

Israel's Real Need

(May 8, 2024)

Historically, the leaders of Israel have consistently failed to rely solely on God for their deliverance regarding enemies. Instead, Israel often chose to pursue a treaty with other nations; often nations that God wanted eradicated because of their abominations. Those treaties would *outwardly* provide Israel with the needed support to wage war against another enemy. Unfortunately for Israel, this type of treaty was something that God usually disapproved of and because of it, brought remonstrance on Israel itself. In fact, there are many examples of this occurring throughout the Hebrew Scriptures and it continues to this very day.

A case in point is seen during the reign of King Asa in **2 Chronicles**. He started off well as we learn in **chapter 14:2-6**. The actions of King Asa highlighted there are stark compared to the actions of most other kings of both Israel and Judah. It is clear Asa wanted to do what was right in God's eyes and he *did* it. These things pleased the Lord and because of this, God gave King Asa rest from wars. This would have been a good template for all kings to have done but many simply did not do these things. In fact, most kings deliberately turned the hearts of the people of Israel/Judah against God and paid the terrible price for it.

King Asa was different than most of the other kings. Later in **2 Chronicles 14**, we read where an enemy came out against King Asa and we also read of Asa's prayer to God (**v 11**).

And Asa cried out to the Lord his God, and said, "Lord, it is nothing for You to help, whether with many or with those who have no power; help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on You, and in Your name we go against this multitude. O Lord, You are our God; do not let man prevail against You!"

So God *did* prevail because King Asa turned to God and depended on Him and Him alone for victory. **2 Chronicles 15** tells us of the actual reforms King Asa made in Judah, even deposing his own mother who had made an abominable image of an Asherah (**v 16**). God blessed King Asa with rest from war until the 35th year of his reign (**v 19**).

Then what happened? The answer is clearly given to us in **2 Chronicles 16:1-3**.

1 In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. 2 Then Asa brought silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the Lord and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-Hadad king of Syria, who dwelt in Damascus, saying, 3 "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. See, I have sent you silver and gold; come, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me."

So King Asa was concerned that King Baasha of Israel was coming against him (Judah). So instead of doing what he had done previously by relying directly and only on the LORD, King Asa went to the king of Syria - Ben-Hadad - and enticed him to break his treaty with Baasha and unite with him (King Asa) against Israel. Because of this lapse, God sent Hanani the seer to King Asa to tell him God's heart in the matter (**vv 7-9**) and warn him that there would be wars from now on.

God decided that because of King Asa's reliance on other human beings and not God Himself, King Asa would finish out his years as king fighting wars. Up until that time, there had been rest because of Asa's

trust in the LORD.

By the way, any of us can do the same thing. If we are not forever mindful of how easily we will stray from Him, we *will* stray from Him. We will go off on our own, even if we've been living a life of service to Him for decades. It doesn't take much because our sin nature is always looking for opportunities to ditch God. The fact that King Asa continued with God for 34 years is a marvel in itself.

So why am I relating these things? Certainly not to judge King Asa or Israel for that matter. It is to point out the fact that Israel has *never* completely and finally learned this same lesson and to this very day, has still not learned it. There seems a bit less reliance on other nations as evidenced by the fact that PM Netanyahu continues to push on to eradicate Hamas and has now undertaken the military invasion of Rafah. This is being done in spite of the fact that the US now wants a six-week cease fire even though Hamas/Iran/proxies will likely break that ceasefire if entered into.

The USA has some nerve here to decide how Israel (or any nation), should determine its own welfare and future. It appears as though Israel is ignoring the wants of US leaders and is doing what Israel *should* do to ensure its own safety and future survival. Still, much of the world stands against Israel and it seems clear that the USA is also standing against Israel as well by massive attempts to block Israel's efforts against Hamas and Iran. Our leaders say one thing - "*We support Israel's right to defend itself!*" - all the while demanding that Israel does things the way US leaders say things should be done.

Can you imagine a neighbor telling you that you should *not* do everything you could to make your own household safe and if a thief or group of thieves breaks in, you should just "let it go" if they ended up not harming you or your family? That would be absurd. If someone breaks into your home there is a duty to defend your homestead, family and animals against that threat and may include lethal force.

So, while Israel is starting to show signs that it is learning to rely on itself (and will eventually and ultimately come to rely on God *alone*), more headway needs to be made clearly. In essence, it seems clear that God's plan is to put Israel on one side of the aisle completely alone and ultimately vulnerable, while all other nations actively stand against Israel (or don't care and won't help Israel). Why? Because it will *force* Israel to come to her knees before God, to learn to depend solely and only on God Almighty, the very Creator of Israel.

I want to be clear in my support for Israel and I've said that many times before. I support what God is ultimately going to accomplish in Israel. He will one day gather a final remnant from all of Israel (**Romans 9-11**). That final remnant will survive the coming Tribulation and will enter into the Millennial Kingdom as the final nation of Israel, over which Jesus, Israel's One and Only Messiah, will rule. That remnant nation will then fully enjoy all aspects of every promise originally given to Abraham, Moses, the prophets et al regarding Israel. In order for this to happen though, Israel must come to the end of *self-reliance*. Israel is not yet there as they still rely on themselves and other nations (for supplies, military equipment and money).

