

The God of B'nei - Yisrael Loves Arabs and All Peoples

(the Children of Israel)

By Christopher J. Patton

Many reporters and writers have noted that the struggle in the Middle East between the Israelis and the Arabs is one between cousins, between anciently related peoples. The struggle between Arabs and Israelis is often depicted as the modern continuation of the biblical stories about inheritance and blessing between Ishmael and Isaac, Jacob and Esau. In other words, the seed of Abraham contending to see who would be the favored heir of a small strip of land given to Abraham.

Many of the social forces feeding this seemingly endless struggle today revolve around cultural issues, too. When the Jewish immigrations to the land of Israel began over a hundred years ago, they came from Europe, bringing European values and worldview. While Jewish immigrants to southwest Asia have come from all over the world, the predominant character of the modern State of Israel is democratically western European as contrasted to Arabian or central Asian Islamic. But even this cultural disconnect is not the cause of the problems between the Muslims, Jews and Christians. They are spiritual in both the social and personal dimensions.

The situation in the Middle East exemplifies in violent urgency the problems of the world, which is spiritually infused with an intertwined and indivisible force of good and evil. For God to "restore all things" as prophesied He must address the structural problems of human government as well as the inclinations of human nature. He does so through the seed of Abraham. The word "seed" in many languages is at once singular and plural. The Bible is the covenant promise of the Creator working through the children of Jacob, renamed Israel, as the plural sense of the seed and in the messianic son of David, King of Judah and then Israel, in the singular sense.

In fact the solution to this complex, multi-dimensional problem lies in Yeshua/Jesus, who was both fully human and fully divine. By His judgment and reign human governments will be overthrown and replaced with the Kingdom of God over the earth. Through His life, suffering, death and resurrection almost two thousand years ago, the way was made to transform human nature. While we humans wait for the promised change in government, we are called to repent, submitting to the transformation of our natures into the image of the Son, through the Holy Spirit sent by, and being also, the Father after whom all of the redeemed righteous are named.

Part of the difficulties in comprehending and accepting the truths of the Bible come from how the word "Israel" is perceived by the hearer. The modern state of Israel may have its name in fulfillment of prophecy, but it is a fully human political organization, which is not by nature holy or always right. Furthermore, the Jewish people who represent that name among the family of nations have not always been good ambassadors for the Creator of the universe. They were born with the same twisted human nature we all inherit from our parents.

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The name of Israel was given to Jacob because he overcame his selfish fears to trust and believe in God. The name of Israel represents God's promise being fulfilled; hence it is hated by the Enemy and his agents, Satan and the fallen angels or demons. In the history of Israel we see evil judged by the Creator and replaced, where the stubborn human will submits, with the righteous goodness of God's loving and merciful nature.

Babylonian Idolatry

The story of how God will change human government goes back to the first worldwide judgment of humanity – the Flood. Human civilization since the Flood of Noah is rooted in Babylon. Babylon was founded by Nimrod, whose very name means rebel. (Genesis 10:10) A confederated army from the city states of Babylonian Shinar was the only enemy that Abraham ever raised his sword against in the rescue of his nephew, Lot. (Genesis 14:1-16)

It was at Babel that God confused the tongues of the families of Noah so that the world became divided into regions of tribal alliances independent of one another. Nimrod had tried to unite all of humanity to imitate the Kingdom of God; he called them to one place in order to make a name to replace the one name of God. (Genesis 11:1-6, 7-9) In response, God divided and scattered the families of man by confusing their languages so that the growth of collective human power would be delayed. Even so, throughout the ages the Enemy has inspired great military leaders to try to unite the world as one in order to oppose the truths of God. Now civilization has again reached the point of "nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them," and God will once again intervene in the affairs of nations to judge them.

The clearest picture of this evil idolatry is given in the book of Daniel. In Daniel Chapter 2 the story is told of Nebuchadnezzar's vision of a huge statue of himself, an idol with a head of gold, a chest and arms of silver, and abdomen and thighs of bronze, legs of iron and feet of iron mixed with clay. This idol prophetically pictures the development of the conquering state or empire. It stands for Babylon, Persia, Alexander and Hellenism, Rome and the endtime rise of western civilization over the rest of the globe through trade and warfare. That this idol is hated by God is clear by its destruction from a "stone cut without hands" that grows into a mountain, the "mountain of the LORD." (Isaiah 2:2)

Every political state since then has been a manifestation or attempt at world government under one name in opposition to God. Their historical and prophetic existence is pictured in Nebuchadnezzar's vision as revealed by Daniel. They have all been tools of Satan at the core even though God has used political states to accomplish His purposes. Remember, Satan seeks to rule all completely so that he can destroy all. God seeks to rule all so that He may give us life eternal with a quality worth experiencing forever.

