

GROWING IN GOD PODCAST



Special Episode – Prayer for Israel

Welcome to this Special Podcast.

I have had the question, “Why do you call this a Special Podcast?” This is the second one in not very many days that we have had which has been titled a Special Podcast, so let me just explain it to you. The reason for the title is because normally when I record a podcast, it takes approximately four weeks to get that podcast published because of the editing process that we go through. We have to also create show notes; we have to create a transcript; we have to review everything about the podcast itself, the recording, all of the editing. That’s just the reality of what it takes to get a podcast up and posted; it is about four weeks. So whenever you are listening to one of these podcasts, it was probably recorded approximately four weeks before you are hearing it. Now this Special Podcast that we are doing I plan to have up in a few days because of the urgency of the subject matter, very much like we did on the Special Episode for the Maui fire. So when we do a Special Episode, the reason for titling it that and handling it the way we do is so that we can interrupt our normal flow and schedule, and get this into your hands immediately; or as soon as possible, within a few days of having had recorded the message itself.

So this is a Special Episode, and it is entitled, *Prayer for Israel*. I am doing this because I am so burdened of late, I have been for a few weeks now, that as we begin to enter into the time of the Fall feasts and observances, we really need to have a focus of prayer on Israel and the Jewish people. I am bringing this to you as a real request, as a burden of my heart, to initiate intercession during this time. It is about three weeks from now that we will actually enter into the time of the Fall feasts and observances. When we talk about this time period, we are talking about the Day of Trumpets; the Days of Awe that are celebrated; the Day of Atonement; and the Feast of Tabernacles. As we go into this timeframe, which encompasses a little more than a month time period, I am believing to see many things happen for Israel and for the Jewish people worldwide.

It is a very special time for them. They are focused very much upon the Lord as they enter into each of these individual days and times that the Lord has specified through the Scriptures that should be kept. I know that we, as Christians, also should be really observing these days, because they are not just Jewish feasts, they are biblical feasts; God has called them out as a very special timeframe, as a window in time when He will meet His people. And as we are grafted in to the promises of God through Abraham, through Christ, then we ourselves, as Christian believers, should also have tremendous expectation to see much happen for us according to what is proclaimed in the Scriptures that shall take place during these times.

As we look forward to it, as Israel, as a Jewish people worldwide, as we as Christian believers enter in to the days of these observances, I encourage us especially to pray for Israel. The reason for that is because of the deep concern, as I talk to people in Israel, and as I track with what is going on there through the sources that I have; I think we should be concerned about some of the events that are taking place. We are seeing a great deal of political upheaval. It concerns me that in that political upheaval, we are seeing very similar spirits manifesting in anger and in division that we see throughout the rest of the world. And

I do not believe that the purpose that God has for Israel is for them just to follow the world's pattern, but instead to be setting an example and an illustration of something that the world should follow. That is always what God was looking to do through Israel, was to create an example of faith, an example of righteousness, an example of a walk with God that the nations could follow, and the individuals in those Gentile nations could observe them and follow.

When we see the tremendous political upheaval that is taking place, I feel like Israel is being affected and impacted by the same spirits that seem to be really devouring many nations in the earth, including America, Brazil, and many of the sheep nations that are to be moving in a different direction as we get closer to the days of the Kingdom. So I am concerned that we see a prayer to break and bring a difference, and a different spirit, during these days that we are getting ready to celebrate.

We see upheaval in the political arena. We see it over judicial reform, as has been very prevalent on the news, with tremendous protests almost bringing cities to a halt and stopping the normal flow of function within the state of Israel. There is a great deal of division that is manifesting over the relationship between the ultra-Orthodox, the Orthodox, and those who are not necessarily observant followers of Torah, because of the treatment that is provided for, and the financing and the support that is provided for, the ultra-Orthodox in their lifestyle. Things such as the fact that they do not have to go into the military, while everyone else feels like they are giving their lives and their families to protect and sustain the State of Israel; it is not required of many of them. These types of issues are beginning to really emerge in a division between the Israeli people to such an extent that there have actually been proposals floated that there be a breaking up of the state of Israel into two states. And I am not talking about the two-state solution that has been proposed surrounding Israel and the Arab nations. I am talking about a two-state breakup within Israel itself, so that there would be what is called a new State of Israel and a State of Judea.

