

# Anchor Point 1

## Supplement to Fireside Chat, Jerusalem, O, Jerusalem

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*God covenanted to restore us even before He created us. Jane Hansen, Fashioned for Intimacy  
For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through  
the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. Romans 5:19  
He remembers His covenant forever, the word which He commanded, for a thousand generations,  
the covenant which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac, and confirmed it to Jacob for a  
statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant. Psalm 105:8-10*

### God's Eternal Plan

Long before time began, we were in the mind of God, chosen in Christ. His intent from the beginning was for a creation that would reflect the beauty and glory of Heaven, and for a people with whom He would have a loving intimate relationship.

- In this place of perfection man would be given a freewill.
- Love could never be demanded.
- It would be man's choice to love and trust in the goodness of the creator.
- It is the foundation on which intimacy lives.

The unfolding of the creation story began in a place of perfection called Eden. There God created two people, a man, Adam and a woman, Eve, and placed them in the Garden. He blessed them, telling them to be fruitful and multiply. They were invited into an intimate relationship with the One who created them to be His kingdom agents to rule, to reign having dominion, *radah*, over all creation.

The one thing God reserved for Himself was a tree that stood in the midst of the Garden. They were free to partake of all others, but not the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the midst of the beauty and perfection that was the Garden, came one who intended to kill, steal and destroy what God had purposed. Satan, with great cunning, led Adam and Eve to question the goodness of God.

- They wondered, "What is God withholding in the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil?"
- "If we partake, will we then be like Him?"

And so, they rebelled against the one thing God forbade. They ate. Sin entered. Perfection marred. As a consequence of rebellion, Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden. Only a pure life offered in sacrifice would atone for sin and restore the broken relationship. God's plan before the foundations of the world would not be thwarted.

Before Satan and the great deception that would bring sin into the world, God had conceived a redemptive plan. "God covenanted to restore us even before He created us" (*Fashioned for Intimacy*, page 31). It was foreordained before the foundation of the world (I Peter 1:20) that sin would require the atoning sacrifice of the blood of a lamb without spot or blemish. Without the shedding of blood

there can be no remission, forgiveness, of sin, because God had stated that “life is in the blood” (Leviticus 17:11). Only One could satisfy the demands of this law for the sins of the world and that was God’s son, His only Son, Jesus.

## **The Abrahamic Covenant**

Genesis 12 describes the man, Abram, through whom God would work His plan to bring about the restoration of all that was lost in the Garden before the fall. Abram was obedient to God’s word to *Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house.* (Genesis 12:1). Romans 4:3 says, *Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.* When God called Abram, He gave him 7 promises. (Genesis 12:2, 3)

- *I will show you a land.*
- *I will make you a great nation.*
- *I will bless you.*
- *I will make your name great.*
- *I will bless those who bless you.*
- *I will curse those who curse you.*
- *In you all the nations of the earth will be blessed.*

In Genesis 15, God again comes to Abram to reaffirm that he will be a great nation of many peoples and then in verse 7 God speaks to him regarding the land. *I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it.* Abram asks God, verse 8 *Lord God, how can I know that I will inherit it?* He wants to know how committed is God to what He has just told Abram. **The answer to his question is covenant.**

- Covenant is an agreement entered into between two parties with the power of mutual relationship at its core.
- In ancient times it was initiated by a stronger party to a weaker one.
- It is legally and spiritually binding with a high degree of accountability.
- The Hebrews actually described the making of a covenant as “cutting covenant”.

In Genesis 15 God instructed Abram to bring a three-year old heifer, goat, ram, turtledove and a young pigeon. He was told to slaughter the animals, cut them in half and make a pathway of blood through the carcasses. In ancient covenants the two parties walked through as a way of saying, “Let this happen to me if I do not honor what we have agreed to.” The blood ratified the covenant and if the covenant is broken, a blood sacrifice is required. God cut covenant with Abraham for the land and the people.

