

The Significance of Israel 1980

by Lance Lambert

Lance Lambert emphasizes the miraculous significance of Israel's survival and return as a fulfillment of biblical prophecy and God's active involvement in history.

Duration: 1:16:28

Scripture: Psalm 83:2-5, Psalm 102:12, Jeremiah 31:35-37, Ezekiel 38:4, Ezekiel 39:2

Topics: "Israel"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses a vision from the book of Daniel in which a son of man is given dominion and a kingdom that will never be destroyed. The preacher then connects this vision to the rise and fall of various kingdoms throughout history, including Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, and modern democratic societies. The preacher emphasizes that God has a time for every kingdom and political system, and when that time is up, it will disappear. The sermon also highlights the continuous attempts to destroy the nation of Israel and suggests that the interest in Israel is indicative of the storms or better weather that may come upon the earth.

Transcript

I would like to read a few verses in one of the psalms, the hundred and second psalm, psalm one hundred and two. I would like to read from verse twelve. But thou, O Lord, wilt abide forever, and thy memorial name unto all generations.

Thou wilt arise and have mercy upon Zion, for it is time to have pity upon her. Yea, the set time is come, for thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and have pity upon her dust. So the nations shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth, thy glory.

For the Lord hath built up Zion, he hath appeared in his glory. I would like this evening to speak upon the significance of Israel today. The presence of Israel on the world scene today is no small miracle.

Their survival as a people, their return from the far east, the far west, the far north, the far south, from at least eighty-seven different nations, is a miracle in itself of no mean order. That they have survived four thousand years of conflict and battle as a people, and are still distinguishable, easily distinguishable, amongst the nations as a nation. That they have returned to the land from the four corners of the earth, all is a miracle of no mean order.

The rebirth of Hebrew is in itself unique in the annals of human history. There has never in the history of mankind been a language which has died and become merely a liturgical language for some one thousand eight hundred years, and then been revived as the spoken language of a virile, volatile nation. The battle that has been on in the last years for the survival of Welsh and the preservation of Welsh, the preservation of Gaelic, both Scots Gaelic and Irish Gaelic, the preservation, the battle for the preservation of the Basque language and these other languages, has been over a language that has been in danger of falling out into disuse.

But it has never, none of these languages have ever ceased to be the spoken language of the home and hearth. Hebrew ceased to be the spoken language of home and hearth. It became the liturgical language of worship in the synagogue.

And then, after one thousand eight hundred years, it has been reborn as the language of a contemporary, modern nation. The fact that one man and one man alone was basically and substantially responsible for this revival of spoken Hebrew is in itself a miracle. The recreation of the Jewish state is also a miracle of no mean order.

Twice this nation has lost its national institutions, its national territory, its national capital, its centre of spiritual life, and twice it has had it restored. All these are factors that constitute no mean miracle. And when we add to that the survival, the triumph of this little nation of three and a half million people, surrounded by one hundred and fifty million hostile Arab peoples, it is no small miracle.

Now, if I were to leave it at that alone, it would surely constitute some significance. But if we add to all of that the prophetic Word of God, uttered at least some two thousand years ago in the most cases, which in a most detailed manner has forecast and predicted not only the exile of this people and the loss of their national institutions and territory, but in the end the recreation of their state and their national institutions, the restoration of their national territory, and the restoration of their national capital, we have a miracle that is supreme. It is not as if God has spoken in some abstract, vague manner.

There are prophecies which we could spend the next hours looking into in detail. God has not just spoken some kind of abstract, loose word, but He has spoken specifically, in detail, in a way that whilst it may have had a partial fulfilment in the return from Babylon and, for instance, in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., was never exhaustively fulfilled until our own generation. But we have been the witnesses of a lateral fulfilment of specific and detailed prophecies.

