

Israel in God's Heart and His Plan of Salvation

When we talk about „Israel“, what is it actually *all about* for us?
Is it a topic that *we as the church* leave over to *some fans or freaks*?
Or even to *the many in the world* who hate it with an irrational passion?
A key question is: *Why actually* does the topic divide so much? Why so much attention on it, so many feelings involved in it, from *the one side* as well as *from the other*?

The simple answer, *which, however, most of us blind out*, is that it simply has to do with *God*; that Israel is *inseparably linked* to Him and to the way He has decided to bring His Kingdom to this earth.

One single story

More than anything else, this is proved by *the Bible*, which incidentally does *not only* consist of the *New Testament*, but *as a whole* represents God's *one, great, ongoing, ever-evolving* story of salvation with human kind.

It is no coincidence that even the *New Testament* begins with a long genealogy, which shows us *where this Jesus Whom we worship comes from; who He is* and *to what people He belongs*; Who is *not only truly "God"* (1 John 5:20; Rom 9:5), but also *truly man*, more precisely *a Jew!* It shows the deep and lasting bond with His people, to whom He was *first and foremost* sent.

He Himself testified to them at that time: **“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”** (Mt 5: 17-19 NIV, also in all following Bible quotations)

By which He made it very clear that He *did not* come to start *something completely new* and to reject *the previous* - *which ultimately had been given by Him too in actual fact!* But that *all this* has *eternal existence and relevance!* He has not dissolved what *we in the Christian tradition* call the “Old Testament”, but only *confirmed* it!

Merely the *New Covenant* has hereby replaced the *old one*; although the deepest nature of the law, *God's moral orders, which are expressed in the ten commandments/words for example, likewise endure forever!* Just like *the many promises* given by the prophets, that Jesus has only *partially fulfilled* so far.

Paul, too, describes **“that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God’s truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed”** (Romans 15: 8)

- and not “dissolved”, as the church unfortunately has imparted *for much too long* more or less subliminally.

Let us therefore now take a closer look at what is both *the foundation* and *the goal* of the salvific plan of God; Who says of Himself:

“I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, ‘My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.’” (Is 46: 10)

Who practically says by this that *what will come in the end* was already announced from the beginning, and He will accomplish *all* which He has planned from the foundation.

An important question for us Christians is thereby *what God's goal for us* is at all. Is it “only” that we might *go to heaven* and stay there for all eternity, as *most of us* were taught? - Or actually *still something else?*

Jesus teaches us to pray, “on earth as in heaven”, in which *the will of God* becomes very clear: He wants to *fully establish His kingdom on this earth*, not just in an idealistic way, *as we would theoretically would like it to be*, but simply *very real!*

Yes, God's purpose is none other than to eventually *fully answer this prayer of His people!* Since it originates from Himself!

And not only *Jesus' successors* pray for exactly this since two thousand years now, but also - *even much longer already* - the *children of Israel*.

And thus He will *fulfill all His promises* when Jesus, the Messiah, returns to rule on this earth, *as promised from earliest times!*

Exactly according to what Peter, *freshly filled with the Holy Spirit*, proclaimed in *one of his first sermons* in Jerusalem; admonishing his people: **“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may**

send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.” (Acts 3: 19-21)

In the last book of the Bible, *the beloved disciple John* describes *even more detailed* how Jesus will *come back* at the end of this present age, depicted as *rider on a white horse*. Revealing that *even then* His adversary, Satan, will not be judged *immediately*, but will be bound in the abyss **“for a thousand years”, “to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time. I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.”** (Rev 20: 2-6).

At certain other points the Book of Revelation contains a lot of symbolism which is explained in previous passages in the Bible; *here, however*, this is clearly *not* the case! Jesus *or the angel of God* in fact mentions *five times in a row* this concrete time period of *1000 years*, in which the Messiah will reign *here on this earth* with His saints. Yes, it is *so important* to Him that *we as His people* take this *absolutely seriously and literally*, that in the end He even says, **“These words are trustworthy and true. (...) If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.”** (Rev 22: 6,18f.)

- What once again expresses: Yes, is *very, very important to God* that His children really *know these things* and *take them seriously*. Neither symbolize and *explain away* anything, nor *add* anything unbiblical!

Still, for us Christians *until now* often *only heaven* is in the foreground, in case of the Jews, however, it is *completely the other way round* and they expect with the (again) coming Messiah mainly *God's kingdom on earth* as the prophets announce it. But the truth is: God simply wants **both** for His saints. - *Also the second!*

For this reason certain words of Jesus like: **“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth (literally: land/ground).”** (Mt 5:5) or: **“Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.”**” (Lk 19:17) might someday come true for us *in a much more realistic way* than we had ever expected until now because of our traditional-religious, yet unbiblical world view!

Hereby, it is quite interesting that *the biblical world history* from the creation of Adam up to now can be numbered *on the basis of the time information contained in the bible* to approximately *almost 6000 years*. **“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.”** (2 Peter 3:8) So, world history can in fact be seen as *a seven-day week*, where after “six troublesome days” a (thousand year-)“Shabbat” will follow, on which all of creation will enter into God's sacred “day” of rest. Before *in fact* after this time *something completely new* will come, God will raise up *every dead person* for judgment, re-create everything, and unite heaven and earth forever in the “New Jerusalem”, which will then have *gigantic proportions*. (See Rev 21+22, esp. 21:16).

Even about this *final city*, where *each one of us* is called to spend *all eternity* and enter into it through one of its twelve gates (cf. Rev 22:14), it is said that on *these very entrances of it* are written *the names of the twelve tribes of Israel*. (Compare Rev 21:12)

What all expresses ***the lasting importance of Israel for God!***

Beginnings and foundations of salvific history

In the light of this reality let us therefore look *once more* at the foundations of the plan of salvation of our God, Who *does not change Himself and His plans* and Who *does not call Himself in vain*:

YHWH, „the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob (...) **This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation.**“ (Ex 3: 15)

Who spoke to Abraham at that time: **“I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”** (Gen 12: 2f.)

We know today that this “*blessing for the whole world*” came *first and foremost* through *Jesus*, through *Yeshua* (His true *Hebrew name*), the Jewish Messiah, but still *also from His people*, who prepared the way for Him, gave us *the written word of God* and much more.

Later, *Isaac* speaks in the same manner about *Jacob/Israel*: **“May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed.”** (Gen 27: 29) We thereby recognize a continuance of God’s promise, which is passed on *from generation to generation*.

So *right up to our times* we see *to some extent* the blessing of *blessing Israel's still living descendants*, but also the curse of *not doing so*.