But God knew there would never be a people who would be able to remain faithful to keep covenant with Him. So, He caused a deep sleep to fall upon Abram. And *behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed through those pieces* (Genesis 15:17). The Lord, Himself, passed through alone. Honoring this covenant was the sole responsibility of God. Keeping this covenant would

never depend on the faithfulness of Abraham or his descendants. The covenant that God made with him and his descendants was

- Unconditional
- Irrevocable
- Everlasting.

|| *For the gifts and callings of God are irrevocable.* Romans 11:29

God confirmed His promise in Genesis 17:7-8,

|| *And I will establish My Covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting Covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. Also, I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.*

The same Covenant of God with Abraham that promised a Savior to the world through His seed also promised the territory of Israel to Abraham's physical descendants (Israel the Church and Last Days: Asher Intrater and Dr. Dan Juster page 126)

**So, the Jews and the land of Israel were God's Sovereign choice.** Because it is His to give. He confirmed it again through Isaac and Jacob. The understanding of the unconditional, irrevocable, everlasting covenant is a foundational truth that has never been rescinded, replaced or fulfilled by another, not even the Church!

## A Different Kind of Covenant

Five hundred years after God made His Covenant with Abraham, He brought Moses up to Mt. Sinai and spoke to him through the Mosaic Covenant. *Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people, for all the earth is Mine* (Exodus 19:5).

However, this was conditional, based upon the nation of Israel meeting the requirements of the law. Along with the promise of blessing in this second covenant came a warning about the consequences of disobedience: *Then the Lord will scatter you among all nations, from one end of the earth to the other* (Deuteronomy 28:64).

## A Conflicted History

The Old Testament records the conflicted history of the Jewish people. Even though Israel broke that second conditional Covenant with God and experienced the punishment promised, God said He would always honor His everlasting, unconditional Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and be faithful to keep promises made thousands of years ago!

Prophet after prophet spoke of the time of both spiritual and physical restoration: for the Jewish people, for the land of Israel, and for the city of Jerusalem.

**The first destruction of Israel at the hands of the Babylonians resulted in 70 years of exile.** The Jews would return, for God had promised that a stump would remain after being cut down (Isaiah 6:13b). In

Isaiah 11:1 *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The stump was the house of David; the Rod and the Branch were Jesus, the son of David and the root of Jesse. Through Him would come the restoration of all things.*

*Yet, in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them or abhor them so as to destroy them completely, breaking my covenant with them. I am the LORD their God. But for their sake I will remember the covenant with their ancestors whom I brought out of Egypt in the sight of the nations to be their God. I am the LORD. Leviticus 26:44-45*

*As you have been an object of cursing among the nations oh Judah and Israel, so will I save you and you will be a blessing! Zechariah 8:13*

## **A New Covenant**

Standing on the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem, Jesus wept as He foresaw all that was to come (Luke 19:41-44). To the religious community from that place in the city He declared, *You will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord'* (Luke 13:15).

The religious leaders had missed their day of visitation. Jesus was crucified and the requirement of the law was met as the blood of the perfect Lamb was poured out for the sins of the world. Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension reversed all that was lost in Eden. In Heaven, the work was completed, but on earth, there were many promises to Abraham yet to be fulfilled. Satan was determined to thwart the plan of God.

In 66 AD, the Jews rebelled against Roman rule. The Temple was destroyed, the priesthood ended and with it the sacrificial system. Over one million Jews were killed, one hundred thousand enslaved, leaving a tiny remnant in the land. **This second destruction of Israel lasted for 1900 years.**

In the last revolt in 132 AD, led by the Jewish leader bar Kochba, the Romans salted the land in an attempt to prevent it from producing life:

- Wanting to forever destroy any Jewish connection to the land, they renamed the land Syria Palestina.
- It is the Latin form of Israel's ancient enemy, Philistines, from which the name of Palestine is derived.

## **A History in Conflict**

During the next nineteen centuries, the land of Israel would change hands ten times. Nevertheless, there was a continued presence of small pockets of poor religious Jews living in the land. Often the battle for control was between Muslims and Christian Crusaders. Jerusalem became the third holiest city to Muslims, even though it is not mentioned one time in the Qur'an.