Now, if you go back historically, we've been there, done that. This has been tried and it did not work. And I do not believe there is to be a division within Israel. I do not believe that Israel itself as a Jewish state is to break up into two Jewish states. So, this type of discussion is very concerning, and I think it should concern all of us; because what God is doing in the end days is something very specific and very special with Israel, and it is to be a reflection to the nations.

We also see the fact that there are new levels of violence that are beginning to take place in Israel, within Israel itself, within Jews and Arabs that are living together in the State of Israel. Also, we see areas of prejudice against other religions, and especially we see it with Christians. There is a battle that has been ongoing where one of the organizations that we give support to Israel through, the ICEJ, or the International Embassy of Christians in Jerusalem, has been being denied visas to their workers as religious workers; because there has been talk that the ICEJ is not being recognized as a religious or a Christian institution, and therefore, there is the possibility that they would not be given worker visas for religious workers. They, of course, have existed for many, many years and do tremendous work. This is why we support them. We support them through their work with Aliyah; this is where our finances are given through to help with Aliyah. We also give finances in support of the Haifa Home, which takes care of the Holocaust survivors and others of age and need now that are coming out of Ukraine. And to all of a sudden say that these are not religious workers, that it is not a Christian, recognized institution, this is very radically different than the approach that has happened.

To tell you the truth, part of my concern is not with my determination towards Israel, my faith towards Israel and what God is going to do for them, in them, and through them for not only Israel, but the

nations; but there are many Christians that I am concerned for that their faith is not as ingrained in the biblical mandates as some of our faith is, and therefore, they could lose faith. And a great deal of support that comes now into Israel in many areas – be it food and clothing, whether it be supporting widows and orphans, all manner of support, and support within the world to counteract the problem of antisemitism – is done through many Christian organizations. And it is that faith and support and force that is provided to Israel that should not be endangered right now. This is something that even Bruce and I on our last trip witnessed ourselves, riots against Christian gathering that were taking place for prayer at the Temple Mount; and this has increased and grown since the time of our return. It is very concerning to see this type of thing beginning to transpire.

There are a great deal of reports of clergy and ministry, as well as Christian tourists, that are being assaulted in the Old City of Jerusalem, being spat upon, or whatever. And this is just not what needs to be portrayed about Israel and the Jewish people, either through the government, or through Judaism itself. And it is not representing the bulk of the people in Israel, nor is it representing the bulk of synagogues and groups within Judaism. But you know how the news works: this is what's going to be seen, this is what's going to be heard. And people will begin canceling their tours to Israel, which bring a great deal of faith and finances to Israel, both in the Jewish families as well as in the Arab families that live in Israel proper.

So, many of these things are very concerning. And I know that besides what is happening internally, Israel is facing a growing anti-Semitism throughout the world. We see the news media turning very much against them. We see it in universities and different institutions in the United States, and we also recognize that the enemies of Israel herself are being emboldened by some of these issues and these actions that are taking place. So it is for these reasons that I am having this Special Episode of *Growing in God* that I want to get into your hands; and I just want you to please be in prayer with me and with many who are really in support of Israel.

What I would like to do is to read some of the Scriptures; because, again, I want to remember that our support of Israel is absolutely founded and grounded within the biblical text. It is not something that we are making up; it is not something that we are doing out of some sympathetic heart for what is going on. This, to me, is a mandate to the Gentile church in this age that we are to comfort, comfort His people, and we are to be part of what God is doing in bringing the Jewish people back to the land and seeing the land restored and blessed. It is for these reasons of the Word that we do what we are doing. Do we love the Jewish people? Yes. Do we see the benefit of Judaism in its relationship to Christianity and what it provides for us as believers? Absolutely. But the foundation that we are building everything upon is the Scriptures themselves. So I want to read some of those Scriptures. This does not have to be long, but I want it to be impactful.