In addition to many *biblical* examples, only a few *recent* ones:

As long as the British Empire supported the Jewish people in their efforts to come home into their land, it flourished; however, as soon as they began to block Jewish entry into Palestine because of pressure from the Arab world and put *Jews fleeing from Europe* into internment camps, this quickly led to its downfall.

Above all, Nazi Germany, which had brought indescribable calamity on the Jews, *thank God*, relatively quickly perished again, while the later Federal Republic, which supported the emergent Israel with high reparation payments, was noticeable blessed again economically in the course of the “Miracle of the Rhine”.

As well as, above all, the perhaps most blessed Great Power of the United States, which in recent centuries has not only become *a place of refuge* but also *the greatest supporter of the Jewish people and the state of Israel*.

How much more then should *we Christians* bless what *God has blessed* and wants to *continue blessing*?

Back then HE went on to speak to Abraham:

“I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted.”

(Gen 13: 16)

Against all natural circumstances, Abraham *believed* God at that time, and sees *probably only now* how numerous His descendants really are; to which *even we* may still belong, who are supernaturally taken into the people of God *by faith in Jesus*. (Compare Gal 3: 7: **“Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham.”**)

While the word *still* has a *literal meaning* as well!

Yet, the calling of Abraham goes *even further*, when God speaks concerning the land of Israel: **“All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever.”** (Gen 13: 15).

As unusual as it may seem to us, God begins his plan of salvation with humanity, among other things, by promising *a piece of land* to the descendants of a single man! We can ask ourselves: Should this be *for no reason*? Or did God instead *right from the start have intentions for this land*, even concerning *His Kingdom purposes on earth*?

Well, *whatever God chooses* is always *fiercely contested*, too, especially by a world that - *at the latest when it comes to politics* - does not want to hear anything of *a higher authority*; a world in which *man* (still seduced by the serpent to become *supposedly wise and like God*) instead raises himself to *His place* and wants to decide *alone for himself* what is right and wrong! In mostly unconscious *rebellion* against Him and His intentions which He has revealed all along.

Abraham, too, wanted to know how to recognize that God was really serious about this promise of the land. HE thereupon told him to split different animals in two halves (see Gen 15: 9ff.); which corresponded to a former *blood covenant*, where it was customary at that time that two parties who committed themselves to something, marched through the two divided halves of an animal, thereby expressing: If I should break this bond, may the same thing happen to me as to this animal.

Subsequently it is described that **“a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces”** (Gen 15: 17), which stand for

nothing less than *God Himself*; Who *in the highest form of a then existing covenant* unilaterally committed Himself to something that *maybe today* is internationally fought over *more fiercely than ever*:

“On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram and said, “To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates”. (Gen 15: 18)

So important was it to God at that time and *is it for Him until today* to make it clear *how serious* it is to Him - *as the highest authority, Who has every right to decide this!*- that *this land* should belong to His chosen people, also for the sake of His salvific purposes. And this until today, where the return of the king is quickly approaching!

For: **“He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations, the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac. He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as an everlasting covenant: “To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit.””(Ps 105: 8-11)**

Contrary to the later covenant at Horeb, *all these are eternal, one-sided, unconditional covenants* that have *never been dissolved!*

As they have to do, *not least*, with *how* He wants to bring *His kingdom on earth*.

May *we and our nations* therefore beware of working *against God in this*, for instance by *self-righteous judgment in a different way* over this land.

Identity of God's people

Regarding *the identity* He gave Israel *already at that time, after the exodus from Egypt*, He speaks:

“You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” (Ex 19: 4-6)

This is *the same as* what still applies to *us today* as followers of the Messiah, about Whom it is written *in parallel*:

“you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made

them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.” (Rev 5: 9f.)

Just like *each of us personally*, God chose *Israel as a whole* at that time, *purely out of love*, when He says:

“To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. Yet the Lord set his affection on your ancestors and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations—as it is today.” (Deut 10: 14f.)

It shows us the passion of God, Who likewise has feelings and is driven by them! Who is *one hundred percent righteous and good to all*, but also - *as we do with our spouse* - chooses individuals or even whole peoples in a special way for Himself and His intentions.

Election is thereby always *both*:

A privilege as well as a *great responsibility and liability*.

Similar to when Jesus says, **“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”** (Lk 12: 48)

- Which, of course, applies to us *Christians as well!*

About *Israel* it says *further* on another occasion:

“Hear this word, people of Israel, the word the Lord has spoken against you—against the whole family I brought up out of Egypt: “You only have I chosen of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins.”” (Am 3: 1f.)

At the *beginning of the quote*, people from the nations (*solely in the flesh* and if one has *not yet really understood the gospel!*) could almost become *jealous*, but this will quickly cease *at the latest in the next part*, where God promises that He will therefore *judge* this people, to whom He entrusted the law in a special way, *all the more severely*.

Exactly this, however, we have seen in the last 4000 years in a frightening way, where *this people* probably suffered more than any other people on earth; it has repeatedly experienced *hatred, rejection, accusation, incrimination, oppression, expulsion, right up to mass murder*.

We could thereby honestly ask ourselves: Would *our nations*, had they been under God's law and judged in this way, have done better?

The simple answer is: Not really. Because *we all* are sinful and cannot become righteous by our own strength, without the sacrifice God has provided.

Yet, one can *by no means* claim that *all* that the Jews experienced, especially in the Holocaust, was God's direct will;

In this context He rather speaks in great anger about **“the nations that feel secure. I was only a little angry, but they went too far with the punishment.”** (Zech 1: 15)

We simply have to be aware that there is *a real spiritual world*. And Satan *hates* all those *integrated in God's plan of salvation*. Already *the very existence of Israel is not only to the devil but also to all nations* a visible sign and constant reminder that *God lives* and, contrary to all resistance, *is faithful to His promises*.

Thereby, *from the beginning*, He set before His people *the blessing* that comes upon them if they walk in obedience to His Word, but likewise a long list of *curses* which will come upon them if they are unfaithful (see Deut 28); which unfortunately were *altogether fulfilled in a shocking manner throughout the centuries* in the long history of Israel's worldwide dispersion.

Nevertheless, *in this very context*, God continues and promises *already back then* a final time of *great divine compassion*, prophesying:

“When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come on you and you take them to heart wherever the Lord your God disperses you among the nations, and when you and your children return to the Lord your God and obey him (...) then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you. Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there the Lord your God will gather you and bring you back. He will bring you to the land that belonged to your ancestors, and you will take possession of it. He will make you more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors. The Lord your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.” (Deut 30: 1-6)

Judgment and deliverance

Judgment came upon the people, *back then* when they were exiled to Babylon, but *especially in the first century*, after a leading part of the people - *yet not all of them* - had rejected Yeshua, crucified Him and persecuted His followers; whereupon the Romans carried out a massacre in Jerusalem in the year 70, in which reportedly nearly 1 million people were killed, before the rest of them were scattered all over the world.

