

ISRAEL: What is the proper attitude toward them?

Israel is coming under a lot of heat, from those of Islam, those of a secular humanism and from a number who are calling themselves Christians.

The more recent history of Islam and its connection with Hitler should explain part of the reason for heat from that source. After all, to this day, Hitler's book, "Mein Kampf" (My Struggle), is one of the best selling books in the Arab world.

Secular humanists will join forces and be easily persuaded by those who follow the spirit of this world. They will naturally join league with the Muslims in their hatred of the "descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob".

As far as the smaller percentage in the midst of those calling themselves Christians, I have heard the reason that the Jews rejected Jesus so now are no different to the rest of the world in God's eyes.

Grounds of approaching God

Biblically, the position of opposing Israel on the grounds of some Jewish rejection of Jesus in the first century A.D., is a false position.

Let's begin with this potential scene in heaven: The end of the ages has come and the time of the judgment of the nations when they will stand before God. We see those of some nation approach who have been worshipping Krishna and the host of deities associated with Hinduism. We can be sure to catch some of the words of condemnation that address the falseness of their whole system, idolatry being at the top of the list. If we considered it more, we would realize they were unable to find any ground of meeting God's approval in reliance upon their religion.

Next, we see those of Israel brought before the Judgment seat. With a little more attention we hear the Jew declare that he is standing upon the Law of Moses. He put his trust in Moses and followed him. (Note: We saw Jews saying the same thing to Jesus. Jesus' response showed approval of looking to Moses. He didn't condemn that,

Jesus condemned their failure to truly do what they were claiming. John 5:45-47) We might hear God saying something like, "Very well, I approve of what Moses wrote, it is good, holy and righteous. He spoke as my prophet and wrote my words. In this court of justice, I find no fault upon this position. I find no idolatry, nor immorality, nor impurity of any kind here. You meet my approval. The next point we must address is if you kept that pure and holy law. Uh oh! I think most of us know where that will end.

You see, these Jews' desire, their love, is not wrong. To not have such a love for God's word, which is what Moses' law is part of, is wrong. There are many who call themselves Christians who do not have either love or respect for God's holy law. Woe to them!

Overview of Jewish society

I have been studying the Jews for some time, and they are a diverse group. There are the devout religious practitioners called "Observant Jews." There are the middle of the road. They may not go around with that little round head-covering (kippah), but are concerned more with morality and decency. Then there are the secular who appreciate their historical past. Appreciation of their culture and common descent, though they have no real care about God. Finally, there are those who are the lowest of the low. They join league with the enemies of the Jews and do nothing but condemn their own people and sell them for a piece of bread.

The "Observant" Jews might have a lot in common with the New Testament "Saul of Tarsus." He was definitely "Observant" and was zealous for the law. He truly cared for God. That is why we found him coming into the New Testament persecuting the Christians. It took a special revelation from God to open his eyes to who the Messiah really was.

As I have been "observing" the "Observing Jews", I have noticed a strange mix. Elements of worldliness and elements of deep love for God. What

seems to stand out to me is their sincere zealotness. A zealotness that I can't even find among Christians.

For example: I have a copy of the book of Psalms. It is the Hebrew version published for Jews. It has seven division markers through it for a weekly reading cycle through the entire collection of Psalms. I would say I know of no Christians who would even desire to read that volume of the Scripture on a daily basis. On the other hand, I have heard some of these same "Observant Jews" using the title of deity as a vain expression. Violating the third commandment. Nonetheless, my evaluation would be that God has been at work among the Jews, preparing them for a time of truly turning to Him in truth and life.

Preparing for a new birth

For a moment I want you to consider the work of birth. Before the child is born, he spends nine months of growth and development in the womb of his mother. He is very human and is most certainly alive. The only missing element is that he has not come to the birth. All the groundwork has to be laid for that birth to take place. Before that birth, a godly man or woman will not count that developing child with contempt, but will value that child as precious. Such is Israel today. For that new birth to take place, the growing and preparing time in the womb must take place. From my observations of the growing "Observant Jews", God is doing a work preparing the way for their receiving Him.

The last days

I firmly believe we are standing on the brink of the end of the age. Christ's second coming is eminent. We read in the prophets that the inhabitants of Jerusalem will see a mighty, horrifying army coming upon it. As they behold this army approaching God gives a wonderful promise of speedy deliverance if they but call upon Him. The prophecy tells us they will. I have quoted the whole second chapter of Joel here. It describes that

army in great detail and the call upon Israel to turn to God for help when they see the army coming. I would encourage you to read the chapter paying attention to the details. I believe the passage is basically very literal:

1 Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; 2 A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. 3 A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. 4 The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. 5 Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. 6 Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. 7 They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: 8 Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. 9 They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. 10 The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: 11 And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? 12 Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: 13 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. 14 Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat

offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God? 15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: 16 Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. 17 Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? 18 Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people. 19 Yea, the LORD will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen: 20 But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done great things. 21 Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things. 22 Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. 23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. 24 And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil. 25 And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. 26 And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. 27 And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. 28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: 29 And also upon the servants and upon the

handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. 30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. 32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Joel 2

Another prophecy tells us there will be a terrible war in Israel. Half of Jerusalem will actually be killed and the enemy carrying them off into captivity. At that point, the Messiah will return and deliver them. The survivors will be instantly converted and will be holy before God. Their sins will be forgiven. Such a final conclusion to the birth, passing through the pangs of labor, finalizing all the preceding months of growth in the womb, as it were.