I have said in many places, and I would like to repeat it this evening, that if God had said about the Welsh people that they would be dispersed into the four corners of the earth, and that there they would in some remarkable way survive, if the Welsh language ceased to be spoken as the language of home and hearth, of school and university, but became only the language of hymnology in Welsh chapels scattered throughout the world wherever these Welsh folks had been dispersed, and if after 2,000 years they were brought back to Wales again, and Welsh again was reborn as their language and their national institutions and capital were restored and the whole world would call it a miracle of supreme significance, if God had furthermore spoken to them in Welsh 2,000, 3,000 years before saying, this and this and this and this will happen and then this and this and this will be returned, would we not consider that the Welsh people were unique and that in some way God was speaking through this little nation to the nations of the world? Yet this is precisely what God has done with the Jewish people. We are 4,000 years old, the oldest people on record. We have had a battle that has been continuous for 4,000 years.

No other nation has been subjected to the same systematic attempt to liquidate, to destroy, to assimilate, to undermine as the Jewish people. But after 4,000 years, the Jewish people are back in their homeland, back with their national territory, back with their national capital, Jerusalem, and back with their own national government. It is a miracle.

It cannot be just swept under the carpet. Those who call this a political accident and cannot accept that the Word of God has spoken so specifically about this nation must surely be embarrassed by what God has been doing. I myself would find it a cause of acute embarrassment if I had tried to say over the years that there was no future for the Jewish people and then suddenly 1948 the state was recreated in its national homeland, a thing that has never happened in the history of mankind before, and that their language was now a spoken language again of that nation, and then in 67 when their capital was finally reunified and restored to them, and then in war after war they not only survived but triumphed, I would find this whole thing an acute embarrassment.

I am told that God doesn't speak specifically. I am told that only when He says, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, then He means specifically what He says. But when He talks about fear not, for I am with thee, I will gather thee from the east and from the west, I will say to the north, give up, and to the south, keep not back, bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the end of the earth, He doesn't mean it.

This, I am told, was physically and literally fulfilled in the return from Babylon. When did they ever come from the south and the west? You've only got to look at your Bible to see that Babylon was due east of the holy land, and they came back from the east, and the great trade routes came in via the north. When they tell me that the ends of the earth were the Caucasian mountains, modern Armenia, I understand that, but what about the western end of the world? The western end of the world in Isaiah's day was Gibraltar.

When do we hear of any of them coming back from Gibraltar, or Spain, or the North African coast on the Atlantic side? We don't hear of such a thing, but we're told, don't, don't, you mustn't take God so literally as that. It's poetic. When God says they come from the east and the west, and the north and the south, He means from the east and the north.

The rest is poetic license. If we accept this principle of poetic license, and God just speaking in an abstract manner, what else has God said that is poetic license? Maybe when He says, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, maybe it's not so clear as that. Maybe it's not so specific as that.

Maybe there's a bit of poetic license in it. Where shall we end? Seventy years ago, there was no possibility of a Jewish state in Palestine, in the Holy Land. It was the days of the Ottoman Empire, and although it was called the sick man of Europe, nobody in their right mind would have ever conceived of a Jewish state if they did not believe in the Word of God.

Thirty-eight years or forty years ago, in 1940, who could have conceived of a Jewish state being recreated in the Holy Land? At that time, the Nazi terror was at its height, and just at that point, the whole great machinery of Adolf Hitler's demonic final solution of the Jewish problem was being conceived and planned and was about to be put into action. In that final solution, two-thirds of European Jewry were to be liquidated in the concentration camps of Nazi-occupied Europe. Who, forty years ago, could have conceived that today there would be a Jewish army with Jewish generals, Jewish commander-in-chief, a Jewish cabinet, a Jewish prime minister, a Jewish president, a Jewish state with a Jewish house of parliament? Who would have conceived it? But Christians, simple enough and silly enough, in the eyes of

the world, to believe God's Word.

If God has been so specific about this people, and at the end of time, in spite of their unbelief, in spite of their blindness, and in spite of their sinfulness and failing, has yet wrought miracle after miracle after miracle, what is the significance of Israel today? I have already made some reference to the fierce battle through the ages over Israel. All through history, there has been a systematic attempt from without and from within to destroy this nation. For some four thousand years almost, this battle has continued.