And yet, it is a sheer miracle that the Jewish people did not *mingle* with the rest of the nations *for all these many centuries*, but kept their identity; while *at least some* continued to hold fast to *God's promises of mercy, gathering and spiritual blessing*, whose beginnings we have finally been able to experience and witness *first hand* in the recent past and until now, in our time. What we should be *anything but indifferent about* or even *condemning*, but *just like our God: passionate and enthusiastic!*

For: **“This is what the Lord says: “Sing with joy for Jacob; shout for the foremost of the nations. Make your praises heard, and say, ‘Lord, save your people, the remnant of Israel.’ See, I will bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labor; a great throng will return. They will come with weeping; they will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel’s father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son.”**

“Hear the word of the Lord, you nations; proclaim it in distant coastlands: ‘He who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.’ For the Lord will deliver Jacob and redeem them from the hand of those stronger than they.” (Jer 31: 7-11)

There are *more than 300 passages* in the Bible where God talks about *gathering his people from all over the earth*, showing us that *this is definitely important to HIM!*

This passion can be seen in other places too, like when He promises: **“I will surely gather them from all the lands where I banish them in my furious anger and great wrath; I will bring them back to this place and let them live in safety. They will be my people, and I will be their God.**

I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me and that all will then go well for them and for their children after them. I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them. (...)

I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul. “This is what the Lord says: As I have brought all this great calamity on this people, so I will give them all the prosperity I have promised them.” (Jer 32: 37-42)

The question for us is *this*: If our God is doing something *with all His heart and all His soul*, should it not be of some importance to *us, too*, then? Should *we* not also be *one with Him* therein in our hearts, in our prayers, in our speaking and acting?

When God *now, after such a long time of judgment, where His people “received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins” (Is 40: 2)*, begins to bring about their promised salvation; where “**instead of your shame**” and “**disgrace**” they eventually are to “**receive a double portion (...)** and everlasting joy”. (Is 61: 7)

History of restoration

Although there were *always* Jews in the land of Israel over the last 3000 years, yet, *especially since the end of the 19th century* immigration increased more and more.

In 1917, the British occupying force gave with the “Balfour Declaration” an *official declaration* approving the goal of Zionism, *namely to found a national homeland of the Jewish people in Palestine*; what was *again* internationally confirmed and legitimized in 1922 by the League of Nations, the forerunner of the UN.

Although Palestine was divided *already in the same year of 1922* into an Arab part (Jordan) and a mainly Jewish part, in 1947 there was *another division plan*, which, however, *the Arabs* rejected, since *from the beginning* they didn’t want *any Jewish state at all* in the region.

After the founding of the state in 1948, Israel was immediately attacked by five Arab nations simultaneously. It is *a real miracle* that the Israelis, *who in many cases had just escaped the Holocaust and who were highly outnumbered, hardly had any equipment, weapons, or heavy war material*, still could successfully defend themselves against their enemies.

Likewise in the later “Six-Day War”, when Egypt first cut off Israel’s southern sea route and deployed its military on the state border, the Jewish nation was able to hold its ground against the Muslim states that beset it from all sides and *even gained still more land* in the course of the battles. The same in 1973 during the “Yom Kippur War”, where *on the highest Jewish holiday, when everything is at a standstill and even many secular Jews are fasting*, Egypt and Syria *once more* started a surprise attack. In which again *numerous supernatural events and miracles* were reported. Just on the northern front, for example, at the beginning *about 177 Israeli tanks* faced 930 tanks, 930 guns and 30 missile batteries of the Syrians, who further had two more divisions with 460 tanks in reserve. *Egypt alone had more than twice as many soldiers and far more tanks and planes* than Israel, which, yet, won again.

In 1967 still *something else, very decisive* happened: Namely, that after *almost two thousand years of occupation - among others through the Romans, Arabs, Crusaders, Turks, British and lastly (from 1948-67) the Jordanians* - Jerusalem finally returned into Jewish hands again. (Even though *the most important site of the Temple Mount* was returned into Muslim/Jordanian control soon after.)

Jesus, however, once promised to His people:

“They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” (Lk 21: 24)

We indeed see that *God’s main focus* during the last two millennia was clearly on *the nations*; but His word promises that *lastly* it will turn back on Israel again in a strong way.

At the same time, this historical reconquest of Jerusalem is *an important precondition* for *the coming of Jesus and the eschatological events* announced by the prophets that will go ahead of it.

Another condition for this *His Second Coming* is what Jesus prophesies in the following:

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” (Mt 24: 14)

Yet this “gospel of the kingdom” is much more than *the gospel of personal salvation* that is today *mostly exclusively* preached, and clearly has to do

with the fact that Jesus returns as Judge and King, reigning on David's throne in Jerusalem and establishing God's kingdom on earth.

That means, exactly what the prophets have always promised and even Jesus' disciples had vividly expected after His resurrection, when it says:

**“Then they gathered around him and asked him,
“Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”
He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the
Father has set by his own authority.”** (Acts 1: 6f.)

By this, Jesus effectively said that this is *actually coming*, and it is just a matter of *time* that the Father has set for it.

Especially since *back then* first *the world-wide proclamation of the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit* was due.

Before Jesus *in fact* comes back to **“restore everything”** and fulfill what God **“promised long ago through his holy prophets.”** (Acts 3: 21)

Prophetic foresight on the Messianic Age

Let us therefore take a look at what the Bible says about *this very upcoming age*, whose “birth pangs” will increase *more and more* in our days, until lastly *the following* will happen:

„The moon will be dismayed, the sun ashamed; for the Lord Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders— with great glory.“ (Jes 24: 23)

These are *the same signs* that *Jesus cites* in His eschatological discourse. (Cf. Mt 24: 29f.: **“Immediately after the distress of those days ‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; (...) And then all the peoples of the earth (/land) will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.’”**)

In general, a “kingdom” always begins with *a king*. - Who is *Yeshua*, **“the king of Israel.”** (Jn 1: 49, 12: 13, cf. Lk 23: 3)

About Whom the Father says, **“I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.” I will proclaim the Lord’s decree: He said to me, “You are my son; today I have become your father. Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.”** (Ps 2: 6-9)

So *God's kingdom on earth*, according to His plan, has always been *inseparably linked* to the people and the land of Israel.

