings us to that place. But God, in His foreknowledge has marked out all things after the counsel of His own will, and shall perform the thought of His heart perfectly. Using a race, His sovereign grace, and filling a place with this apprehended company, to His glory.

"--to the strangers scattered..." The word "stranger" to us means someone we do not know. But the Greek word that is used here is a composite of three parts; para, meaning ALONGSIDE; epi, meaning UPON; and demos, which in Biblical usage means as opposed to the Jew, A PAGAN. Add the three meanings together and you have a correct sentence, as translated by Wuest: "TO THOSE WHO HAVE SETTLED DOWN ALONGSIDE OF A PAGAN POPULATION..."

Israel was sifted among all nations, so when Peter was directing a letter towards them, he wrote it to all of those scattered ones who were now settled down alongside of the pagans, becoming nationalized Israelites, according to whatever country they were dwelling in.

Peter also used the word "SCATTERED" coming from that Greek word which means "TO SOW SEED" and having a prefixed preposition meaning "throughout".

Thus we have a picture of those who were sown as seed, providentially placed there by God. Sowing speaks of design, of purpose, of planning. Though God put Israel away, sifted her among the nations, it was according to His perfect design, that in due time, harvest time, HE would be able to gather them again, every man in his own order. Visiting the nations now He is taking out a spiritual firstfruits, but HE shall return to build again the whole of Israel, and gather the nations.

The word "scattered" that is used here, 1 Peter 1:1, is also translated once as "dispersed". "Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will He go, that we shall not find Him? will He go unto

the dispersed (or the sown ones) among the Gentiles (NATIONS), and teach the Gentiles (NATIONALIZED ONES)?" (John 7:35). They all knew that the rest of their brethren were scattered abroad, and that it was God who had dispersed them. But how few today know that God still has His Israel, even though they are sifted among the nations.

"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but through their fall salvation is come unto the NATIONS..." (Romans 11:11). How great is the plan and purpose of God to use all this process in the execution of His marvellous counsel and will.

## **Israel Divided - Circumcision and Uncircumcision**

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands." (Ephesians 2:11).

Who was call Uncircumcision? and who was called the Circumcision? The specific rite of circumcision was given to Israel as a nation, but with the dispersion, those who were scattered among other nations, or those who borrowed from other pagan nations their worship - began to leave off the practices they once observed. Those who remained true to the ceremonies of the law and its rituals became known as the Circumcision, and the rest were despised by them for being uncircumcised.

We might also point out that there was a third class of people who could be termed as the non-circumcision, namely the pagans to whom the rite was never given. In this, of course, they differed nothing from those who forsook the practice - but to be specific we must call the Uncircumcision those ISRAELITES who left off their practicing of this rite.

There was a great enmity between those who "observed" kept the rite of circumcision, and those who did not.

In Galatians 2:7:9, Paul points out that Peter was the one sent with the gospel to the Circumcision, while he carried the good news to the Uncircumcision. And Paul suffered much persecution because he preached that all the law, with it flesh-practices, was fulfilled - and in Christ Jesus all that mattered was becoming a "new" creation, for the CROSS OF CHRIST ended the old realm. (see Galatians 5:11, and 6: 12-16).

Paul insisted that "the Israel of God" were those who had become a new creation in Christ. This remnant, the election of grace, called out of natural Israel to now become THE SPIRITUAL REMNANT OF NATURAL ISRAEL, were a people who walked by the Spirit, and had no confidence in the flesh. Spiritual attainment comes BY GRACE, not by the works of the flesh. Christendom still seems to be unable to grasp this fact, and so they continue all their efforts to try and establish their own righteousness. The cross alone brings and end to all of this.

Returning to Ephesians 2, verse 12, Paul points out to the Uncircumcised, how "that at that time we were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

Aliens - more correctly, BEING ALIENATED from the commonwealth of Israel. One cannot become alienated without first being a part of that commonwealth. Then, if one is turned away, you can be termed alienated from that to which you once belonged. So this is not speaking of the pagans without the commonwealth of Israel, but of those Israelites who have become alienated, and are now strangers from the covenants of promise.

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Ephesians 2:13). It can be noted that they weren't always far off, but because of their forsaking the law of God they were SOMETIMES far away. Nor was it necessary to return to all the ceremonies and rituals of the "law" to come NIGHT, they were reunited BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. "For HE is our peace, Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between." (Ephesians 2:14).

Ephesians 2:16, Amplified, "By means of His cross; thereby killing the mutual enmity and bringing the feud to an end." The law of commandments contained in ordinances was not an enmity to the "heathen nations", but between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision. Now in CHRIST the feud was ended, and they twain, two factions, are ONE NEW MAN.

Ephesians 2:19, Wuest expanded, "Now then, no longer are you ALIENS AND FOREIGN SOJOURNERS, but you are fellow citizens of the saints and householders of God." What joy Paul's message must have brought to these "despised of Israel". WHAT RECONCILIATION. The house of Israel is reunited, not by observance of days, months, ceremony, ritual, standards that make a fair shew in the flesh - but now in Christ Jesus there is peace, "for through Him we both (Circumcision and Uncircumcision) have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Ephesians 2:18).