Today, thousands of years later, humanity indeed approaches a state of world unity through international finance and trade that makes this phrase, "now nothing which they

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purpose to do will be impossible for them" alive with potent fulfillment. Unfortunately, the direction of human civilization is implosion by self-centered materialism typified by greed and religious practices that glorify human wisdom and power even as they sanctify sin. For this, judgment comes soon upon the earth. God will redeem His Creation from the destructive hand of human socio-political organizations operating under the spiritual rule of the "god of this world." (2Corinthians 4:4)

So what is the tool of Babylonish idolatry through which humanity collectively rebels against God? The political state. And what is the ultimate power of the political state but its military, which is the state's monopoly in the use of physical force. This force is used to obtain and control wealth, which is used to seize further political power. This vicious, corrupting circle of perverted power infects all nations, and the Jewish people are no exception. The State of Israel is not a creation of the biblical God of Israel but of the United Nations, which seeks to rule the entire world. Its enforced reign will enslave all peoples and deny them freedom to worship the One Creator. This is the socio-political enemy that is the tool of the spiritual enemy, Satan the devil who prefers to appear as an angel of light - as the glorious god of this world.

How does the Bible talk of these truths? Through the choosing of the children of Israel as His own nation, the Creator reveals what He intends to do. Not that the ancient Israelites or modern Jewish people are holy or more righteous than any other nation. They are not. Often God complained about their nature and mentioned that they were less than other nations. But God's way is to choose the despised and weak of the world in order to perfect the manifestation of His power and truth that we humans can not boast. (1Corinthians 1:26-31) Pride is our greatest fault.

The Creator had to choose some one nation as a material window through which He could reveal Himself to all peoples because of the huge gap in comprehension that exists between His spiritual realm of the *Heh* dimension and our material earthly one of *Daleth*. Similarly, Yeshua was born a Jew because an individual can only be born into one nation, one tribe and one woman, Miriam/Mary. God's choice was rational by necessity, too. Yeshua was born into the chosen tribe of Judah so that the infant would be reared in a family and culture founded on the teachings of the Creator. Thus, the helpless child would not be forced into sin as a baby due his parents' ignorance of or due to some form of cultural alienation from righteousness as defined by God.

In the days of the prophet Samuel the children of Israel rejected God as their king and chose to establish a kingdom for themselves in Saul. (1Samuel 8:4-7) Samuel warned them of the oppression that they had chosen to be like the other nations, but the Israelites insisted on having their own political state. The modern political state is no different. The modern State of Israel is not divinely ordained but the choice of the Jewish people. This statement is also true for the United States, the United Nations, the European Union, China, India, the World Trade Organization, The Vatican, Japan or Saudi Arabia -

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just to name a few other political organizations that are states, para-states or super-states.

God may use a political state just as He will use any imperfect person - or even a donkey, but that does not mean that God has endorsed everything about that state as a whole. In fact some of the greatest evils done in the name of God have occurred when people combine religious fervor with politics. From this we have suffered the Vatican's inspired European Crusades and the Nazis' Third Reich, for example.

What happened in the Crusades is typical of all human history. The Popes in Rome called for spiritual crusades in the name of Christ in order to obtain earthy power and wealth. It was the Catholic Church's solution to European lords continuously battling each other at the expense of the common people. "Unite and go fight the Saracens," he said. "Besides, it's more profitable!"

What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. And you are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask

You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? (James 4:1-4)

As proof that greed and power were the real motivations behind the Crusades, all one needs to do is to read the histories of the various crusades closely. You will not find much Christ-like behavior in any of them. In fact more Christians and Jews probably died at the hands of these "Christian Soldiers" than Moslems, so it was not even a genuine military expedition against the armed forces of Islam. Thus, it should not surprise anyone that current military actions by "Christian" European powers in the Mideast are driven by objectives other than military and motives other than altruistic liberation in the name of spreading "democracy."

