

THE TIME OF
JACOB'S
TROUBLE

ISRAEL'S STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL
AND THE COMING GLORY

LARS ENARSON

The Time of Jacob's Trouble
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“So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak... The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel.”

— Genesis 32:24,31

INTRODUCTION

“This is what the Sovereign LORD says:
This is Jerusalem, which I have set in the
center of the nations, with countries all
around her.” — Ezekiel 5:5

Jerusalem is increasingly becoming the center of the world’s attention. The conflict in the Middle East concerns us all. God has made all of humanity dependent on the outcome.

As believers in the Messiah of Israel, we must face up to our responsibilities regarding the Jewish people. The first step is to understand what is going on and why this conflict is so crucial.

Fortunately, God has not left us in the dark. The words of the prophets, recorded in Scripture thousands of years in advance, give us the light that we need. The apostle Peter wrote,

“And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will

of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Pet 1:19–21)

The Jewish sages refer to the time of Jacob’s trouble as the birth pains of Messiah. This book deals with the cataclysmic events at the end of this age, including the great tribulation, the war of Gog and Magog, and the battle of Armageddon, which will precede the coming of the Messiah. It will be a time of great turmoil, but it will bring about the salvation of the Jewish people and life for the whole world. “How awful that day will be! None will be like it. It will be a time of trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved out of it.” (Jer 30:7)

In a sense the Holy Scriptures were primarily written for this time. Paul wrote in Romans 15:4,

“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”

And in 1 Corinthians 10:11,

“These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.”

The spiritual battle of the ages between the forces of darkness and the forces of light is upon us. If we ever needed to study the Scriptures it is now. It is my prayer that this book will provide increased understanding of the time we live in and help you to fulfill your calling regarding the Jewish people.

Lars Enarson

“This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘Write in a book all the words I have spoken to you. The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will bring my people Israel and Judah back from captivity and restore them to the land I gave their forefathers to possess,’ says the LORD. These are the words the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah: ‘This is what the LORD says: ‘Cries of fear are heard—terror, not peace. Ask and see: Can a man bear children? Then why do I see every strong man with his hands on his stomach like a woman in labor, every face turned deathly pale? How awful that day will be! None will be like it. *It will be a time of trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved out of it.*’”

— Jeremiah 30:1–7, emphasis added

THE RETURN

The God of Israel, the God of the Bible, the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah,¹ is also the God of history. No one but God can declare the end from the beginning and accurately predict the future thousands of years in advance.

“This is what the LORD says—Israel’s King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and the last; apart from me there is no God. Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me...yes, let him foretell what will come. Do not tremble, do not be afraid. *Did not I proclaim this and foretell it long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me?* No, there is no other Rock; I know not one.” (Isa 44:6–8, emphasis added)

And in Isaiah 46:8–10 God says,

“Remember this, fix it in mind, take it to heart, you rebels. Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and

there is none like me. 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.”

Truly there is no god like the God of Israel, who is able to declare the end from the beginning. He is the God of history! The prophetic word in Scripture is like a light that shines in a dark place. Light gives us direction and security when it is dark. The apostle Peter says that we need to pay close attention to the prophetic word.

“And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and *you will do well to pay attention to it*, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.” (2 Pet 1:19, emphasis added)

In the midst of the increasing terror and confusion that surround us on every side, God wants us to know that He has everything under control. He has made sure that we can have understanding and insight into what is taking place.

God told Jeremiah to write down all the words that He gave to him because one day, thousands of years later, He would fulfill His promise and restore the people of Israel and Judah back to their own land again!

“This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘Write in a book all the words I have spoken to you. The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will bring my people Israel and Judah back from captivity and restore them to the land I gave their forefathers to possess,’ says the LORD.” (Jer 30:1–3)

Yeshua said in Matthew 24:35, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

Thank God for the Holy Scriptures! Thank God for the prophetic word that gives us the insight and direction we need today. But we must humble ourselves and pay close attention to it.