As well as to *the kingdom of David in Jerusalem*, who -just like his son Solomon- was merely foreshadowing what will be *fulfilled completely* through Jesus, the *true* “**Offspring of David**” (Rev 22: 16), Whose kingship will *indeed* last forever. Who is building *the living temple* according to God's word to Nathan, “**He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever.**” (1Chr 17: 12)

And as Gabriel promised to Mary, “**He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.**” (Lk 1: 32f.)

And the center of this throne *was, is and always will be Jerusalem!*
“**For the Lord has chosen Zion, he has desired it for his dwelling, saying, “This is my resting place for ever and ever; here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it.”** (Ps 132: 13f.)

Likewise to Ezekiel, *who found himself moved in a vision to the place of the temple-mountain*, He said:

“**Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet. This is where I will live among the Israelites forever.**”
(Ez 43: 7)

A little foretaste of what *this coming kingdom of peace which Yeshua will set up from Jerusalem* will look like is beautifully presented by the prophet Isaiah, who announces:

“**In the last days the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.”**
The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.” (Is 2: 2-4)

Jesus, the true “Prince of Peace”, alone will accomplish what *the rulers of this world, who despise His Word, will ultimately altogether fail to achieve:*

To bring *true peace* to this region and the entire world.

For He, “*the Branch*”, “**will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the cobra’s den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper’s nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth (/land) will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” (Is 11: 4-9)**

So He will bring about *all the promised salvation* for His people, *in which we from the nations may share and have part, but that still applies first and foremost to the descendants of Israel, who will turn back to Him!*

Wherefore God speaks to *the city to which Yeshua will return to:*

“**Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. “Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the hip. Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come. (...) Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you. Though in anger I struck you, in favor I will show you compassion. Your gates will always stand open, they will never be shut, day or night, so that people may bring you the wealth of the nations— their kings led in triumphal procession. For the nation or kingdom that will not serve you will perish; it will be utterly ruined. (...) The children of your oppressors will come bowing**

before you; all who despise you will bow down at your feet and will call you the City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel. “Although you have been forsaken and hated, with no one traveling through, I will make you the everlasting pride and the joy of all generations. You will drink the milk of nations and be nursed at royal breasts. Then you will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. (...) No longer will violence be heard in your land, nor ruin or destruction within your borders, but you will call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise. (...) Then all your people will be righteous and they will possess the land forever. They are the shoot I have planted, the work of my hands, for the display of my splendor. The least of you will become a thousand, the smallest a mighty nation. I am the Lord; in its time I will do this swiftly.” (Is 60)

“At that time they will call Jerusalem The Throne of the Lord, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honor the name of the Lord. No longer will they follow the stubbornness of their evil hearts.” (Jer 3: 17)

In all these passages, God's unbelievably great love and faithfulness to Zion - or Israel -, is revealed in a wonderful way, whose offspring He has promised to gather and restore as a people:

Even though “Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me.” “Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me. Your children hasten back, and those who laid you waste depart from you. Lift up your eyes and look around; all your children gather and come to you. (...) Though you were ruined and made desolate and your land laid waste, now you will be too small for your people, and those who devoured you will be far away.” (Is 49: 14-19)

All these *affirmations of love* are not only meant *symbolically for the church*, as we have often interpreted them exclusively, but they are embedded in promises to return for the real children of Israel! (See also Is 43)

Whereby the present or future gathering of Israel, *in its meaning and in its dimensions*, will even *far surpass* the historical exodus from Egypt!

As promised:

“The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord Our Righteous Savior. “So then, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when people will no longer say, ‘As surely as the Lord lives, who brought the Israelites up out of Egypt,’ but they will say, ‘As surely as the Lord lives, who brought the descendants of Israel up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them.’ Then they will live in their own land.” (Jer 23: 5-8)

Spiritual renewal

But in addition to the *natural gathering*, Israel is also promised a *spiritual awakening*!

In chapter 37, the prophet Ezekiel finds himself in the Spirit in a *valley of dead bones* representing *the house of Israel*, to which he is to prophesy that God will put them together and bring them to life again.

“I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.” (Ez 38:8)

If historically, *up to now*, there has ever been a *fulfillment of all this*, then it surely was at the end of World War II; where Europe had become a gigantic mass grave for the Jewish people. We may still have the pictures of the liberated concentration camps in mind, with huge piles of dead bodies as well as the living who were *likewise* hardly more than mere skin and bones.

Exactly *out of this situation*, however, the state of Israel was virtually **“born in a day“** and **„brought forth in a moment“**. (Is 66:8)

Even though the vision of Ezekiel *ultimately also already* points to the resurrection of the dead at the end of the age, still, *at least in many ways* we are right now already *in the very midst* of the fulfillment of this promise; where Israel is increasingly restored *in the natural*, but, as the word above says, many of them are not yet filled with *breath* (being the same word in Hebrew as “*Spirit*”), meaning they have *not yet accepted Yeshua as their personal Redeemer and Messiah*, thereby alone *been reconciled to God and filled with His Holy Spirit*. What according to the vision, however, will *come in direct consequence of the former*.

Also elsewhere - *again in the context of the natural restoration and gathering in the land* - is promised:

“The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” (Jer 31: 31-34)

It speaks of the “New Covenant” that Jesus established at His last Passover meal before He died. In which *we from the nations, who have been grafted into God's people*, may also already have part (cf. Rom 11:17), but which is nevertheless made with *the house of Israel and the house of Judah*, and will *also literally* be fulfilled entirely for them; so that really *each one of them* will truly know God and His Son and no instruction will be necessary anymore.

One of the highest *Jewish* or correctly said *Biblical feasts*, namely the *Day of Atonement* “Yom Kippur”, points to *exactly that*. On which the high priest once, *at the only occasion in the whole year*, entered the holy of holies to atone for the sins of the entire people, who at the same time humbled themselves before God and repented of wrong ways.
- What Yeshua later did *in a true and ultimate way!* Whose acceptance, however, is still pending for *Israel as a whole*.

At this, it is interesting that *in the Bible* God has given His people *exactly appointed times*, which according to Him have *eternal meaning*; which by no means are only “Jewish feasts”, as which they are often understood, but **“the appointed festivals of the LORD”** (Lev 23: 2ff.) - that means, those of *our God, YHWH!* In which *everything* is hidden that is important for us and what He calls us to *solemnly remember and be aware of:*

On the one hand, there are the *spring feasts*, which Yeshua fulfilled *exactly on the particular feast days* during his *first coming*: Exactly on *Passover* He was slaughtered as a *sacrificial lamb*; exactly on the *Feast of Firstfruits* He was *the first to rise from the dead*, and exactly on the *Feast of Shavuot*, when the law was once given on tablets of stone, He sent down the Holy Spirit and wrote the law *in a living way* into the hearts of His followers, just like promised *even in the above word*.