God has not cast off Israel forever. He has been working diligently with her preparing for what is to come. I have again quoted an extensive passage of just over three chapters from Zechariah which shows incredible details. I believe it is worth the time to carefully read. Again, it is incredibly literal in its descriptions. For example, consider there are those still living today who can trace their genealogy right back to King David. The Jews of certain lineages have meticulously keep records. How significant when we read the following:

1 The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. 2 Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. 3 And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. 4 In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness. 5 And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God. 6 In that day

will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. 7 The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah. 8 In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. 9 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. 11 In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. 12 And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; 13 The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; 14 All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.

1 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. 2 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. 3 And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. 4 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive: 5

But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth. 6 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. 7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. 8 And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. 9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

1 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. 2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. 4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. 5 And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. 6 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: 7 But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.

Zechariah 12:1-14:7

The following passage from Isaiah tells of what God will accomplish with Israel in the Day of the Lord:

2 In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent

and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. 3 And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: 4 When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. 5 And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. 6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain. **Isaiah 5:2-6**

Comfort or criticize

As if the previous considerations of the prophecies wasn't enough to hold Israel in a special light, another point needs to be considered. Among those belittling Israel, we find a notable attitude. In many ways, it is like the attitude Job's three friends showed. Job was suffering and his three friends didn't console him, but turned to criticizing and condemning. In the end, God appeared justifying Job and condemning his "condemning" friends.

In regards to this, look at the following from Ezekiel:

1 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, set thy face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them; 3 And say unto the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel, when it was desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity; 4 Behold, therefore I will deliver thee to the men of the east for a possession, and they shall set their palaces in thee, and make their dwellings in thee: they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk. 5 And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couchingplace for flocks: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. 6 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped with the feet, and rejoiced in heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel; 7 Behold, therefore I will stretch out mine

hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the heathen; and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD. **Ezekiel 25:1-7**

This chapter in Ezekiel continues with like judgments upon others for doing the same thing to Israel.

Finally, consider the example of Jeremiah in the book of Lamentations. I can think of no better tutorial for us here. That little book, which was actually a song of mourning, should open our eyes. Judah had rebelled against God and hardened its heart. God had appealed time and again, but eventually it was judged and carried into Babylonian captivity. The prophet Jeremiah had cried out a warning day and night. He didn't have the attitude toward these wayward, God-hardened Jews (the book of Jeremiah tells all about them) of "there you go, you got what you deserved!" Hey, they even tried to kill Jeremiah himself, but look at his attitude in Lamentations! He could still see the vestiges of beauty and remembered the precious, "what was" of a holy people. What's more, read these verses from the final chapter of Lamentation:

19 *Thou, O LORD, remainest for ever; thy throne from generation to generation.* 20 *Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, and forsake us so long time?* 21 *Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.*

Lamentations 5:19-21

Jeremiah loved them, he prayed for them and grieved with and for them. This indeed is the most Christian spirit.

The blessing and the curse

As if the previous had not been enough to direct us in the proper attitude toward Israel, consider the fear factor in God's curse or blessing upon those who curse or bless the descendents of Abram (Abraham):

1 *Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:* 2 *And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make*

thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 *And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.* **Genesis 12:1-3**

The heart of an apostle

The Apostle Paul grieved greatly in longing desire for the good of the Jewish people. Please carefully consider the following verse from Paul. I have chosen just a few verses sequentially found in the book of Romans:

1 *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,* 2 *That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.* 3 *For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:* 4 *Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;* 5 *Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.* **Romans 9:1-5**

1 *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.* **Romans 10:1**

25 *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles*



The Israeli Emblem

be come in. 26 *And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:* 27 *For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.*

Romans 11:25-27

In Romans 11:25, you might notice the, "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." As we look to the second coming of the Messiah, we must take note of this designation of the limiting time factor of "until." At the point of Gentile fulness, God's eyes will make a primary focus on Israel to fulfil Romans 11:26-27 as well as those passages we read from the Old Testament prophets.

Which spirit are we aligning with?

I have barely scratched the surface on the issue of how we hold and esteem Israel and the Jews. Literally, volumes could be written, but let me finish here with something more subjective. A matter of Spirit. If our spirit holds the attitude the men of this world are walking toward, we are wrong. If we do not grieve as Jeremiah grieved in Lamentations, we are spiritually sick. If we do not feel as the Apostle Paul felt in love for Israel, we are walking in a dangerous path. How much more so if we are like the children of Edom mentioned in the following Psalm:

7 *Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.* **Psalm 137:7**

Today the Muslims are literally doing this on the temple mount. Incredibly, they even deny the Temples of the Lord (Solomon's and the second that was standing when Jesus came) ever existed in Jerusalem. When they dig up archeological evidence of those Temples, they try to destroy it. They want to see Jewish Jerusalem leveled and see Muslim Jerusalem built in its place. How can we not be grieved? On the Temple mount, where the Islamic Dome of the Rock stands, there is a plaque that calls for the destruction of the state of Israel. Until Messiah returns, there will always be Hitlers. Where do you stand this day? Where will you be found on the Day of the Lord?