During their first conquest of the Holy Land in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Muslims built the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa mosque on the same site as the first and second Temples in Jerusalem. The golden dome was built to commemorate Muhammed's "Night Ride". On that night he claimed to have ascended to the 7<sup>th</sup> Heaven, thereby establishing Islam's sole ownership of the Temple Mount and Jerusalem.

Since that time Jerusalem remains one of the most contested pieces of real estate in the world. As such, it continues to play center stage in the unfolding of God's plan. The central issue is: Who will be worshipped as the Most High God!

Despite the ongoing battle the sons and daughters of Abraham never lost their dream of God's covenant promise.

## **Fertile Soil for Christian Anti-Semitism**

By the end of the first century, Gentile believers outnumbered believing Jews. Church leadership transferred to gentiles. No longer was it centered in Jerusalem, but moved to gentile cities of Antioch, Alexandria and Rome. Ultimately, Rome became the center of Christianity.

Many of the Church Fathers believed that God had cast aside Israel and the Jews. According to their teachings, Israel (the Jewish people and the land) had forfeited its place as the chosen people of God because they denied Jesus. The Church, then replaced Israel. Written Church Liturgy reflected the disconnect from our Judaic roots. To reinforce this position, Scripture was re-interpreted transferring the prophetic call on Israel to the Church. The evidence cited to verify the doctrine of "Replacement Theology" was:

- The destruction of the Temple
- The unproductivity of the land, the loss of the ancient language, the scattering of the Jews to the far corners of the earth
- The Muslim control of Jerusalem
- The scorn ascribed to the name "Jew"

As the Church moved away from our Jewish roots, the **disconnect gave way to judgement, and judgement gave way to loathing of the Jew**. This shift in the early Church provided fertile soil in which anti-Semitism grew.

Down through the ages, cycles of persecution against the Jews continued. In the 1880s, there was a marked increase in violence against Jews, particularly in Russia and eastern Europe. Jews began to look to their ancient homeland as a refuge. A movement back to the land, called "Making Aliyah", began with groups of Jews purchasing Israel's mosquito-infested swamp lands from absentee Arab landowners at inflated prices. The land, as described by Mark Twain, "**sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies**". Slowly, life began to come alive in the land as returning Jews drained the swamps, reclaimed the soil and farmed the land.

|| *But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. Jeremiah 23:3*

In 1914, World War I broke out. The sovereign hand of God moved in the events brought on by war. They set the stage for the establishment of the Jewish State and the fulfillment of prophecies concerning the restoration of the Jews back to the land of covenant.

- As the war raged on Jewish financiers answered the call from the British to help fund the desperately depleted war chest.
- Jewish Chemist, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, gave the British the formula for synthetic acetone desperately needed in manufacturing explosives.
- The British government, at that time, was led by Evangelical Christians who believed the Old Testament scriptures of the restoration of the Jews back to their ancient homeland.
- Theodore Herzl's Zionist Movement, birthed in 1897, calling for a National Jewish homeland, continued to gain momentum in the Jewish and Christian world.

For four hundred continuous years the Muslim Ottoman Turks controlled the land. In 1917 victory for the allies was on the horizon. With the impending fall of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, the future of millions of square miles would be decided by the victors. British Foreign Secretary, Lord Alfred Balfour, on behalf of the British government wrote the **Balfour Declaration** promising the creation of a national homeland for the Jews.

In 1920 the victorious allies met in San Remo, Italy and formally placed oversight of Palestine under the British and charged them with the responsibility to see that the Balfour Declaration was carried out. Two years later it was confirmed by the international community. *(See further Aglow teaching on the Legal Foundation for Establishing Israel)* Many Arab nations would also be carved from that landmass.

However, after the war ended, for the next 30 years, the new pro-Arab British government thwarted the establishment of the Jewish State. **But God's purposes would not be withheld.** He had spoken through the Old Testament prophets again and again that He would restore the Jews back to their ancient homeland. Jeremiah 16:14–15; 23:3, 7–8; 29:14; 31:7–8

(The information in Anchor Point One was compiled by Sandy Wezowicz, Israel Education Director)