On the other hand, there are also the *fall feasts*, which point to Jesus' *second coming* and He is still to fulfill! It causes us to expect that He will return exactly on the *Feast of Trumpets*, *Yom Terua* (1Thess 4: 16; Mt 23: 31); that exactly on the *Day of Atonement*, *Yom Kippur*, the whole remnant of Israel will be reconciled to Him (Rom 12: 12ff.), and exactly on the *Feast of Tabernacles*, *Sukkot*, which is a *seven-day joyous festival*, the “wedding feast of the Lamb” will take place, when Jesus will finally dwell among us in bodily form.

It may not be a *coincidence* that the word above of the “New Covenant”, *into which an overwhelmingly majority of Israel is still to enter, which, however, has long been claimed by the Gentile Church alone*, continues with the following clarification in the text:

“This is what the Lord says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the Lord Almighty is his name: “Only if these decrees vanish from my sight,” declares the Lord, “will Israel ever cease being a nation before me.” declares the Lord. This is what the Lord says: “Only if the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth below be searched out will I reject all the descendants of Israel because of all they have done”. (Jer 31: 35-37)

Repentance of replacement theology

God makes it very clear in this scripture that *as long as the sun and the moon exist and the sea is still raging* He will never reject Israel!

Still, that's exactly what the Gentile church taught for centuries! By falsely claiming *through the so-called “replacement theology”* that the Church would have *replaced* Israel. That, paradoxically, the *curses promised by God* would continue to apply *literally* for the descendants of Israel, but

all the *promises of blessing for them* from now on would be interpreted as *purely symbolic* and be completely passed over to the Church. - What is thoroughly wrong and absolutely contrary to God's Word and His character! Yes, a real *sin* and insult to Him! If God were like that, how then could we still be sure of *our salvation*, after the official “church” has likewise fallen *so deep again and again* during history:

It began already *early* that the Church *raised itself in pride* above “its root” instead of *being thankful for it*. As a result of the rejection of Jesus and His followers by much of the Jewish religious leadership, a deeply antisemitic spirit entered into the Church. *In abominable hatred* it turned away from everything that had to do with *Israel*.

Under Emperor Constantine *the living church of Jesus* was more and more transformed into *an institutionalized state church full of man-made religion, own rule and control*. At the same time its leadership increasingly wanted to have *nothing more to do* with the Jewish people. Constantine and his bishops placed great importance to the Church celebrating no longer the feasts given by God, but instead instituting its own rules, times and feasts. The *holy day of rest* that God had given as an everlasting ordinance, the Sabbath, was rejected and instead *Sunday* was introduced. Instead of *Passover, Easter*, whose name even bears witness to the *pagan spring deity Eostre/Astarte*, etc.

It went *so far* that Christians later were even forbidden to keep Shabbat - *one of the Ten Commandments* - partly on pain of death penalty!

And that *at the Council of Nicaea 325* for the first time *Jewish Christian bishops were completely excluded!!*

... Whereby Messianic Jews, *that are Jews who follow Jesus as Jews, just as His apostles and the early church likewise did*, are tragically treated with suspicion and contempt by many large churches *until today*.

For centuries, the Jews were branded as “Murderers of Christ”, even though Jesus gave His life *voluntarily because of each one of us personally* for whom He died! (As tragic as it is, this even *had to happen* through the descendants of Israel, the only people to whom God had consigned the office of priesthood and who thus could “legally” give the sacrificial “Lamb of God” over to death.)

But even among the Jews many believed in Jesus after His death and resurrection and brought the gospel of salvation to us in the nations. The rest were hardened according to Scripture, and this also “for our sake” (cf. Rom 11: 28), so that salvation could first come to *the entire world*. But instead of having this *loving, grateful view of them*, much of the church was completely blind to it because of this evil, unbiblical theology that claimed their rejection!

This was the basis for an incredible amount of guilt; where the church, *e.g. during the Inquisition*, murdered thousands of Jews, forcibly converted them to Catholicism in the most humiliating way or drove them to suicide. Where, *over the centuries*, there have been masses of false accusations (such as host desecration, well poisoning, ritual murder etc.) that have repeatedly exposed Jews throughout Europe to abuse, torrents of hate, expropriation, expulsion, and assassination. Even the reformer Martin Luther had fallen deeply at the end of his life and *up to his last Sunday sermon* called on the hatred and persecution of the Jews. *All this only* made it possible later for something like *the Holocaust* to take its course in an officially “Christian” country like Germany; whereby Hitler himself still quoted Luther and was able to build upon the centuries-long so-called “*Christian*” *anti-Semitism*.

That’s why it is absolutely crucial for us today to understand how much we Christians need to reconsider the centuries-long imprint of our church culture, which has its origins in the hate-filled disengagement from our God-given root and establishment of our own foundation, that, however, will not endure; to turn back from the deeply sinful “replacement theology” that is *separating us from God*; by returning *in humility and gratitude* to our true identity as *the church of YHWH, the God of Israel*, that is inseparable from His chosen people; by repenting of accusation, envy and theft of their spiritual goods and calling for *us alone*. Toward the humble recognition that we are not following a “pagan Jesus”, of whom we have made up our own image, but the Messiah of Israel, the “King of the Jews”. (Lk 23: 3)

Succeeding the last quotation, the prophet Jeremiah, foreseeing that *this very truth* will once be denied and rejected by a great throng of people, repeats *a second time*:

“Have you not noticed that these people are saying, ‘The Lord has rejected the two kingdoms he chose’? (Meaning *Israel and Juda.*) So they despise my people and no longer regard them as a nation. This is what the Lord says: ‘If I have not made my covenant with day and night and established the laws of heaven and earth, then I will reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant (...) For I will restore their fortunes and have compassion on them.’” (Jer 33: 24-26).

So let us simply not keep on thinking *in pride and impenitence* that we are the only ones who are part of God's plan of salvation; especially *in this time* when God wants to prepare for His Son *a holy bride* who has freed herself from any false, ungodly foundation, pure human doctrine and untruthful religiosity.

Because *until today*, replacement theology is deeply rooted in our churches; although often *not officially*, yet, mostly *subliminally*, by constantly interpreting *promises given to Israel* merely symbolically unto us personally in our everyday preaching and teaching. By which we virtually “rob” them of the Jews.