Frederick the Great of Prussia once asked his personal physician, “Give me one proof that there is a God. But hurry, I don’t have much time!” The physician quickly answered, “The Jews, Your Majesty!”

The Jewish people are proof that God exists and that the Bible is true! Their exile, preservation, and return thousands of years later constitute an unparalleled miracle. “Hear the word of the Lord, O nations; proclaim it in distant coastlands: ‘He who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.’” (Jer 31:10)

The Bible clearly predicted that the Jewish people, because of their disobedience, would be dispersed into all the nations of the world. Just as clearly, it also predicted that God would preserve them as a people among the nations and then one day bring them back again to their own land. Truly, there is no greater phenomenon in all of history that can be compared to the restoration of Israel after two thousand years!

When Israel became a nation again in 1948 after two thousand years of exile, the Dead Sea Scrolls were found containing copies of the prophetic word that predicted this very event thousands of years ago. The copies are around two thousand years old, dating back to the time that the Jewish people still lived in their land. They are almost one thousand years older than any other manuscript of the Hebrew Bible that had been discovered up to that point. These scrolls predict in detail both the scattering and the regathering of the Jewish people from the four corners of the world, back to their own land.

God allowed those scrolls to be found at that exact time in order to underline for those who have an ear to hear, that the prophetic word is true and that the rebirth of modern Israel is no coincidence. It was predicted by Him thousands of years ago and shows us that the coming of His Son is near. The apostle Peter said to the people in the Temple in Jerusalem, “He [Jesus] must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.” (Acts 3:21) We are truly living in these times of restoration.

Through the words of the prophets in Scripture, God has given a very clear message to all mankind, both to Israel and to the rest of the nations of the earth: The God of Israel is also the God of history!

TERROR, NOT PEACE

The prophetic word is very accurate. Right after God’s declaration in Jeremiah chapter 30 to regather His people, it says,

“These are the words the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah: “This is what the LORD says: ‘Cries of fear are heard—terror, not peace.’” (Jer 30:4)

Isn’t this exactly what has characterized the modern state of Israel from its very beginning in our day? Instead of peace there has been terror and fear. In fact, the words “terrorist” and “terrorism,” are terms primarily connected to the past century, after the Jewish people began to return to their homeland. Even though terrorism is increasingly becoming a problem all over the world, Israel and the Jewish people have been and still are the main targets.

The text continues,

“Ask and see: Can a man bear children? Then why do I see every strong man with hands on his stomach like a woman in labor, every face turned deathly pale? How awful that day will be! None will be like it. It will be a time of trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved out of it.” (Jer 30:6–7)

Terror and fear will increase and get worse until they reach a point in history predetermined by God called “the time of Jacob’s trouble.”

A PROPHETIC PICTURE

Why is this time called “the time of Jacob’s trouble”? Is there a parallel between what is taking place today in Israel and what happened to the Jewish people’s forefather Jacob, when he returned to the land of promise? Yes, there is! In the story of Jacob, God has given us a clear prophetic picture of what is happening to His people today, and also of what will soon take place.

Jacob was the son with the blessing and promise of God. However, it was not until he returned to his homeland that he fulfilled his destiny. After a life-changing encounter with God, Jacob the “heel grabber,” became Israel, “Prince with God.”

In the oft-quoted verse in Romans 11:29, Paul is referring to Israel, when he says, “For God’s gifts and his call are irrevocable.”

Replacement theology, which says that the church has replaced Israel, is an insult to God’s character of faithfulness, goodness and mercy. This doctrine blatantly denies what Paul says in Romans 3:34, “What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God’s faithfulness? Not at all!” This

erroneous teaching also ignores Paul's statement in Romans 11:12, "God did not reject his people whom he foreknew."

God knew even before He chose Israel that they would fall. Make no mistake, no matter what you have heard or been taught, God has never removed or changed His calling, plan, or promises for the Jewish people!

Today, however, the return of the Jews to their own homeland is building up to a climax of terror and unprecedented international suspense: "the time of Jacob's trouble." This will be the time when all of Israel finally will be saved!

