

ONE NEW MAN

THE BEGINNING OF RECONCILIATION

Apology

God's ultimate purpose in sending us the long-promised Savior through the bloodline of King David is to build up His eternal royal family that will surround His throne and serve Him forever. The Scriptures call this divine family various names including the "Bride of Messiah," the "Body of the Lord," the "Ekklesia (called-out) Church," and more. Of these marvelous apostolic revelations, the term ONE NEW MAN from Ephesians 2:15 addresses specifically God's plan of gathering together Gentiles and Jews into a brand-new kind of humanity whose identity is not primarily that of Jewish or Gentile origins, but a new creation that draws its life from Messiah Himself. This Jewish-Gentile oneness in Messiah's love is a oneness of Spirit and of purpose, and this is the goal of this ministry.

Yet, before the Church can fully understand Israel's place in God's plan, past present and future, and before Israel can fully enter into the full embrace of Messiah, the two must reconcile as both failed the Lord and failed one another. According to scripture, the nation of Israel defiled itself and their God-given land with spiritual compromise, moral uncleanness, and hardness of heart. The Church too abandoned her devotion to Israel's Hebrew Messiah by grazing in fields of secular humanism, pagan idolatries, and man-made non-biblical traditions. Both groups need healing and restoration of heart and mind, and both must extend grace and forgiveness to one another in order to be whole.

The Word of God calls His people to return to their first love and to their first works. As far as Israel is concerned, while all our prophets from Moses to Malachi chastised our people with the sword of God's Word, we find no clearer charge than the painful admonition of the prophet Ezekiel. Prophesying from the Babylonian Exile to the nation of Judah after the destruction of the First Temple and the national trauma of shame, defeat, and exile, Ezekiel, who saw a greater exile still on the

horizon, addressed Israel's calling, failure, struggle and ultimate healing. He prophesied:

“Son of man, when the house of Israel was living in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their deeds; their way before Me was like the uncleanness of a woman in her impurity. Therefore, I poured out My wrath on them for the blood which they had shed on the land, because they had defiled it with their idols. Also, I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the lands ... When they came to the nations where they went, they profaned My holy name, because it was said of them, ‘These are the people of the Lord; yet they have come out of His land.’

But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went. 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. And 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.’” (Ezekiel 36:16-23).

This Scripture assures us that (1) Israel bore the righteous chastisements of God throughout our painful history. (2) That God WILL eventually restore Israel in spite of her failures. (3) That God WILL do so for His own name's sake. And (4) that the ultimate purpose of this miraculous epic national healing is to promote God's own holiness and glory among the nations of the world. One can say that Israel, through her victories and disappointments, ups and downs, blessings and curses, is God's "Marketing Plan," and especially now at the end of this age of grace.

These words of Ezekiel stand as a divine witness pointing to both the failures as well as to the eventual and unavoidable healing of God's nation, Israel. We have become unclean and defiled the Land He gave us as an inheritance. Consequently, and according to His Word, our Heavenly Father evicted us from the Land of Promise and scattered us

among the nations of the world for a long and torturous exile. And even in exile, according to Ezekiel, our presence as the “exiled people of God” continued to profane His holy name. Israel’s very dispersion is the proof of God’s righteous verdict against us, and of our urgent need of His miraculous healing grace. The fact that Jewish people are born today in San Francisco, Johannesburg, or Rio de Janeiro instead of in the Land that was promised us by our God, spells out one thing and one thing only: God’s promised and just chastisements. As it is written, **“For whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.”** (Proverbs 3:12).

According to the prophetic Word we, the nation of Israel, have forsaken God’s covenant, silenced the message of His prophets, and replaced His Word with man-made traditions and practices for millennia. During the years of our exile, scattered among the nations of the world, our presence was a witness of God’s righteous judgments on the one hand, and His faithfulness to His great promises of restoration on the other hand. According to His Word, our Heavenly Father not only sustained us by His mercies, keeping His side of the Covenant, but also gathered us back to His Land in the fulness of time.

Israel, the very nation chosen and fashioned to represent God to the world as an example of His purpose and His blessings, missed the mark and faded into a long and painful exile soon after giving birth to the promised Savior. As Israel was “exporting” the Lord’s Spirit and Word to the pagan nations through the ministry of the early apostles of the Lamb, our national life and sovereignty died and were buried in the graveyard of the nations. And while in birthing the Messiah Israel probably reached its highest calling, we failed to be the people God called us to be. The only scriptural remedy to reenter the graces of God and the fellowship of His saints is repentance. Therefore, as a native-born Israeli and a disciple of Jesus the Messiah, I acknowledge our national failure and ask the forgiveness of the people of God everywhere.

It is my conviction that God is drawing Israel and the Church into the ultimate reality of the One New Man as we draw nearer to the end of the age. This oneness is not one of gender, status, doctrine, or race.

Rather, it is a oneness of Spirit and of purpose; a oneness that a person must be “Born Again” into while being “Grafted,” intentionally and systematically, into God’s family as a wild olive branch is grafted into God’s cultivated Olive Tree. This ultimate oneness requires reconciliation of the Gentile and the Jew in the love of God, and for reconciliation to have its full effect, both groups must humble themselves, acknowledge their respective failures, and receive wholeheartedly the beautiful gift of forgiveness from God and from each other. Let it be so in our generation.

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