The sanctification of God's name

Particularly at the *present time*, we have the privilege to see how God *indeed very literally* fulfills ancient prophecies, for which *for almost two millennia* hardly any Christian had expected a literal fulfillment anymore, and *by this* proves *His faithfulness* before the eyes of the whole world! By which He makes clear to all that He will not only fulfill *this* in an actual way, but (of course!) also *the rest of the prophetic promises!*

This *demonstration of His faithfulness towards His Word*, evident to all the world, by which He proves Himself to be incomparably exalted, is expressed when He promises:

“For on my holy mountain, the high mountain of Israel, declares the Sovereign Lord, there in the land all the people of Israel will serve me, and there I will accept them (...) when I bring you out from the nations and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will be proved holy through you in the sight of the nations.”

(Ez 20: 40f.)

Also further He, the “God of Israel”, makes it clear that *the very fact that Israel, or the Jews, are not in their land and have been exiled for so long* is a disgrace to *His own name*, which is inseparably connected to His covenant people and its destiny:

“And wherever they went among the nations they profaned my holy name, for it was said of them, ‘These are the Lord’s people, and yet they had to leave his land.’ I had concern for my holy name, which the people of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone.”

And He makes clear: „**It is not for your sake, people of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Sovereign Lord, when I am proved holy through you before their eyes.”** “For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God.”
(Ez 36: 20-28)

In each “Our Father” we pray: “Hallowed be Your name!”

But do we actually know what exactly we pray for and *by what* this is *concretely expressed*? In this passage, HE Himself makes it clear *what this means* in practical terms:

As strange as it unfortunately is for many of us because of our theological predisposition, *the sanctification of God's name* - among others - has to do in a very central way with *Israel being re-gathered in His land* in this time and, ultimately, *being even spiritually purified, cleansed and awakened!*

- Not because they (just like we) *deserve it* because of their own works, but out of grace and faithfulness to His promises; to uplift His reputation, yes, *His holy name*, in the eyes of the entire world.

In general, *the revelation of God* is inextricably linked to *the fate of His people*. In a way, already now, it is *like a mirror*, on which *spiritual things* concerning the church of Yeshua often go hand in hand with *very practical events*:

Only *a few examples*: The beginning of the “indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believers” on a massive scale in the wake of the Pentecostal movement around the year 1900 was accompanied by the increasing return and indwelling of the Jewish people in their country. The broad restoration of speaking in tongues with the restoration of the Hebrew language.

(Which is *unique* in history, especially as *Hebrew* has not been used as an everyday language for more than *one and a half thousand years*!!)

With great revivals around the year 1948, *in which innumerable people experienced personal liberation*, the independence of the state of Israel went hand in hand; with a tremendous healing movement (*initiated by K. Kuhlman, Oral Roberts, A.A. Allen, and others*), where *tens of thousands of people experienced physical healing and recovery*, the restoration or healing of the nation.

The charismatic renewal in the *mainline churches* and the Jesus Movement, in which *Jews* started to come to faith in large numbers again, went *hand in hand* with the recapture of Jerusalem, the center of Israel! Etcetera.

By this, we see very clearly that *not only the spiritual things* are important to God, but also *the natural ones*, which come from His hand as well! And which need *healing and restoration* as well; whereupon the whole creation waits eagerly! (Compare Rom 8: 19)

Nevertheless, *just as for us personally in the body of Christ*, also for Israel the *coming into its full calling* is fiercely contested!

Since the enemy knows that *when this happens*, it means *his own end*, what he is therefore trying to prevent with all his might!

Final birth pangs and judgment on the nations

Thus, in the end, his anger will be directed both against *the church*, those “taken into His people” from the nations, “**the rest of her offspring—those who keep God’s commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus**” (Rev 12:17), who will be subject to worldwide persecution as never before. But also increasingly concretely against *the nation* which always took and

especially then will again take *the most central key function* for God, and *the land* that He has chosen *all along* to become the center of His Kingdom on earth, where the Messiah will return to according to His promise.

The Bible promises for *the time when God will restore Israel - what we see happen today in front of our eyes!!* - that He will allow all nations to gather against Jerusalem. (What will become *still clearer* in later passages.) But *then* the returning Jesus will intervene and judge the nations according to *how they have treated Israel*:

“In those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will put them on trial for what they did to my inheritance, my people Israel, because they scattered my people among the nations and divided up my land.” (Joel 4: 1f.)

God Himself says here that the subject of His judgment over the nations will be that - *in complete contempt for His purposes, His statutes, and His covenants* - they have despised His people and divided up “His land”, which we see happen “live” *exactly today*: The UN has passed far more resolutions against Israel in recent years than against *all the other countries in the world combined!* And to this day, the nations are almost obsessed with dividing up Israel in self-righteousness and creating a “judenrein” (meaning “rid of Jews”) Islamic Palestinian state therein.

This demonically fueled hatred against His people, which was already at work in a Haman or an Adolf Hitler, and which *is to this day* in millions of radical Muslims and *many others*, will go so far that *also a future Antichrist* will finally bring a time of unprecedented affliction to God's people and besiege Israel. (Cf. Rev 16: 13f.)

In this very context *of the beginnings of it*, Yeshua calls upon His people to flee from Jerusalem into the mountains (cf. Mt 24: 15-22), before He will finally *return in glory* as mighty Savior.

“At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.” (Dan 12: 1f.)

Already today, *Jerusalem* is an issue that makes the rulers of the world *like drunk*, so that they are *like obsessed* with lifting this “stone”; they are grimly determined to bring about peace in their own way, in which, however, they will *fail*, as long as they despise *the One Who has announced ever since*:

“I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. (...) On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves. (...) On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem. And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.”
(Zech 12: 2-10)

Precisely in this affliction, *in which God, however, will supernaturally support Israel and grant them victory (just as He did already in the past wars!)*, He will thereat pour out His Spirit upon them, so that they will *look on* and *salvifically recognize Yeshua, their Messiah*, Whom their ancestors delivered over to death. What will cause *such a brokenness* in them, that they will mourn for Him with a pain that can only be compared to *loosing one’s own only child*. When they realize that *they and their people* have despised *their own Saviour, Who came from their midst*, for so long and in such a stubborn and contemptuous way.

In spite of all the promised repentance, there will *then* occur another, *last tribulation for them*, just before Yeshua will return in real person, bring judgment, and take His place as King; as YHWH explains:

“I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city.

Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights on a day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem (...) The Lord will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name. (...) Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem

will go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, and to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles.” (Zech 14: 2-16)

In this context of *the dawning kingdom of God* is finally even described, that the remaining peoples on earth will *then* celebrate (probably no longer *Christmas* or *Easter*, but) again *God's feasts*, in particular the joyous, autumnal *Feast of Tabernacles, Sukkot*.