Yet God said in Jeremiah and chapter thirty-one, as it is recorded there, and verse thirty-five to thirty-seven, Thus saith the Lord, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea so that the waves thereof roar, the Lord of hosts is his name. If these ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. Thus saith the Lord, if heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath them, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord.

How do people who tell me that the Jewish people are under the irrevocable wrath of God understand this word? Oh, all right then, let's take it that it is the spiritual Israel of God, those redeemed by God. But it seems to me that here at the point when the prophet was speaking words of judgment and words of doom and words of condemnation, then he spoke this word. Don't think that when God judges this people, they will be cast off forever.

They shall never cease from being a nation so long as there is a sun and stars and a moon and a sea. God's word has been fulfilled. This people have never ceased from being a nation.

Even when scattered to the ends of the earth for 1,800 years and losing all their national institutions, still they have not ceased from being a nation. God has said in another place, in Psalm 83, Psalm 83 and verse 2 to 5, these words. Here is a word of knowledge.

For though, I'll read from the beginning, from verse 1, O God, keep not thou silence. Hold not thy peace and be not still, O God. For though thine enemies make a tumult, and they that hate thee have lifted up the head, they take crafty counsel against thy people and consult together against thy hidden ones.

They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. This is what is behind the systematic attempt over 4,000 years to destroy this nation. It is culminating in our own day, in movements that will end in alliances and confederations of nations, in military alliances, to destroy this little nation from off the face of the earth.

Those attempts, they would take all of this evening to go through. Whether it was Egypt and Pharaoh's edict, let every man child be drowned. Or later, let them be put into slave labour and driven into the ground.

Or whether it was Babylon with its policy to deport the whole people thousands of miles east and then break up their community life and scatter them all over the place. Or whether it was the Assyrians that impaled thousands upon stakes all round Samaria and in the northern kingdom of Israel. Or whether it was Greece and that arch type of the Antichrist, Antiochus IV, called Epiphanes, outshining of God, who thought he was God manifest in the flesh, and who came against the Jewish people because he had this great scheme to unite the whole eastern Mediterranean into a kind of economic union of nations in which

they would speak the same language, worship the same way, live the same way, have an economic and commercial union that would rule out the possibility and cause of war.

And everyone followed him. He was a democrat of democrats. He was given the freedom of Athens, conferred upon him as a recognition of what a fine, far-thinking, broad-minded man he was.

But in the Mediterranean, there was one people that stood out like a sore thumb. They wouldn't eat Gentile food. They wouldn't dress in a Gentile way.

They wouldn't play games and indulge in sport in the Greek manner. They didn't even like to speak Greek, if they could help it. They worshipped God in their own way.

They had strange to him barbaric customs like circumcision and other such things. And he came against this people with brutal and ferocious force, so that the seven years became forever after an arch type of tribulation. The first three and a half being not so bad, but the last three and a half, he bathed the whole holy land with blood.

It was the era of the great Maccabee rebellion, and one of the most glorious eras in Jewish history. But I am just saying, here you have a continuous systematic attempt to liquidate this people. Is it not interesting? I tell you something, whenever the enemy or the forces of darkness and evil take a particular interest in a person or a work, I become immediately interested.

I have found so far that although we believers are stupid at times and bring a lot of trouble upon our own silly heads by the things we do and the way we behave, generally speaking, when a man or a woman or a company of people or a work of the Lord is singled out for continuous satanic attack and onslaught, there is something extremely valuable to God in those people or in that work. Do I have to speak about Rome and its attempt to subjugate the Jewish people? And in the end, the destruction of Jerusalem, the destruction of its temple, the destruction of Jewish national institutions, and the dispersion of the Jewish people into the whole world for selling, if we believe, Josephus, of nearly a million young Jewish men into slavery. Has the attempt ceased with 70 AD? Would you not have thought that with the destruction of the Jewish people and their dispersion into the whole earth, that then the battle, the attempt to liquidate them would cease? No, not at all.

That was only the beginning of sorrows, the beginning of the anguish of the Jewish people. And through the next 1,800 years or more, those attempts have increased with ferocity as history has proceeded. Furthermore, this continuous and systematic attempt to assimilate or to destroy, to liquidate this people will not cease until the Messiah comes.

