

ISRAEL: YESTERDAY, TODAY, & FOREVER (Properly Interpreting Israel)

The Prussian Emperor Frederick would often test his chaplain in matters of theological questions. However, he did not want long-drawn-out dialogue or answers. He wanted simple answers that he could comprehend quickly. One day he asked his chaplain if he could give simple and succinct evidence for the truth of the Bible. In fact, he asked if he could provide this evidence in just ONE word. The chaplain said he could do this. “What is this magical word?” Frederick asked. The chaplain responded, “Israel”.

Israel is a fascinating place with much diversity and background.

Why is the land of Israel so special? Consider the following:

- It is the land of the Bible!
- Israel is the land of promise. God promised this land to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants forever (cf. Gen. 12:1-3, 7; 13:15,17; 15:7,18; 17:8; 26:3-4; 28:13; 35:12).
- This is the land of the prophets and the apostles.
- This is the land of King David and the kings.
- The temple was located there in the special place of God’s own choosing (cf. Deut. 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26, etc.).
- This land is said by Scripture to be the center of the world (cf. Ezek. 5:5, 38:12).
- Israel is the central player in prophecy, in terms of the nations of the world.
- Christ was born in Israel, carried out His ministry in Israel, died in Israel, was resurrected in Israel, and will come back again to Israel.
- The Church began in Israel on the Day of Pentecost.
- Israel will be the place where Christ will establish His kingdom headquarters in the Millennium.
- It is called the glorious land in Dan.11:41.

- Israel is repeatedly stated to be uniquely GOD’S LAND (cf. Ezek. 36:5, Joel 3:2).

In Deut. 7:8, it says the LORD chose Israel because He loves Israel. We might ask WHY did God love her, but we are not told. The answer is simply because He wanted to. God is God, and it is His prerogative to do as He pleases (cf. Ps. 115:3). God answers to no one! Of all the nations in the world, only Israel is called THE CHOSEN NATION.

In Jeremiah 31:3, God says to Israel: ***“I have loved you with an everlasting love”***. When our heart is in tune with God’s heart, we love what He loves. If we love what God loves, then we too will love Israel.

Rightly Dividing the Word of God

When it comes to Israel (as well as all doctrine), a proper interpretation of Scripture is very important.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV)

15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth**.

Rightly dividing literally means *“to cut straight”*. Paul was a tentmaker and in order to make a good tent, he had to cut the material straight. There are proper divisions in the Word of God. To rightly divide the Word is to handle it correctly and accurately. It is to make proper distinctions. It is to be accurate, consistent, and precise in the interpretation of it.

Key Distinctions in Scripture:

- There are **distinctions** between the pre-fall world and the world after the fall (cf. Gen. 3:17-19).
- There are **distinctions** between the pre-flood world and the world after the flood (cf. 2 Pet. 3:5-6).
- There are **distinctions** between the dispensation of law and the dispensation of grace (cf. Jn. 1:17).
- There are **distinctions** between the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God (cf. 1 Cor. 10:32).

If one does not make the proper interpretive distinctions in the Bible the inevitable result is a **WRONGLY** dividing of the Word. Rightly dividing the Word means getting Israel **RIGHT**! God cannot be done with Israel because that would make God out to be a liar and to make such a charge is **MOST SERIOUS**! Better get Israel right or you will be shown to be the **LIAR**!

“...Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar.” (Romans 3:4).