When *Jesus will live among us*, Whose coming is described as follows:

“I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations.

“He will rule them with an iron scepter.” He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: king of kings and lord of lords. (...)

Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.” (Rev 19: 11-21)

In parallel *also already Daniel* testifies: **“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. (...) As I watched, this horn (that is *the Antichrist*) was waging war against the holy people and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment**

in favor of the holy people of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom. (...) Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.” (Dan 7: 13-27)

God will finally judge and lift up high His *henceforth often so despised children*. Including *the entire remnant of Israel*, who will then realize that YHWH, their God, had sent Yeshua to them!

“For this is what the Lord Almighty says: “After the Glorious One has sent me against the nations that have plundered you—for whoever touches you touches the apple of his (literally: my) eye— I will surely raise my hand against them so that their slaves will plunder them. Then you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me.

“Shout and be glad, Daughter Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you,” declares the Lord. “Many nations will be joined with the Lord in that day and will become my people. I will live among you and you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you. The Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land and will again choose Jerusalem. Be still before the Lord, all mankind, because he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.” (Zech 2: 8-13)

Hallelujah! *Already today* it is the case that many people from the nations have joined Yeshua and are His people, Who, however, will above all return to *His land*, will inherit *Judah* as His share in the Holy Land and will reign in the midst of Jerusalem!

- *The city* He has loved all along, and over whose *shortly afterwards following judgment* He was deeply broken *already back then*, even ahead of *His own* terrible suffering:

“As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.

The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of” your visitation. (Lk 19: 41-44)

And unto whom He lamented, “**Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’” (Mt 23: 37-39)**

All this reflects the age-old, burning passion of the “Great King” for the city, in which He has always been destined to rule, but which at the same time inflicted upon Him *the greatest pain, agony and injustice* that one can only imagine.

And thus it is *the religious leadership of Israel or Jerusalem*, whom Jesus lastly promises in the word, that they will *not see Him again*, until *they* turn back to Him! Thereby He states that He will not return to this earth until *the Jews of Jerusalem* also invite Him and worthily welcome Him as their Messiah!

Oh, may we understand how crucial it is in this time, that *we, as believers from the nations*, recognize *the place of the Jews in God's plan of salvation*, become aligned with His view of them and finally *truly* become a worthy testimony to them that provokes them to jealousy.

Paul's love and teaching about Israel (Romans 9-11)

For centuries, instead, it was rather lovelessness, accusation, reproach, and hatred (that means, *the enemy's view of Israel!*), with which the official church was aligned with and unfortunately *still is today* in many parts. Because it is influenced not by *the word of God*, but by *the view of the world and its medial influence*, behind which the eternal “**accuser**” (Rev 12:10) is *so clearly recognizable*.

...Instead of *receiving God's burning heart for His beloved people* as Paul did, speaking in the Holy Spirit:

“I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it through the Holy Spirit—I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race, the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the

human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.” (Rom 9: 1-5)

He shows us the value of this people before God, which is His **“firstborn son”** (Ex 4:22), with whom He has made *all Biblical covenants*, to whom He entrusted His commandments, who is bearer of so many of His promises - also because of *godly love for* and *faithfulness to* its forefathers in the faith, the patriarchs, prophets, etc.

Above all, however, it reveals Paul’s **love for them**, which is *coming directly from God and going to the utmost (when he even wants to give his life for them)*, which in turn is only an image of the one of the Father.

Which also propelled him to *intercede for them*, when he declares:

“Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.” (Rom 10: 1-4)

Regarding God's sovereign election of them, he speaks:

“What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God’s mercy. (...)

Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.” (Rom 9: 14-18)

He further explains, *of all others, specifically addressed to the Church of Rome*, the eternal continuance of their election, which was denied for so long by Replacement Theology; asking:

“Did God reject his people? By no means!

I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. (...)

What the people of Israel sought so earnestly they did not obtain.

The elect among them did, but the others were hardened, as it is written: “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that could not see and ears that could not hear, to this very day.” (...)

Again I ask: **Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all!** Rather, because of their transgression, **salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious.**

But if **their transgression** means *riches for the world*, and **their loss** means *riches for the Gentiles*, **how much greater riches will their full inclusion bring!**

I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them.

For **if their rejection brought reconciliation to the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?** ” (Rom 11: 1-15)

Paul clarifies the tremendous fact that *the fall of Israel* has brought salvation to *us from the nations*, “**to make Israel envious**” - *that means indeed as a (co-)purpose of our salvation, as God's Word says here!!*

Oh, how much have we missed this calling so far, where we, *as the church*, over the centuries have *rather done the opposite*:

Repelled the Jews a good deal more from Messiah by accusation, incrimination, coldness of the heart, indifference and even enmity!

In doing so, cut off from them *every path to their Messiah outside of our own religious system full of manmade doctrines, that was already largely detached from many biblical orders.*

Instead of really provoking them to jealousy through *selfless, devoted, sacrificial, divine love* (to each other as well as to them).

Because we know that *if already their failure* has led to the salvation of the world, *their acceptance*, that means *their salvation*, will be *the greatest awakening and the greatest blessing for the entire world, as well as for us personally*, that we can only somehow imagine!

By understanding, *we belong together before God!* And even if *many of them* do not yet know Yeshua, they *still* deserve our *sincere appreciation, gratitude and respect*:

For “**If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches.**

If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in

the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not consider yourself to be superior to those other branches. If you do, consider this:

You do not support the root, but the root supports you.

You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.” Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but tremble. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either. Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!” (Rom 11: 16-24)

Let us understand: It is *pure grace* that we were allowed to know Jesus, *not our own merit!* And *on that account* God has accepted that the children of Israel were *for the great part* taken out of their own salvation-tree for this time - also *for our sake!*

Does this not deserve *reverential gratitude* to a holy God *and* to the people who have prepared for us the way to our salvation?