Who is the enemy here? It is not a human being. The Enemy is the god of this age, of this world. Satan inspired the idolatry of the political state with its human warrior-king in opposition to the Kingdom of the Creator God. Just as the ancient children of Israel self-corrupted to the desire for a human king in Saul, so all nations desire a conquering warrior to lead them. The Prince of the power of the air empowers proud leaders with charisma and the appearance of wealth to lure the simple farmers and small business people to their own destruction. That destruction comes both directly as a consequence of violence and indirectly from the horrendous cost of war's waging. A chain of successive empires from Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to Cyrus to Alexander to Julius Caesar, Augustus, Hadrian, Constantine and others lead right up to the future when Antichrist in the name of the universal god will again seek peace through military and economic oppres-

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sion. This is why God must replace the modern political state with His own divine king and kingdom.

The Spiritual Enemy and True Battle to Submit

People who are true believers, submitted to God, oppose sin wherever it is found and the Enemy wherever he operates. They do not hate people who sin or who are deceived by Satan. Thus, much of the anti-Jewish sentiment found in the world today can be explained as spiritual rebellion against the will of God.

The anti-Semitism so common to the world is simply a specific expression of humanity's general rebellion instead of submission to God's will as revealed in His Word. It is one of many possible sins or symptoms that a person's human nature needs reformation. The prophet Jeremiah and the Apostle Paul both had insightful comments on the heart of each of us as persons:

The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick (wicked – KJV); who can understand it? (Jeremiah 17:9)

For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the Spirit is alive because of righteousness. He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells within you. (Romans 8:6-11)

Only the Bible tells us of this great truth that human nature is naturally opposed to God and resists submission to His will and laws. In the history of the children of Israel, God makes it plain that evil is natural to people and that such a nature is unacceptable to Him. It is a fact that each person must accept, regardless of present nationality or religious persuasion. It was the Creator's decision to reveal Himself to the world as the God of the Israelites. It was not the Jews' or the Arabs' choice, nor is it anyone else's.

If part of the process of that revelation requires a love for of those God used to bring salvation to all and practical support of His promises to them, so be it. God's covenant promises of salvation come through Israel. It is through a Jew, Yeshua/Jesus, that human nature is changed and human governments will be judged and removed. In speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well, Jesus stated this truth in John 4:22-24:

You worship that which you do not know, we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews...God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth

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The Creator of the universe is the God of the Bible, who in Roman times was worshipped by the Jewish people. Yeshua describes the one God as one Spirit revealed in one true Word that has come through the Jewish people, the descendents of Jacob/Israel and Abraham.

It is through the Jew, Yeshua, that God provides the way of escape for every person, the way by which our natures may be transformed into conformity with His own. This is why the Bible says in John 3:3-16 that people must be born again in the Spirit through faith in Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) in order to inherit eternal life. This eternal inheritance will be on earth as is made plain in Revelation chapters 21 and 22. Paul expands on these principles of the need for and means of human transformation in Romans 8:

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh -- for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (9-14)

It is only possible to submit to God by repenting of sins through faith in Christ Jesus, whose blood atones for them. Thus sanctified by the Son, we, who are otherwise totally unworthy, may receive the Spirit of God that enables us to submit the flesh and live by the Spirit. In this way we become conformed into the image of God's righteousness so that we may inherit eternity with Him and live forever in joyous love. (Romans 8:29) This would be impossible for anyone not conformed to the image of God, for God defines by His being and nature what may live eternally in joyous light with peace and justice, though possessing omnipotent power.

The socio-political issues of the Middle East revolve around the same question that faces each of us in our daily lives: who is sovereign? This is just another reason why what happens in Israel today is important for us to understand as individuals no matter what nationality we claim or were born into.

The Bible teaches that our citizenship is in heaven. (Philippians 3:20-21) We become ambassadors of a heavenly kingdom. (2Corinthians 5:20) What ambassador wields a sword? They do not fight in armies, and so Paul can teach us to live in peace with all men as much as is possible as well as to submit to the unjust rulers and political states of this age. (Hebrews 12:14; Romans 13:1-8) True believers do not engage in violence or war against their fellow human beings -- no matter how just the cause.