## **Israel Obtains Mercy Once Again**

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar (purchased) people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." (1 Peter 2:9-10)

All through this passage of scripture we find precious dual applications, both of the natural and spiritual. Natural Israel was CHOSEN out of the nations of earth, while spiritual Israel is chosen out of natural Israel and those gifted in, according to election of grace. Exodus 19:6 - Revelation 5:10 both speak of how we're kings and priests. Israel was redeemed, purchased out of Egypt with the blood of a lamb, and spiritually we have been purchased with the blood of THE LAMB, Jesus. Then Peter goes on, Which in times past were not God's people, but now they are. Earlier in this message we quoted from Hosea 1:6,9, how God denounced Israel, and said they would no more be His people, nor obtain His mercy. Now, Calvary's triumph changing the whole, God is reconciled to His people once again.

"And I will sow her unto Me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not My people, Thou art My people; and they shall say, Thou art my God". (Hosea 2:23)

Now we have another sowing, Hallelujah, I will sow her UNTO ME. She who was dispersed, sown among the nations of the earth, cut off and left unidentified for all these centuries, now is promised that she shall obtain mercy, and be received back unto her God. You say, But isn't this a spiritual fulfillment? Yes, it is, and we do praise God for that, but it also has a natural fulfillment as God receives ALL ISRAEL back unto Himself. "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." (Romans 11:26-27).

Yea, the callings of God shall be fulfilled, and those whom God ordained should be His witness shall see that the GOOD NEWS is declared in every nation, to the ends of the earth. We set up our programs, send out people and missionaries, and preach the doctrines of our group to build up our organizations. But God has a far, far greater message for this groaning creation to hear, it is a message of GOOD NEWS, not of creed and tradition.

Who ever would have conceived such a marvellous way of dispersing the MESSENGERS? God calls a nation to become HIS WITNESSES, and then sows them throughout the earth. There, as seed fallen into the ground, they die to their own identity, and ere the process is finished will have died to all their own selfish motives. With their life now to be FOUND ONLY IN CHRIST, suddenly as a root out of a dry ground shall these spring forth to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ - a message of hope and deliverance for all mankind.

A PEOPLE WITH A PURPOSE. Their confidence no longer a thing of the flesh, but as a NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST to be HIS SPIRITUAL ISRAEL through whom all families of the earth shall be blessed. All of the promises, yes, all the covenants given to Israel shall be fulfilled.

Out of Israel, scattered and forsaken, the Spirit has been taking a spiritual remnant, election by grace, and preparing them to become that DELIVERER COMPANY of whom Jesus Christ is the Head. And through them shall come the establishing of the new covenant, fulfilling every promise which HE hath made unto our fathers long ago.

"And this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, 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. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of the, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jeremiah 31:33-34).

"For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, BUT LIFE FROM THE DEAD?" (Romans 11:15). Glory be to God.

Who can comprehend what it shall mean, when God begins to restore a nation that has been scattered and hidden from view all these many years. But rising out from among the nations HE shall receive Israel unto Himself. And oh, the glory of that restoration, for Israel, as a holy, firstfruit nation, shall not have died in vain, but all the world shall receive of her salvation. God has a divine purpose in sowing her as seed, and that's the MYSTERY OF ISRAEL which has been hidden from many, and baffled the theologians. But through her shall all nations of the earth be blessed.

"Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is His name: If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever. Thus saith the Lord: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 31:35-37). AMEN!

## **THE LORD'S BRANCH**

By Ray Prinzing

A little branch of Israel's tree,  
A tender twig -  
God did foresee,  
Which He could blend into His will,  
And through this one His plan fulfill.

And so He cut it from the rest,  
Did cast it down -  
From carnal crest,  
To walk a solitary way,  
While waiting for the break of day.

Into the likeness of His death  
He led this branch -  
With shortened breath,  
And planted it within His side,  
Henceforth in Him to ere abide.

Thy mind brought low, the mind of Christ  
Is given thee -  
Within this tryst,  
His branch and servant now to be,  
To grow in Him, a greater tree.

A branch arising from the tomb,  
A christed life -  
From morning's womb,  
Clothed with His beauty, glory bright,  
Triumphant o'er the shades of night.

Thou art a branch He hath made new,  
Joined to the Lord -  
One spirit true,  
A king and priest thou dost remain,  
In righteousness o'er earth to reign.

The Lord brought down the carnal tree,  
And raised the branch -  
Of low degree,  
A sovereign working of His grace  
Within this twig of Israel's race.

As it is always written in Ray's publications:

*NOT TO BE SOLD - this book is given free, as a ministry of love. That which is contained therein cannot be valued in terms of material goods, but is shared with others because it has become life and light to us. May it be received in the same spirit of love in which it is shared. If there be any thoughts expressed that seem to be the result of only natural thinking, we trust that a little breath of kindness will blow the chaff away, that the kernel of truth might remain to bless.*