We shall be witnesses in these lands of what will be done, first against the Jewish people and then later against the Christians. All the last great battles of human history, if I read my Bible aright, are centered upon this little nation, upon its capital, whether it is that great war that is described in Zechariah 12, which speaks of all the nations being gathered together against Jerusalem to destroy it, because Jerusalem has become a bone of contention to the nations, or whether it is the great war described in Ezekiel 38 and 39, we sometimes call it the Gog and Magog War, that great confederacy of evil that will descend from the north upon the land of Israel, or whether it is the well-known final battle of human history, Armageddon, in Hebrew, Har Megiddo. All these great battles, and maybe others, are centered upon this little land, upon this little nation, upon its capital, Jerusalem.

We must take note of this continuous battle. If we do not understand its significance, we shall never have an understanding of the times in which we are living. For this nation, as I said earlier this morning, is the time clock of God.

It is ticking away. By it, we can tell approximately where we are in the purpose and plan of God. It is the barometer of God.

What is happening in this nation, and with this nation, is a sure indication of the storms that are either going to come upon the whole face of the earth, or the better weather that might come. Now, I want to move on, if I've carried you with me thus far, to another matter which I find even more significant, and perhaps, for some of you, will be very puzzling. The most remarkable thing of all, in these final battles of human history, is that God declares that He is behind these battles.

Now, get it clear. He doesn't say, I'm using them. He says, almost, dare I say it, I am causing them.

Oh, now we have a problem. Let me just take you to just one or two scriptures. Take, for instance, Zechariah and chapter 12.

Zechariah and chapter 12, verse 2 and 3. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of reeling unto all the peoples round about. And upon Judah also shall it be in the siege against Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in that day that I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples.

All that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded, and all the nations of the earth shall be gathered together against it. Verse 9. And it shall come to pass in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. Listen again, if it's not even more clear.

Chapter 14 and verse 2. For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle. And the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and so on. Now, here is a most interesting thing.

For it is not that the Lord is saying, I will use the evil. I will somehow turn it to good. But here the Lord actually says, I'm behind this thing.

I am behind it. This is the significance of Israel. I am going to use this little nation to confront the whole fallen human society of nations with the fact of myself, of my word, of my purpose, of my counsel that will stand forever.

Look again, if you want more evidence, but we can't give you too much because we'll be here all night, but in Ezekiel and chapter 38. I want you to listen very carefully. I hope you're not dropping to sleep, but if you are, have a good sleep.

Ezekiel 38, verse 3. And say, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, Prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. And I will turn thee about, listen, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armour, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them handling sword. Now have you noticed that the Lord said, I will put a hook in you.

He won't just say to them, come, come. No, he will put a hook, they may not even want to come, but he will put a hook in their jaws and will draw them, pulling them, pulling them, pulling them from the far north and from the north and from the other parts of the earth together, till he pulls them down upon the

mountains of Israel. Listen again, chapter 39, verse 2, if anybody hasn't got the message.

And I will turn thee about, and will lead thee on, and will cause thee to come up from the uttermost parts of the north, and I will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel. So, why then should we be afraid of these wars? God is behind them. God is doing something.

He is going to bring this whole system, whether it's Marxism or whether it's Khomeinism, he is going to put hooks into its jaws and draw it, pulling it, forcing it into confrontation with this little nation of Israel, three and a half million people. And there, when this huge armed confederacy of nations and armies will seem to have got this little nation in its grip, and will look as if at last the longing of the PLO to drive these Jews into the sea and to bathe the holy land with Jewish blood will be fulfilled, then God will act. And the whole thing will be destroyed in a moment of time upon the mountains of Israel.

So, it is not just evil. It is evil. It is not just the powers of darkness.

It is the powers of darkness. But the Lord is using this little nation as the magnet to draw these great principalities and powers behind the flesh and blood of Marxism, Khomeinism, and every other form of radicalism into conflict with himself. What then is the significance of Israel? It is the evidence of the living God in history, the evidence of the power and purpose of God, operative for all time.

God has never abdicated. God has never withdrawn. God has a purpose for the nation.