JACOB'S RETURN

In the book of Genesis, chapters 31 to 33, we read about the return of Jacob to the land of promise. It begins by saying,

"Jacob heard that Laban's sons were saying, 'Jacob has taken everything our father owned and has gained all this wealth from what belonged to our father.' And Jacob noticed that Laban's attitude toward him was not what it had been." (Gen 31:1-2)

Just like the return of Jacob, the modern Zionist movement that has brought the Jews back to their land, has been motivated by similar experiences. Both have been the result of increased insecurity, caused by jealousy and hostility from the people around them in foreign lands.

How many times in history has the attitude towards the Jewish people suddenly changed? Time and again, the Jews as a race have been accused of taking the wealth of others through deceit, just as Laban's sons unjustly accused Jacob. How accurate the prophetic word is!

Today anti-Semitism is on the rise again, not only in the Muslim world, but also in Europe and even in America. Just

wait until the economy crumbles in the affluent nations of the world and see who will be blamed!

Despite the horror of the Jewish Holocaust just a generation ago, the most ugly, violent anti-Semitism could be the result of a crisis in America, just as it happened in Nazi Germany during the 1930's. In bad times, the Jewish people have always been the scapegoat.

The question we must ask ourselves is: Will Christians be awake and act differently than they did in Germany during the Nazi regime? An absolute prerequisite for this not to happen is a strong, clear teaching from the Bible against all replacement theology that has infiltrated church pulpits.

THE PLAN OF GOD

The second reason for the return of Jacob, as well as the modern Zionist movement back to the land of promise, is God Himself. The next verse says,

“Then the LORD said to Jacob, ‘Go back to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you.’” (Gen 31:3)

It was God who told Jacob to go back to the Promised Land. In the same way the Zionist movement has been God's hand at work in history to return the Jewish people back to their own land.

Despite their sin, rebellion and unbelief, God has been with the Jewish people throughout their long history. “Hear the word of the LORD, O nations; proclaim it in distant coastlands: ‘He who scattered Israel will gather them and *will watch over his flock like a shepherd.*’” (Jer 31:10, emphasis added) A few verses later God explains, “Just as I watched over them to uproot and tear down, and to overthrow, de-

stroy and bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant,' declares the LORD." (v. 28)

God has promised to watch over Israel like a shepherd watches over his flock. Nothing is a coincidence when it comes to Israel. Nothing happens to His people without the permission of the Shepherd of Israel. He is the number one reason for the existence of the modern state of Israel! He said in Micah 4:6-7, "In that day,' declares the LORD, 'I will gather the lame; *I will assemble the exiles and those I have brought to grief. I will make the lame a remnant, those driven away a strong nation.*" (emphasis added)

On the very day after the state of Israel declared its independence, all the surrounding Arab nations, numbering over 40 million people, declared war against the newborn nation with only 650,000 citizens! Trained and equipped by the British, the Arabs attacked with modern armies that massively outnumbered the poorly equipped and largely untrained Israeli army. When the fighting ended a few months later, Israel had acquired more land than when the war started!

The Bible says that He who watches over Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps (Psalm 121:4). Nothing happens to God's people without His permission. Both the Bible and history tell us that God is behind the return of the Jewish people back to their own land in our day.

THE ARMIES OF HEAVEN

Immediately after Jacob had left an upset and angry Laban and all the bridges behind him were burned, it says,

"Jacob also went on his way, and the angels of God met him. When Jacob saw them, he said, 'This is the camp of God!' So he named that place Mahanaim." (Gen 32:1-2)

Mahanaim means “two hosts” or “two camps.” Today there are two armies actively and intensely involved in the return of the Jewish people back to their own land: the angels in heaven and the praying believers on earth.

The late international Bible teacher Derek Prince used to tell a story of a pastor in New Zealand who had a dream in which he saw myriads of angels eager and ready to be released on the earth. The angels were, however, held back waiting for a command from the LORD of Hosts, *ADONAI Tzevaot*.

