

ISRAEL

Tom's Perspectives
by Thomas Ice

“Behold, I will gather them out of all the lands to which I have driven them in My anger, in My wrath, and in great indignation; and I will bring them back to this place and make them dwell in safety. And they shall be My people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me always, for their own good, and for the good of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will no turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me. And I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will faithfully plant them in this land with all My heart and with all My soul.” For thus says the Lord, “Just as I brought them all this great disaster on this people, so I am going to bring on them all the good that I am promising them.” —**Jeremiah 32:37-42**

What do you think of the modern state of Israel? Hardly a day passes without seeing this small country, about the size of New Jersey, in the newspaper or on television news. Why? Because Israel is God’s elect nation and He is preparing her and the world for “a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall” (Matt. 24:21). The emphasis is upon preparing, because we are still in the church age and not yet in the seven-year tribulation.

THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

My wife and I just returned from a wonderful tour of this marvelous land in which so many past events of the Bible have occurred, but in which so many future events await. What a wonderful job the modern Israelis have done in subduing this small area and making it the most productive agricultural enterprise in the world. There are many other accomplishments that have been achieved during the last 75 to 50 years.

What one believes about the future of Israel is of utmost importance to one's understanding of the Bible. I believe, without a shadow of doubt, that Old Testament promises made to national Israel will literally be fulfilled in the future. This means the Bible teaches that God will return the Jews to their land before the tribulation begins (Isa. 11:11–12:6; Ezek. 20:33-44; 22:17-22; Zeph. 2:1-3). This has been accomplished and the stage is set as a result of the current existence of the modern state of Israel. The Bible also indicates that before Israel enters into her time of national blessing she must first pass through the fire of the tribulation (Deut. 4:30; Jer. 30:5-9; Dan. 12:1; Zeph. 1:14-18). Even though the horrors of the Holocaust under Hitler were of an unimaginable magnitude, the Bible teaches that a time of even greater trial awaits Israel during the tribulation. Anti-Semitism will reach new heights, this time global in scope, in which two-thirds of world Jewry will be killed (Zech. 13:7-9; Rev. 12). Through this time God will protect His remnant so that before His second advent "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:36). In fact, the second coming will include the purpose of God's physical rescue of Israel from world persecution during Armageddon (Dan. 12:1; Zech. 12-14;

Matt. 24:29-31; Rev. 19:11-21). Matthew 24:22 says, "And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short."

IT'S TIME TO VISIT ISRAEL

Contrary to popular opinion, it is safe for Americans to travel and tour the holy land since the current problems are primarily limited to areas where tourists rarely go. We were as safe as one can be on this planet. In fact, I have been told that not one single American tourist has ever been killed in the whole history of modern Israel. Because of the false perception that it is dangerous to travel to Israel today, we had the whole land almost to ourselves. That was nice, in a way. But it was not nice to realize that many who would like to visit the place where our Savior walked, lived, died, rose again, and ascended to heaven are staying away because they think it is not safe. Many who would benefit from seeing the sites where dozens of future events are prophesied to occur are not coming because of the false notion that their life may be endangered, are choosing to stay at home.

Now is a very good time to visit Israel for the trip of a lifetime. This November 7th through 16th, Tim and Beverly LaHaye are leading a tour to Israel. I am going along also to help on this tour. Concerned Women for America and The Pre-Trib Research Center are joining forces to provide a great tour package for those wanting to visit the holy land. This tour will visit all of the normal places that anyone would want to see on a complete trip to Israel, but it will also be a tour that will focus on future prophecy. This will be an excellent Bible prophecy tour where we will be sure to note and teach on where things will happen in the future, most likely the near future. For example, we will spend an entire day visiting and learning about Jewish efforts and preparation to build Israel's next Temple.

Back in the early 1990's when Randall Price and I wrote our book *Ready to Rebuild*, about Jewish efforts to rebuild Israel's temple, there were many who would write or call to tell us that we did not know what we were talking about. Some even accused us of making up the information in the book. But such was not the case. Today, you can go to Israel and visit the institutions and organizations that are by and large ready to rebuild the Temple right where the Islamic Dome of the Rock now stands. Of course, those of us who know Bible prophecy understand that it will happen, it is just a matter of time, God's timing. Why don't you come to Israel and see first-hand these things for yourself with us.

On one of my first trips to Israel our guide said that when Catholics come to Israel they want to visit all the churches and holy sites. When many Protestants came they want to see what happened in the past. But, when Bible-believing Christians came, they not only wanted to see the sites where biblical events took place in the past, but they always want to visit the sites where Bible prophecy is destined to occur. If you have ever wanted to go to Israel, now is the time to do it. Why don't you come with the LaHayes and I to see this marvelous land for yourself. Come see in advance where the armies will assemble for Armageddon. Come see where and how Israel will rebuild their temple. Come and see where Jesus will literally touch down on His return to

planet earth and what will happen when he does. Tim LaHaye and I are preparing to guide you through the Bible as we trek through the land of Israel in anticipation of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ's return.

There is probably nothing more that a Christian can do for his/her spiritual life than taking a tour of Israel. Forever after, when you read the Bible it comes alive as you recall what things are actually like because you have been there. You've been on the Sea of Galilee. You know what it is like to go UP to Jerusalem. You can experience the Judean wilderness and travel the hills around Galilee. Pray in the Garden Tomb and walk the streets of ancient Jerusalem. Visit where the Sermon on the Mount likely took place and watch the sun set, or come up, over God's city—Jerusalem. You can do this and more with a group of friends or a loved one. I must also add that the cost of this trip is very reasonable for a first class trip that includes so much.

I must admit, that it was a great thrill to have been in Israel just about 10 days ago and to see for myself what is taking place. You too can come and see for yourself, rather than being restricted in your knowledge about modern Israel from what the liberal media has to say, who always seem to give Israel the short end of the stick. If you think you would like to visit God's country and examine the many footprints that He has left in the sands of history, as well as those that will be made in the future, then call the following number to receive information about this prophecy tour. Call 1 (423) 821-3635 for information and a brochure. I hope that if you have any interest to visit Israel that you will be able to join us on this exciting trip.

CONCLUSION

I believe that God's nation and people—Israel—have a wonderful future in store for them after the storm clouds of the tribulation are past. Some wayward Christian teach that national Israel is a historical "has been," and is finished in history. If this is the case, then Bible prophecy is obviously wrong. However, the Bible says she clearly has a future and world events will revolve around that tiny nation at the center of the earth (Ezek. 5:5). Bible prophecy is not wrong and we will be able to see during our November trip there that such is the case.

The world's focus already is upon Israel. God has preserved His people for a reason and it is not all trial and tribulation. History is progressing along the lines of God's ordained plan for Israel as we see God setting the stage in our own time for His great end-time drama. Come and visit the apple of God's eye and see for your self, how our Lord is bringing His chosen people back to the land that He owns and has given to them. Maranatha!

ENDNOTES