And he said, as surely as I live, saith the Lord, the earth shall be filled with the glory of God. He has a plan for the nation. He has a plan for this heaven and earth, for this universe.

He has not been thwarted, nor frustrated, nor stalled, nor hindered. You may think that some of these systems are a great hindrance to him, but not the Lord. He allows them to grow like the wicked, growing like a great banyan tree, until the time comes that he speaks the word, and it's done.

And then these things pass away as if they never were. I was brought up in the Hitler period, the period of Mussolini and Hitler, of Himmler, of Goebbels, of Goering, of all these other demonic characters. But there came a day when suddenly they were swept away, and it is as if they were never.

Whilst they grew, it seemed as if they had all power, that they were God himself. With a word, they could order the liquidation of thousands of people. With a word, they could cause their survival.

But when God finally acted, they're gone. For God is God, and men are men. They are only dust.

What is the significance of Israel? I see four things that constitute the significance of Israel. I just give them to you, and you can go away, and you can think about them yourselves, and pray about them. But here they are.

The first great significance of Israel is this. God's Word is true, and His truth endures forever. It is accurate, reliable, and relevant.

Now, we live in days when, so often in the pulpits of Christian churches, whilst the Word of God is called the Word of God, there is an atmosphere that it is not accurate. It is not reliable. Somehow, other, therefore, it cannot be totally relevant.

There is a tremendous amount about the book, which evidently died out with the dark ages. Customs, and ideas, and all the rest of it, that somehow has no bearing upon us today in the life that we live. I refute the whole thing.

In my estimation, the Word of God is the Word of God, and it lives and abides forever. And one of the most remarkable things about Israel is that on a literal level, I know there is a spiritual level, and in my estimation the spiritual content of the prophecies is the abiding value of them. Nevertheless, there is a physical and literal application of the prophecies.

And I find it of tremendous comfort that God has gone to such bother as to specifically speak about certain situations, and they are being fulfilled in front of my eyes. What a comfort, and what a wisdom God has, that He should have reserved this for the last part of the age, which is the most unbelieving of all. So that for those who have an ear to hear, and a heart that is tender, and are simple and childlike enough to be pure in spirit, the Word of God can become a rock under our feet, upon which we can stand in these days, and know that it will be vindicated in its entire.

Many of the theories about God's Word have long ago been exploded, but the Word of God is the one thing that's been vindicated again, and again, and again, and again. I find it interesting when people say to me, now don't get too excited about this thing, about Israel. I mean, you're getting too literalist.

The book is a spiritual book. I've no doubt about it being a spiritual book. All things in the final analysis are spiritual.

This world is essentially a spiritual world, because the forces that abide are the forces behind flesh and blood, are behind the things which are seen. Now dear friends, when God says in Isaiah 49, a specific word like this, and these shall come from the east, and these from the west, and these from the land of Sinaim. I have never yet heard anyone spiritualize these from the land of Sinaim, but I'm told by some people this is rather like our appendix, something that belongs to prehistoric man, they used to say.

It has no meaningful function. It was when we called about on all fours, or whatever it was, and therefore people say, and these from the land of Sinaim. Well, you can't spiritualize that.

Some modern liberal theologians have told us that Sinaim is to be found in modern Lebanon. Others say in northern Egypt, with not too much evidence. But Jusinius, that greatest of all Hebrew scholars, said that Sinaim was the Chinese, and in modern Hebrew, Sinaim, the land of Sinaim is the land of the Chinese, and Sinit is Chinese language, and Sin is China.

But you say there were never Chinese Jews. Ah, there were. The first record we have of Chinese Jews is in the ninth century after Christ.

We read of families of Jews settled in a place called Khotan in Chinese Turkestan in the north, and at the same time in the ninth century, we read of Jewish families settled in Canton in South China. By the 11th century, we hear of a synagogue built in traditional Chinese style, with a Chinese Jewish cemetery next to it. Can you believe it? Chinese speaking Jews.