Sometime later he had the same dream. This time he saw the angels being released to earth. The dream left a powerful impression on him that something very special was going on in heaven, and he wondered what the vision could mean. After a while he began to tell his colleagues about his dreams and that they should prepare themselves, because he believed that a powerful revival would soon break out in his area.

Months went and no revival came. After about a year, he one day had a thought that he ought to find out if something significant had taken place somewhere else around the world the day the angels were released from heaven to earth. It did not take long until he discovered that it was exactly the first day of the Six Day War when Jerusalem was reunited under Jewish rule for the first time in over 2000 years! On June 7, Colonel Motta Gur gave his moving announcement over his radio, “The Temple Mount is in our hands! I repeat, the Temple Mount is in our hands!” It was truly a miraculous war of biblical proportions.

Only the hosts of heaven and praying believers with prophetic eyes and ears, who hear from the Spirit of God, fully understand the significance of what is taking place today in the Middle East!

NO PEACE WITHOUT GOD

Nevertheless, Israel has not yet returned to its full inheritance. We are only seeing the beginning of the fulfillment of prophecy.

Few prophecies in the Bible speak about the Jews returning to the coastland area of Tel Aviv, Netanya and Haifa, where the majority of the Jews in Israel live today. Most of the promises speak about Judea, Samaria and the mountains of Israel, eighty percent of which today is called the West Bank. Where the Palestinian Arabs live today is the very heart of the Promised Land!

Like Jacob when he returned to his own land, the Jews today are faced with a bitter and wounded brother who has sworn to kill them.

“Esau held a grudge against Jacob because the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, ‘The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob.’” (Gen 27:41)

The first thing Jacob tried to do as he returned was to arrange a “peace conference.” The Bible says that he sent messengers ahead of him to tell Esau that he only wanted to live in peace with him.

“Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. He instructed them: ‘This is what you are to say to my master Esau: ‘Your servant Jacob says, I have been staying with Laban and have remained there till now. I have cattle and donkeys, sheep and goats, menservants and maidservants. Now I am sending this message to my lord, that I may find favor in your eyes.’” (Gen 32:3–5).

This is so much like Israel today. From the beginning the Jews have wanted peace, almost at any cost. But there is no peace.

Just as God had a plan for Jacob, He also has a very special plan for Israel today. He is after their hearts!

No matter how hard Israel tries, the Arabs are never going to make real peace with them, until the Jewish people have met face to face with their Messiah and been changed by Him. What a day that will be! Neither religion nor politics is the answer. God Himself is the only answer to Israel's peace problem!

The messengers quickly returned to Jacob and said, "We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him." (Gen 32:6).

This is exactly what will be the end result of all the peace talks in the Middle East today!

The Bible says that Esau was coming out to meet Jacob with four hundred men. Four is the number of the earth and also of the flesh. Four hundred is often mentioned in the Bible in connection with military might (Jud 20:2, 1 Sam 22:2; 25:13; 30:10). Zechariah 12:3 predicts that in the end all the nations of the earth will join with the Arabs and come against Jerusalem.

"It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And *all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.*" (NASB, emphasis added)

When Jacob heard the news of this army coming against him, it says,

"In great fear and distress Jacob divided the people who were with him into two groups, and the flocks

and herds and camels as well. He thought, 'If Esau comes and attacks one group, the group that is left may escape.' Then Jacob prayed, 'O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, O LORD, who said to me, 'Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper,' I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two groups. Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, *for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children.* But you have said, 'I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted.' *He spent the night there, and...Jacob was left alone.*" (Gen 32:7–13,24, emphasis added)

This is the time of Jacob's trouble!

WRESTLING WITH GOD

Jacob's heart began to soften from the heat of the fire that he went through. He sent people ahead of him with generous gifts to his brother Esau. But Jacob was still afraid!

"So Jacob's gifts went on ahead of him, but he himself spent the night in the camp....So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak."
(Gen 32:21,24)

Jacob's real problem was not with man, but with God. He had spent twenty years in a foreign land with the promise of God over his life, but there was still something unsettled between him and God. Now the hour of reckoning had come.

