

Notes:

ISRAEL AWARENESS

A TIME OF FAVOR--THE AGE OF GRACE

“See, I will beckon to the gentiles, I will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders.”

ISAIAH 49:22



“You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.”

Psalm 145:16



For the last 60 years Israel's reality has been harsh. Violence, resentment and anger are always present in their land. As God's chosen people their moral resolve has been tested time and time again. From the beginning they have been the target of torment and annihilation. Distraught and discouraged, they find it hard to see God's blessing, but God, speaking words of comfort, brings them a message of hope and restoration in His Word, and it is the calling of the Church, to help bring that message.

The Servant of the LORD and God's purpose for him. Isaiah 49: 1-7

1. God 'called, mentioned and made him' for His good purpose.--V. 2 & 3 > a speaking ministry and a display of splendor.

- He declares it to the distant nations and Islands! (Isaiah 49:1)
- They'll be a light for the Gentiles, bringing salvation! (Isaiah 49:6, Acts 13:47)

2. In spite of God's promise and encouragement, they feel rejected and defeated.—V. 3 > "I have labored to no purpose...for nothing, what is due me is in the LORD's hand."

- 'God is keeping back from us what is due us', mainly justice, because of their treatment by the surrounding nations during the exile, and the nation to which they were exiled. (Amos Ch.1)
- Yet God reminds them who He is and who they are! (Is. 49:5, 7)

Israel struggles with Gods promise to restore and save. Isaiah 49:8-18

1. God says He will help them and make them a "covenant for the people [Gentiles]". To restore the land, set the captives free and bring out those in darkness! (Isaiah 49:8-9, 1 Peter 2:9, Ephesians 5:8)

- He will "turn the mountains into roads and the highways will be raised up." He is making a way for the exiles to return! They will come from the north, west and other regions. (Isaiah 49:11-12)
- The earth rejoices because of God's favor toward Israel (v.13)!
- In the midst of God's comforting words Israel struggles with their feelings of rejection and abandonment (V.14). As well as their hurt, mixed with apprehensiveness. (V. 21).
- God shows His faithfulness and His heart—"I will not forget you! I have engraved you on the palm of my hands; your walls are ever before me." (V. 15-16)

A "Time of favor" and the 'age of grace'; God's vessel to bring comfort, hope and healing to His people, Israel. Isaiah 49:22-23, 2 Corinthians 5:16-6:2

1. "I will beckon to the Gentiles, I will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders." (V. 22)

- What kind of people would have the heart or desire to physically help the Jews come back to Israel other than the church, which mainly consists of Gentiles spread thorough out the nations.
- 2 Corinthians 6:2, "I tell you now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation." God is reconciling His people today! He is rising up His banner to the nations and bringing His people back.

Since God is raising up a people in the church from all the nations of the world; to bring them back, so they (Israel) will know that "I, the LORD, am your Savior, your redeemer..."; how do we minister to such a hurting people knowing their current struggle with God and their feelings of abandonment as well as the baggage of history that comes with the 'Christian' Gospel?

- 2 Corinthians 5:16, 19, "So from now on we regard no one from the flesh...God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, *not counting men's sins against them.*"
- This is the age of grace; God is no longer counting men's sins against them. Let's remind them of God's love for them not their sin. We must encourage them to revisit their faith and scriptures. This **will** make them wise for salvation through faith in Messiah! (2 Tim. 3:14-15)

Conclusion: The Jewish heart is perplexed with God. Their history is littered with hardship, persecution and suffering due to their relationship with God as well as their sin. They need mercy, love and comfort. God longs for them to know their Messiah, and we have been given the privilege and challenge to do just that. *Is. 40:1-2, "Comfort, comfort my people says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, and that her sin has been paid for."*