In Jeremiah 31, starting at verse 33, it says, “‘But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,’ declares the Lord, ‘I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.’” We are yet to see this on a level that we are going to see it, that the Word of God is written on the hearts of the people; and as it is, it is going to bring a oneness. Verse 34 goes on to say, “‘They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, “Know the Lord,” for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,’ declares the Lord, ‘for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.’” There is a oneness that will exist in Israel amongst the Jewish people because of God placing His Word in their

hearts, because of Him forgiving their sin, forgiving their iniquity. They are going to come together in a oneness.

Verses 35-36 go on to say, “Thus says the Lord, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; the Lord of hosts is His name: ‘If this fixed order departs from before Me,’ declares the Lord, ‘then the offspring of Israel also will cease from being a nation before Me.’” These blessings that God is proclaiming are solidified before God. They are a covenant. They are His Word that He has given that these Words will be fulfilled, they will take place before our very eyes. And I think that as we pray, we need an intensity; an emotional intensity in our hearts and minds, in our spirits, as we pray. And I believe that that emotional intensity should be born out of a determination on our part that we will see with our eyes the fulfillment of these Words. Don’t put them off sometime in the future. This is a prayer of urgency. We are praying now that we see these Words fulfilled **now** before our eyes. We will see with our eyes, hear with our ears, the fulfillment of what God has spoken over His people. And I think that drive and emotion in us before God is what it is going to take to be an impact in the realm of spirit to see these things manifest.

I want to go to Ezekiel the thirty-sixth chapter. I may jump around a little bit through some of these verses, but I will begin at verses 22-23:

“Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord,” declares the Lord God, “when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight.””

This to me is such a key. Why do we believe as we believe for Israel, towards Israel, for the Jewish people? Because God has said it. God has said it, and He will fulfill it in a way that glorifies His name and vindicates the holiness, proves His holiness, proves that His Word is true, proves that every Word that God has said will be fulfilled because of God Himself – because He has stamped it with the authority of His name, because He has made the covenant by the oath of Himself to the nation and the people of Israel. And He will prove Himself among the nations. He uses this relationship that He has with Israel to prove Himself to all the earth.

If we remember, that was the prayer that Moses had in the wilderness, when God said, “Well, I am going to reject these people. I will make another nation out of you, Moses. I will create a new people out of you.” And Moses said, “Well, wait a minute, Lord. You are the one who said these things, and if You do not fulfill them, the nations are going to look and say that God is a God who cannot fulfill His Word.” And in this, God relented, and said, “I will fulfill My Word.” I believe that we should stand in this generation as Moses stood in his generation, and we should agree with what God Himself has said, that God, You will prove Yourself holy among the nations in their sight by what You do and what You accomplish in the fulfillment of Your Word over Israel, surrounding Israel, in Israel; what You do in their hearts, what You do in the land, and what You bring about as the fulfillment. And I think that, really, this is a sense we should have about all of the end-time events.

People get so worried about the Tribulation, and what leads up to the Kingdom of God coming into the earth. It sounds scary, and all these negative things look like they are going to take place. Don’t forget, the one thing that God is doing in the end time is just what He says here: He is going to make His name holy. He is going to prove Himself to be God. He is going to honor Himself. He is going to do it before

every eye, every nation, and they are going to see it and know that He Himself is God – there is no other. And He will bring about a faith through all of the world because people will observe by sight what He does in fulfilling His Word and His proclamation.

Verses 24-30 go on to say,

““For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God. Moreover, I will save you from all your uncleanness; and I will call for the grain and multiply it, and I will not bring a famine on you. I will multiply the fruit of the tree....””