I also support Israel by *not* standing in Israel's way. I cannot help but notice an increase in evangelicals who support Mike Johnson because he ostensibly supports Israel. The problems with Mike Johnson are manifold and frankly, if the USA would simply get out of Israel's way, that would be support enough. While Johnson claims to support Israel, his actual support for USA is negligible as seen in the fact that more Democrats (including Pelosi), are fighting to keep him in as Speaker of the House.[1] What does that tell you? Seems it's lost on the evangelicals who blindly support Johnson, all because of his alleged support for Israel, but I digress.

Consider **Ezekiel 38-39** (aka the Northern Invasion), where we see Israel is out of the blue attacked by Gog and his troops and proxies. During that attack (presumably to take spoil), the world sits by and does nothing except to ask the question, "*What are you doing, Gog?*"

But what is fascinating about this attack is how God Himself thwarts it, first by generating a tremendously huge earthquake that will be felt throughout the world and will destroy much. Then the God of Israel turns Gog's troops on each other for major destruction (**Ezekiel 38:18-23**). So, between the earthquake, the fire and brimstone God rains down and the pestilence and bloodshed God sends, little is left standing. I personally believe this particular response by God will begin to open Israel's eyes far wider than what they are now having to deal with in the Middle East, even after Iran's recent rocket, UAV attack against Israel.

During the Northern Invasion War of **Ezekiel 38-39**, the destruction will be so complete that it will take Israel seven months to bury all the bodies of troops who came against Israel (**Ezekiel 39:11-16**). Stop to consider that please.

Right now, Israel is waging a war against terrorists who lie for their own advantage and are backed by Iran, her proxies and several other nations, even including clueless college students throughout America. These people seek the death of Israel by any means necessary and they don't even understand why. It's like listening to someone trying to explain why they think Donald J. Trump is a "racist." He may be many things, but he's not a racist. Yet, these people firmly believe he is a racist and they do their best to try to explain it although when all is said and done, they don't even sound as coherent as two year-olds in their responses. Just maddening.

The question of course can be asked, *why is Israel so hated?* I've answered that question before but let me address it again. Israel is *the* nation that God created in order to, among other things, bring Israel's Messiah and the Gentile's Savior into this world for *salvation* to anyone who would come to Him. Satan wanted desperately to stop it but failed. Even after Jesus was born, through Herod, Satan tried to eradicate Jesus and again failed. Satan failed repeatedly to stop Jesus at every turn (**Revelation 12**).

Because of Satan's continued failures where Israel (and God), is concerned, his only recourse is to attempt to utterly destroy the nation of Israel and *all* Jewish people. This, believe it or not, is Satan's goal and he knows that if he is able to secure it, he will be victorious over God. So to that end, Satan works, using any means at his disposal to incite this nation or that one or this group of people or that one against God's chosen Israel. Hatred of Jewish people and Israel is once again, ramping up (**Matthew 24**).

The utter stupidity of Satan's endeavor is glaring. We've all heard the expression that stupidity means doing the same thing over and over and expecting a *different* result. This is Satan. He has lost, will lose and ultimately, will be forever lost himself. There is zero chance of him winning against God. Yet, Satan tries and can at least console himself throughout eternity with the knowledge that for every Jewish person he gets killed who does not know Jesus as Messiah, he has "gained" something against God.

The problem of course, is that God will *not* lose and never has. Israel *will* succeed and become exactly what God intended them to be in the end. Jewish people who are part of the final remnant will come to acknowledge their need for Jesus and gain salvation because of it. They will become a nation wholly sold out to God in Christ, always persevering in His will for His glory. Israel is clearly not there yet and that is because God is not done with Israel. However, it is clear that things are building to a climax in the Middle East.

So what should Christians do? Continue to *pray*, to *praise* and to *trust* that God is going to do what He promised He will do, not just where Israel is concerned, but with respect to all aspects of His future will that is yet to be unrolled. This is the best way Christians can actually *support* Israel; through prayer and praise for God's perfect will that will come to fruition in His appointed time and in His chosen way. We also need to seriously get out of Israel's way and let Israel make their own mistakes as they become increasingly conformed to God's will. By getting out of Israel's way, we will be supporting Israel by letting God do His work in that nation. God *will* turn them around.

God has given us two choices where Israel is concerned: to *bless* or *curse*. Blessing Israel means, not necessarily giving them ample supplies of money or military equipment. It means to allow them to find their own way where God is concerned, to *not* dictate to Israel. Cursing Israel means to deliberately stand in their way, to keep them from exercising autonomy as a nation, to force them to continue their reliance on other nations (including the USA), instead of God Himself.

By all means, let's *bless* Israel by taking our hands off, by giving that nation to God for His keeping and to trust Him to bring victory out of chaos in His way and in His time.

[1] <https://www.oann.com/newsroom/nancy-pelosi-backs-democrat-efforts-to-keep-mike-johnson-in-speaker-position/>