And Marco Polo, that most famous of all ancient travelers, wrote in his journal that the emperor has passed edicts concerning Chinese Jews and Muslims. Now, I don't suppose the Chinese emperor was bothered about five Jews within a domain so large as the great middle kingdom of China. I think it must have been that there must have been a sizable community.

This synagogue that we, I've spoken of, is with us to this day, and there are still 200 Chinese Jews that are associated with it, but they are so intermixed that they are not accepted as Jews by the orthodox, by the rabbi. Before the second world war, the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, there were 11,000 Jews resident in China or Manchuria, but by the end of the second world war, the number had risen to 32,000, because the Japanese expelled all Jews from Manchuria, Korea, and Japan, and centered them all in Shanghai. And when the recreation of the Jewish state came in 1948, almost 20,000 of these Jews came here to the land, and lo, these from the land of the Chinese.

Oh, you say, you, you, you are really palatable. I mean, can you get that out of that little phrase in Isaiah 49? Well, come up with a better interpretation. What is it? Is it a useless little bit of something, or was it some scribe who, falling asleep on a hot Israeli afternoon, let his hand slip, and somehow the land of Sinim got into the text? If God went to such bother to inspire by his Spirit prophets, holy men of old, has he not gone to just the same bother to watch over the way that that word has come down to us? Does he give the word and then throw it out to the error and failings of men? Surely not.

Now what I'm trying to say by using this one thing is here we have a significance of Israel that must be universal to the whole people of God. The significance of Israel is that God's word is true, and if God is so accurate in the way he predicts things and fulfills things, what about these other marvelous words such as, he that has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Thank God my grace is sufficient for thee.

If God has been so careful about such a word as the land of Sinim on a physical, literal level, what about these other marvelous words about conforming you to the image of his Son, of bringing you to complete maturity in his Son, of bringing you to the place where you can reign with Christ? What a comfort when all kinds of things assail us, when we have all kinds of problems to turn back and say, thank God for Israel, thank God for Israel. I see that the truth of the Lord endures forever. I see that it is better to trust in the Lord than to trust in men.

It is better to put your trust in the Lord than in princes, that is the best of men. And I must go on, now I'm going to take off my jacket. I don't suppose they normally do that in this august place, but the second, the second matter that constitutes the significance of Israel is that God is the God of all history, sovereignly working according to the counsel of his own will.

Do not think that history is a hopeless jumble, that it is a tangle, a massed tangle that is impossible somehow to unravel. It may appear to you to be like that, but in fact the history of the nations is going exactly according to plan, and God is working out the plan step by step, stage by stage, and Israel is the time clock of God in that fulfillment of his plan. Israel is, as it were, the evidence that God is the God of history.

You know, we Christians have got sometimes so spiritual that we forget that we have a body. You know, I hear people saying, oh, it doesn't matter when you die, you can do anything with the body, doesn't matter, doesn't matter. What matters is the spirit and the soul that's gone to the presence of God.

We who have Jewish background have a deep, deep instinct about the body. That's why Jews never burn bodies. It is this inherent instinct that there is something very precious about even the dust of your body, and that one day there will be a redemption of the body, for what you sow is not what will grow up.

You sow a corruptible body, but you will reap an incorruptible. How marvelous! Now, this whole matter of getting so spiritual is the Greek background of Christians, if you understand what I mean. Nothing wrong in it, because when the gospel went out from its Hebrew roots, it began to bring in all the Greek and Hellenic ideas and so on, which was all right, but sometimes Christians have gone so far in this Gentile idea that they forget the words of Job, yet in my flesh shall I see God, and I will stand upon this earth, and mine eyes shall see him and not another.

What a wonderful hope! There's going to be a new heaven and a new earth, and God is working everything according to a plan, and God has not just given up the nation. We know from the book of Daniel that there are great spiritual principalities behind nations. We read, for instance, that when Daniel was in his great ministry of intercession, the answer from the Lord being carried to him by an angel was delayed because of a fight between two great principalities, the prince of Greece and the prince of Persia.