It is the same with the Jewish people today. Just as Jacob spent twenty years serving Laban, so the Jewish people have begun to return after twenty centuries scattered among the nations. Just as it was with Jacob, something is still unsettled between them and God. “The stone that the builders rejected” (Ps 118:22) is still not in its rightful place. Without it the building can never stand!

In the crisis Jacob went through, God transformed his life. It says that *a man* wrestled with Jacob. But afterwards Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, “It is because *I saw God* face to face and yet my life was spared.” (Gen 32:30, emphasis added)

In Hosea 12:2–5 it is written,

“The LORD has a charge to bring against Judah; he will punish Jacob according to his ways and repay him according to his deeds. In the womb he grasped his brother’s heel; *as a man he struggled with God. He struggled with the angel* and overcame him; he wept and begged for his favor. He found him at Bethel and talked with him there—*the LORD God Almighty, the LORD is his name of renown!*” (emphasis added)

The being that Jacob wrestled with is both called “man,” “God,” “angel,” as well as “the LORD God Almighty,” who appeared to him in Bethel. There is only one person who is called by of all these epithets in the Bible: Yeshua of Nazareth!

Today, as the crisis in the Middle East continues to escalate, Israel’s Redeemer, who shed His own blood for their sins, will continue to wrestle with His people until they have surrendered to Him.

“O 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, but 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, emphasis added)

In the struggle between Jacob and the pre-incarnate Messiah it says, "When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man." (Gen 32:25)

The muscle over the hipbone is supposed to be the strongest muscle in the human body. Jacob did not give up easily! Deuteronomy 32:36 says, "The LORD will judge his people and have compassion on his servants when he sees their strength is gone and no one is left, slave or free."

The last phrase "when he sees their strength is gone and no one is left, slave or free," is understood by the rabbis to mean that there will come a time when no one will support Israel. We read in Genesis 32:24 that Jacob was left alone to wrestle with the angel. It says in Daniel 12:7, "When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed."

God will save His people out of the greatest darkness and despair in human history. "How awful that day will be! None will be like it. It will be a time of trouble for Jacob, *but he will be saved out of it.*" (Jer 30:7, emphasis added) The final outcome is secured! "And so 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.'" (Rom 11:26–27)

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Only God knows to what extent the crisis will escalate. But one thing is certain: the followers of the Messiah of Israel will bear a lot of the responsibility for it before God, and we must face up to this responsibility.

Over the centuries the church has so mistreated the Jewish people through replacement theology and ungodly actions, that today it is almost impossible for the Jewish people to accept that their Messiah is the Christian's Jesus of Nazareth!

During the Holocaust, Hitler said that he only did what Martin Luther had suggested in his writings four hundred years earlier. In the twelfth century, the Crusaders sang "Christ We Adore Thee" while burning alive the last Jewish survivors in Jerusalem who had sought refuge in their own synagogue. The Inquisition in Spain and the pogroms in Eastern Europe and Russia are other shameful examples of the church's tainted history with regard to the Jewish people.

For eighteen hundred years, the church has told the Jewish people, "We have taken over the promises given to you in the Bible. God is through with you! You killed Christ!" Or in a more sophisticated version, "God never meant that the promises were for you in the first place. They were intended as spiritual promises to us in the church."

The righteous old man Shimon prophesied when he took the baby Jesus in his arms, and said that Jesus would be "a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to the people of Israel." (Luke 2:32) For two thousand years now the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been shining over the nations. Soon the second part of Simon's prophecy will also be fulfilled: Yeshua will be "for glory to the people of Israel." God is not cruel or deceitful. He means what He says and He says what He means.

How much we as Gentile followers of Messiah need to repent of in order to fulfill our calling to the Jewish people! Despite the failures of the church in the past, the Bible says that the calling of the Gentile believers in Messiah is to become so full of the glory of God that we will provoke the Jewish people to envy! What an awesome promise!