Let us understand: God has not planted the worldwide church as a *new tree*, but we have only been *taken in*, “*grafted in*” to the **noble olive tree of Israel!** To which *we* may belong, *not the other way round!*

Whose root is *Jesus Himself*, whose stem, however, grew up with *the patriarchs, the prophets, and virtually all the other biblical saints who came from Israel.* From which we have received *all our life-sap, all our blessings:*

From whom ***the Messiah*** came forth. Who as a people gave us ***the entire Holy Scripture!*** Who carried, *representatively for the whole world*, in a special way “the burden of *the law*”; which *generally only reveals sin*; which was like a *death sentence* to them; to show the entire rest of the world: *We cannot achieve it by our own strength* to live up to God's righteous standards, and it takes a *sacrifice*, it needs “*divine help and salvation*” - what “*Yeshua*” *literally means!* - to be reconciled with Him; what will cause *the Holy Spirit* to be given to us, *Who alone can change us appropriately!*

The whole world would have actually deserved *the strict judgment* with which Israel has been stricken time and again; by which *their people* had to *go through and suffer so much*, in preparation of the way for the saving Messiah. They have gone through *so many lessons* before us that *we have been spared*; from which *we can learn* now and which *benefit us* now!

Oh, may we gratefully honor this people! Even *those of it* who, *because of their personal unbelief*, are still “grafted out” from their own tree, but who, according to God's Word, are *all the more likely* to be grafted in again on a large scale, as Paul further describes.

While, in turn, a time will come when *many of us* will be *all the more* in danger of falling away again if we continue to remain in pride; continue to do exactly what Paul has so clearly warned the Church of Rome here:
To arrogantly consider ourselves to be superior over Israel.

Let us hear this prophetic call!

For it is ultimately *time for us as a church* to repent of *any rest of replacement theology* (even subliminally conveyed in doctrine and preaching) and to give back to Israel *its place that we have robbed it for far too long!*

To return to the loving esteem of the Jewish people - *and especially of our brethren in the Lord, the messianic Jews* -, which was still self-evident in the early church; for example, when Paul had an offering collected in the nations for the church of Jerusalem and testified about the donors:

“They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews’ spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings.” (Rom 15: 27)

We, too, have shared in the spiritual goods of Israel;
“for salvation is from the Jews.” (Jn 4:22)

We are only co-participants of what was given to Israel.

“Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)—remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household". (Eph 2: 11-19)

So we have -*praise the Lord!*- share in what God *has begun* with Israel and *will end* with Israel; but have never *replaced it!*

Israel's election is unbroken! God has only a *Plan A* and He will faithfully complete His *ever-present and gradually revealed* intentions with Israel, into which people from all nations should be grafted! As Paul finally concludes:

"I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited (literally: not be wise yourselves): Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, and in this way all Israel will be saved.

As it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins."

As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies for your sake; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.

Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you. For God has bound everyone over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

“Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?” “Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?” For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.” (Rom 11: 25-36)

Call for prayer and comfort

Dear brothers and sisters, God has a **tremendous, wonderful plan** in which *you and I* have a firm place, which, however, is still *so much bigger than us!* Into which He wants to *take us in* and which He does not want to fulfill *alone and without us!*

He is seeking true lovers who are not *full of their own*, but who are ready to be *filled with a longing, a love, a healthy burden for what He burns for.*

He seeks intercessors who hear His call, Who speaks:

“For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem’s sake I will not remain quiet, till her vindication shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch. The nations will see your vindication, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will bestow. You will be a crown of splendor in the Lord’s hand, a royal diadem in the hand of your God. No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate. But you will be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; for the Lord will take delight in you, and your land will be married. As a young man marries a young woman, so will your Builder marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.

I have posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth.” (Is 62: 1-7).

Like a man who marries his beloved, so God says here, He rejoices over Jerusalem, which will then have come into its full calling.

*To which -by its nature- we also belong, but that goes far beyond us. Yes, that indeed has to do with *this patch of earth* and *the Jewish people!* For which we are called to intercede; to give God no rest day and night until He brings Jerusalem into *the fullness of her vocation, holiness and glory.**

- What is *inseparably linked*, yes, indeed *synonymous* with, that His name

will be hallowed, His kingdom will come and His will be done:
As in *heaven*, so on *earth*! As in the *heavenly Jerusalem*, so in the *earthly*!
As in the *heavenly throne room*, so on the *Temple Mount*!

All of this is *ultimately* not only a matter of *Israel*, but of **God's heart!**
Of *His Kingdom* and *His Plan of Salvation*, which includes the entire world!
“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” (Hab 2: 14)

Still, however small and insignificant Israel and the Jewish people may seem, they are *like a key* to Jesus' return, God's kingdom, and the greatest revival the world has ever seen.

Who of us wants to participate in the ministry that God wants to do in this time to His people. That has suffered *so much* hostility, accusation, hatred, contempt, humiliation, exclusion, expulsion, murder and atrocities *throughout almost its entire history*. - even at the hands of *the official church itself*!

Our dark church history, especially the Inquisition and the Crusades, is something that *we Christians* usually know and care *very little* about, but *to this day* is almost *as present* in a traumatic way *as the Shoah* for the Jewish people! Who - *also because of all this* and the many official “Christians” who had sworn *allegiance to people like Adolf Hitler* instead of the “King of the Jews” - in great numbers think *up to the present time* that *the One Who is in fact their savior* would be *one of their greatest enemies*. Who are hated *up to now* by millions of people and threatened with their destruction.

While alleged friends *are silent*, voting in the same way against them in the international referendums and doing business with those who make every provision to wipe out their state; the United Nations continue to accuse, accuse, and accuse them with almost one accord; BDS worldwide calls out *once again*: “Do not buy from Jews!” And so on.

God's Word states that *the ministry to prepare the way for Jesus' return is related* to a *supposedly very different ministry*:
Namely the one to *comfort His people*!

Yes, He speaks prophetically to *us*, His *formerly pagan* children from the other nations, who now have His Word and live in *this last time*:

“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.

A voice of one calling: “In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.

And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.” (Is 40: 1-5)

It is *love* to which we are called, not *accusation*, which comes from the heart of *somebody else*.

Only *this comfort, this assistance, this practically expressed love* of God’s children from the nations, *which will make Israel jealous in a good way, let them want to have what we have*, will bring them closer to their Messiah and pave the way for Him.

Who will *only* reveal Himself physically when *also His physical brothers* will have come to Him; just as *Joseph* did not fully reveal himself in Egypt before *his only full bodily brother* had *first* come to him, too.

Let us ask God to show us *what the whole topic of Israel* is all about; that He makes us *still so much more* empathic and understand the meaning of *this people and this land* for Him and His purposes.

That He may bring *also us* further to the *source of love* that wells up from His Heart; out of which *an unfathomable desire* springs forth, which is *inseparably connected with all this*.

And that expresses itself wonderfully in the following lines, which are certainly *only* possible to speak *out of God Himself* and *the faint foreboding* of what *He* still holds ready for this city.

In which the psalmist pledges:

“If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill. May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not consider Jerusalem my highest joy.” (Ps 137: 5f.)