Now, all this sounds like a fairy tale, almost, but Prince of Greece and Prince of Persia, these are not human beings, these are spirits, but evidently the whole development of these empires was somehow related to these spiritual beings behind them. What a window into the unseen this gives us, and what a challenge to real intercession. If it is really true that all that happens in the nations is actually a reflection of what goes on behind the scenes in the invisible, in the spiritual world, how much more should the church of God take its position in the heavenlies to reign with Christ? Now, God is the God of all history.

He determines the course of nations. Don't, don't for one moment give to the enemy a single greater, any greater luster than he should have. When God says Babylon's days are over, Babylon's days are over, and I've often thought when that Hebrew prophet, that Jewish prophet stood up in the great feast of Belshazzar and said to your kingdom is going to be taken away from you this night.

How could he have said such a thing? I imagine there was almost ribald laughter in the drunken courtiers around the king. What stupid fool is this man? The Babylonian empire has lasted for 800 years, and he says that this night it's going to give up the great Babylonian empire with its great capital of Babylon, its hanging gardens, its zoological gardens, its banking houses, its canals, its avenues and boulevards, its great national buildings. That night, the Persian forces dammed up one of the canals, and they came through a gate, a canal gate in the great city wall.

There were three of them, and once they were inside the city, Babylon disappeared from history as if she had never been. When God says the time of an empire, of a kingdom, of a nation, of a political system, of an ideology is up, it's over. God has a time for Marxism.

Don't think it's eternal. God has a time for Marxism, and when that day has dawned, and the last minute has struck, God will say, finish with it. And in that moment, kingdoms come, kingdoms go.

Systems come, systems go. Demonized men come, and demonized men go. But God.

So the fact of the matter is this, this little nation of Israel is the evidence that God is the God of history, because years and years ago, to be precise, 2,600 years or so ago, God took a Hebrew prophet, a Jewish statesman, who in faithfulness to God, in spite, as it were, of all his uncompromising purity toward God, rose to the highest position in the greatest empire of his day, and God gave him vision, after vision, after vision, after vision, and these visions were all to do with what we call the times of the Gentiles, or the times of the nations, and we have been in these times. They're ending now, because Jesus said, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. So if 67, June 67, was in

fact the ending or the beginning of the end of the times of the Gentiles, dear friends, we're in the times of the Messiah.

Already we can hear his footsteps. Already his shadows flung across us. Blessed be God.

So if we look at it like this, we begin to see something. Daniel, chapter 7, puts it very, very wonderfully. When he saw all those great kingdoms, now I have to watch the time, we've got not too much more time, but in Daniel and chapter 7, and verse 13 and 14, listen to these words, I saw in the night visions, and behold they came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of men, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him, and there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom that all the people's nations and languages should serve him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. And then listen, if you read on in verse 17, these great beasts which are four, are four kings that shall arise out of the earth, but the saints of the most high shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever. Praise God.

How many years elapsed between that and now? What were the four kings? Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, and now our own so-called democratic society, modern civilization. It's all included within this great vision of the four kings. Oh, what a lot of time has gone.

How many of the saints have thought perhaps the end is in our day, maybe we shall see the Messiah coming, but he has not come. But blessed be God, there will come a day when the Father will say to the Son, on your way, and in that moment a stone will come out of the heavens and will take that great colossus and hit it, and the whole thing will shatter. And little Israel, no wonder we should pray for her.

No wonder we should be involved with her. No wonder we should not only look at her as some prophetic comfort to us, some means of encouraging us, but we should be involved with her. She is flesh and blood.

She has suffered anguish and sorrow, such as only the true church of God has known through the years of human history. If there are any people who should feel deep calling unto deep, it should be the true church of God for the Israel. God is sovereignly working out his purpose.

Let those who say that Israel is a political accident say it. Let those that say that there is no future for the Jewish people say it if they wish. For me, I can only say that not only is Israel not a political act, she is divinely ordained.

There is a fulfillment of the Word. I will lead the blind by a way that they know not. In paths that they have not known will I lead them.

I will make darkness light before them, and the crooked places straight. These things will I do, and I will not forsake them. Israel is blind.

She is largely agnostic. It is true. But don't be confused.