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An Inheritance in Israel for those who are Not Jewish

In my observations I note that the state of Israel has so far been undefeated when defending herself. This has not always been the case when that state has gone on the offensive. This is because God has promised the land of Canaan to the children of Jacob/Israel, so He will defend them. In Zechariah's prophecies about the last battles fought by human armies, all of the nations of the world lay siege to Jerusalem and the nations of Judah. In chapters 12 and 14 the remnant of the Jewish people are helped by God in the fight in their defense. The Scripture indicates that these armed conflicts take place before Messiah comes, before Yeshua is recognized for who He is. Thus, the Jewish fighters are not likely to be born again yet as spiritual believers in their God. Nevertheless, many of them will serve the true Creator sincerely in their works instead of Anti-christ and the false, universal god of this world.

The Creator has promised that He would bring all of the descendants of Jacob back to their land in the last days, and He has. He has promised that they will not be removed, and they will not - not by force or by any other means! However, this does not mean that Arab Palestinians, Druze or anyone else will lose their land because they are not children of Israel. In fact the Bible promises otherwise. The Messiah Yeshua guarantees the inheritance of all those who live in peace with the children of Israel and with their God. During the millennium, Isaiah 19:19-25 predicts that an alliance of Egypt, Israel and Assyria (Iraq) will be the source of blessing to all of the other nations, leading them in the worship of the God who made Himself known in human history through to the children of Israel.

The Bible is plain that the land of Israel was historically given to Isaac, who was offered up in sacrifice (Genesis 22). Islamic tradition teaches that it was Ishmael, not Isaac, as is celebrated annually in the Islamic feast of *Idh Il Adha*. Prophetically, anyone who desires to inherit the land of Israel must do so through Jesus, the true seed, who is to be the King of a restored Israel in Jerusalem and in her ancient lands. Arabs, Palestinians and others (aliens) who choose to live in peace with their Jewish neighbors will retain their properties and pass them on to their children. (Isaiah 14:1; Ezekiel 47:22-23) There is the rest of the world for everyone else (a pretty big place), and that includes the Arab nations.

When the LORD will have compassion on Jacob and again choose Israel, and settle them in their own land, then strangers will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob. (Isaiah 14:1)

You shall divide it by lot for an inheritance among yourselves and among the aliens who stay in your midst, who bring forth sons in your midst. And they shall be to you as the native-born among the sons of Israel; they shall be allotted an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. And in the tribe with which the alien stays, there you shall give him his inheritance," declares the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 47:22-23)

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The End Draws Near

Soon a painfully forced peace will come to all peoples, including Israelis and Palestinians. This temporary peace will not come from the true God of the children of Israel because it will not be accompanied by a change in human nature. Therefore, it will not bring real peace, prosperity or safety. These blessings will only come to all when Yeshua/Jesus returns to replace the idolatrous political states of this world under the control of Satan the true Enemy. At the same time He will also wash the entire globe in the healing waters of the Holy Spirit. Those alive then will experience a global baptism unlike anything God has done to date. Most alive will become transformed in their natures so that they may live in submission to God even as the Son did unto His death as an example for us.

In the meantime, we must resist the temptations of temporal power or to take up the sword, just as Yeshua did when tempted as a young man. (Matthew 4:8-10) We must serve Him in peace and love as He leads us. He did not live in a just world, and neither do we. Justice will only fully come with His return as the righteous Judge. In the meantime, we should peacefully work for justice and appreciate what may be accomplished through nonviolent diligence. And yes, we should share the heart of God's love for all nationalities through diligent prayer and caring evangelism of every person and nationality, beginning with the Jews.

Those who believe God know that the true seed is Yeshua/Jesus and that peace is only found in Him. *"And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise."* (Galatians 3:29) In Him only are eternal life and the enjoyment of all blessings. Jesus is the inheritance all peoples should contend for and not a strip of land smaller than Connecticut, or the material wealth of natural resources.

Until Messiah returns, the policies of nations are best served by alignment with God's purpose and program as plainly stated in dozens of scriptural references - not to mention the big picture context of Israel's historical and prophetic narrative. There are no exceptions to this principle. It applies to the United States, to China, to Russia, to Iran and Egypt - as well as to Palestinians and Israelis. There is no blessing outside of the will of God.