It goes on to talk about all the blessings. But I want us to get this concept, because God in what He is doing, what He has planned to do from the very beginning in His relationship with Israel, it comes down to the fact that ““Then the nations will know that I am the Lord,” declares the Lord God, ‘when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight.’” When God fulfills His Word over Israel, then the nations will know that He is God.

And so He will come, as He begins in verse 24; as He gathers them out of the land, He will cleanse them. He will sprinkle them with water and they will be clean. He will take away their filthiness, He will take away their idols. Moreover, He is going to give them a new heart. He is going to put a new spirit within them. He is going to remove the heart of stone from their flesh, and He is going to give them a new spirit, and they are going to be able to walk in His statutes and be careful to observe His ordinances. Therefore, they will live in the land. And you know what? God does this as an example to the nations. What is He saying to the nations? He is saying, “Listen, I am going to cleanse you also. I am going to remove your idols. I am going to take away your filthiness. I am going to remove out of you the heart of stone, and I am going to replace it with a heart of flesh, and I am going to put a new spirit within you.” He is talking to the world. He is trying to show to the world what He plans to do for mankind as God. And when He puts a new spirit in our heart, we are going to be able to live in the land.

What a beautiful promise! Do you realize what that means in the day and age that we are living in? It is just like we are being consumed by the earth. It says in the Scriptures that the earth is polluted because of the wickedness of man; and we see that taking place. And yet, when He cleanses us and puts a new spirit in us, so that we observe His ways, His Word, and His ordinances, then it says we will be able to live in the land that He has given to the forefathers. And I believe very deeply in my heart that He is not just speaking to Israel. He is speaking to all of mankind.

In Ezekiel 11 it goes on at verse 17 to say, ““Therefore say, “Thus says the Lord God, ‘I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries among which you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.’”” He has given them the land. Verse 19 says, “““And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them.””” You see, we really have witnessed this in the last generation. We are celebrating this year 75 years of Israel being a state. God has done just what He said in verse 17, He is bringing them back to the land from all of the nations to which He scattered them. But there is more than that that He is doing. Verses 19-20 say, “““I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit

within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances to do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God.””””

You see what is happening here, He is going to give them one heart. Israel is not just to return to the land; they are to become one as they return to the land. And what is happening now with the division and the conflict and the violence is not the fulfillment of what God says here. God says He is going to give them a new spirit and a new heart, and they will be one; and they will walk in His statutes. Will there be a judicial reform? Yes, there will, because they will walk in His statutes and His ordinances, and be His people. And that will manifest, because, again, it is part of the promise that God has made to Israel. And He has done it so that He can show Himself alive and glorify Himself among all the nations, that we can all walk in His ways.

Remember the prophecies about the Gentiles, that the nations will stream up to Jerusalem to walk in His ways, to learn of His ways, and to keep His Word. They do that because they see what God has done for Israel His people. We need to contend to see it now with our eyes. Not another generation; this is not for another people. This is for now. It is happening now, and we should see the fulfillment of all of these Words now in these days of the Fall celebrations and feasts. The Fall ordinances should bring about the fulfillment of these Words.

One last Scripture in Jeremiah 32, verses 38-41:

“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. I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not 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. I will rejoice over them to do them good and will faithfully plant them in the land with all My heart and with all My soul.”

This is not just something that is happening, this is right now what God is doing with all of His heart and all of His soul. He is planting them in the land. He is bringing about the blessing to them that has been prophesied through all of these Words that we see. And we believe for them to be fulfilled now.

Just to end this, I would like to make a few points that we really clearly remember. We need to determine with an intensity that we are going to see these Words fulfilled with our eyes. They are not for another generation – they are happening now, they need to be finalized now.

Remember that Christian support of Israel is born out of our obedience in faith in the Scriptures, not rooted in Israel’s actions. Whatever is happening now, it does not change our stance, our faith, and our determination.

The ultimate fulfillment of the Word is God glorifying Himself, not just before Israel, but before all of the nations of the world. That is the end game. That is what we are looking to see. Therefore, our prayer is, “Lord, glorify Yourself through the fulfillment of your Word.” Amen.