“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.” (Rom 11:11)

God will bring this about as an answer to the prayers of those who faithfully pray, “Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” (Mt 6:10)

Romans 11:25–26 says,

“I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part *until the full number of the Gentiles has come in*. And so all Israel will be saved.” (emphasis added)

The Greek word that is translated “full number” is *pleroma*, which usually means maturity, as in Ephesians 4:11–13,

“He gave some to be emissaries; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, shepherds and teachers; for the perfecting of the holy ones, to the work of serving, to the building up of the body of Messiah; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, *to a full grown man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness [pleroma] of Messiah.*” (HNV, emphasis added)

This is the fullness that God has intended for His assembly. Only when this fullness, both in number and maturity, has

been reached shall Israel be saved. Because it is through the mercy we have received from God that the Jewish people will receive mercy.

“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.” (Rom 11:30–31)

That is why Paul continues in Romans 12:1–2,

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (emphasis added)

We must present ourselves as living sacrifices to God, in order to become recipients of the mercy which will bring about the “fullness” that will lead to Israel’s salvation and life from the dead for the world, as it says in Romans 11:15, “For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?”

This is truly a staggering revelation. It means that we are all involved in the drama that is taking place right now in the Middle East. It affects us all. We who are Gentiles can either remain stiff-necked and part of the problem, or we can surrender completely to God and become part of the answer. Who will pick up this overwhelming burden in prayer?

Just like Esther, we as believers are the only ones who have access to the throne of the King. Will we accept our responsibility? Listen to the words of Mordecai to Esther,

“For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?” (Est 4:12)

¹ The name Jesus is an English transliteration of the Greek transliteration of our Savior’s original Hebrew name *Yeshua*. Throughout this book, I generally render Jesus and Christ as *Yeshua* and *Messiah*, respectively.

“How awful that day will be! None will be like it. It will be a time of trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved out of it.”

— Jeremiah 30:7

ANOTHER HOLOCAUST?

We saw in the first chapter how the return of Jacob from serving under Laban for twenty years, is a prophetic picture of the return of Jacob's descendants to their own Land in the end times, after twenty centuries in the Diaspora. "Then the LORD said to Jacob, 'Go back to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you.'" (Gen 31:3)

Jeremiah prophesied that this time will not be a time of peace, but of fear and terror.

"This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Write in a book all the words I have spoken to you. The days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I will bring my people Israel and Judah back from captivity and restore them to the land I gave their forefathers to possess,' says the LORD. These are the words the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah: 'This is what the LORD says: "Cries of fear are heard—terror, not peace."' (Jer 30:2–5)

Just like Jacob encountered his brother who wanted to kill him when he returned at the LORD's command, so the Jewish people have been faced with a "brother" desiring to kill and destroy them as they have returned to their Land in our generation. God's word foretold from the beginning that it would be so. However, God has also foretold a happy ending to the conflict.

The very first meeting of the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) took place during a time of war. Since that day Israel has still not experienced even one day of peace! No other nation in history has had to face five major wars in such a short period of time. Technically, Israel has been in a state of war ever since its rebirth as a sovereign state in 1948.

Before we go further, however, we need to deal with some very common misunderstandings and false teachings on this subject. When we talk about the time of Jacob's trouble, we are not talking about the Holocaust that took place under the Nazis before Israel became a state in 1948. Neither are we talking about another future Holocaust.

The theme of Jeremiah chapter 30, where God speaks about the time of Jacob's trouble is one of salvation, not destruction and judgment. It says, "How awful that day will be! None will be like it. It will be a time of trouble for Jacob, *but he will be saved out of it.*" (Jer. 30:7) It then goes on to say in the next verses,

"In that day,' declares the LORD Almighty, 'I will break the yoke off their necks and will tear off their bonds; no longer will foreigners enslave them. Instead, they will serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. So do not fear, O Jacob my servant; do not be dismayed, O Israel,' declares the LORD. 'I will surely save you out of a distant place, your descendants