God, this little nation, has been drawn back in unbelief by God, back in their blindness by God. God is behind it, and underlying the whole history of the Jewish people is the finished work of their Messiah, Jesus. They do not know it, but with God, it speaks forever.

And on the basis of that finished work, God deals with the Jewish people in spite of their sin, in spite of their failing, in spite of their blindness, in spite of their rejection. He deals with it. They do not know it.

Oh, what a wonderful word that Jewish statesman Daniel said to the great Nebuchadnezzar. Till you shall know, he said, that the Most High rules in the affairs of men, and gives it to whomsoever he will. What courage the man had to say it to the great Nebuchadnezzar, who with one could have had Daniel decapitated, or burnt to a cinder.

But Nebuchadnezzar, he heard it. Daniel went on with Nebuchadnezzar to give him an even greater understanding of this matter. He said, he takes down people from high places, and he puts up people who are nothing into them.

God is sovereign. Mr. Brezhnev is in the Kremlin because God has put him there. Mao came, and Mao is gone.

Deng has come, and Deng will go. They all come, and they all go. But God is working according to a plan.

So don't fear. That is the second great significance of Israel. I wish I could say a good deal more about it.

Here is the third. He is using Israel to sanctify himself in the eyes of the nations. Now get this clear, because all of us immediately think, as soon as we heard the word sanctify, we think, oh, oh, he's going to save all the nations.

No. He said, I will sanctify myself in the eyes of all. What does sanctify mean? I will separate myself.

You will know that there's more than flesh and blood to human history. This little nation you come against, and you say, we will destroy it. We will use every modern weapon to liquidate this people.

You will find that in coming against it, you are destroyed. And then you will wheel back, and your mind will try to find some reason, some logical reason as to why you have failed. And you will come back again, but you will fall again, until in the end you will have to say there is something more to Israel than flesh and blood.

Listen. I'll just read you with the New American Standard Version. It tends to be a little clearer on this matter.

In its translation, Ezekiel 38 and verse 16. And you will come up against my people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It will come about in the last days that I shall bring you against my land, in order that the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified through you before their eyes, O God.

How is God going to be sanctified through you? Through God? No, it means that God will take these anti-God forces, because Gog and Magog in Hebrew is a term for all anti-God forces. God will take these anti-God forces, and He will show them that He is God. They don't believe in a God, but God will show there's more to this little nation than you think.

It's not just weapons. It's not just weaponry. It's not just morale.

It's not just the number in the army. There's something else in it. Listen again.

Ezekiel 38 and verse 23. And I shall magnify myself, sanctify myself, and make myself known in the sight of many nations. And they will know that I am the Lord.

This is the description of a horrific battle. But God says, I will make myself known. I will magnify myself.

They will know that I am the Lord. Listen. Chapter 39, the same prophecy.

Verse 21 to 23. And I shall set my glory among the nations, and all the nations will see my judgment which I have executed, and my hand which I have laid on them. That's Gog and Magog.

And the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God from that day onward. And the nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile for their iniquity, because they acted treacherously against me, and I hid my face from them. So I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and all of them fell by the sword.

According to their uncleanness, and according to their transgressions, I dealt with them, and I hid my face from them. Therefore, thus says the Lord God, now I shall restore the fortunes of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel, and I shall be jealous for my holy name. And they shall forget their disgrace, and all their treachery which they perpetrated against me, when they live securely on their own land, with no one to make them afraid.

When I bring them back from the people, and gather them from the lands of their enemies, then I shall be sanctified through them in the sight of the many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God, because I made them go into exile among the nations, and then gathered them again to their own land, and I will leave none of them there any longer, and I will not hide my face from them any longer, for I shall have poured out my spirit on the house of Israel, declares the Lord God. Do you see the significance of Israel? You see what God is doing, is he's manifesting himself through an unbelieving, blind, and sinful nation, and the whole earth is coming against them.

They don't even know why they're coming against them, but they're coming against them because God is drawing them down with hooks to the jaw against them. He's gathering them against Jerusalem, and then when they think they will destroy this little land, God will act, and they will reel back. God never judges nations without giving evidence, without warning them.

Israel is the final great warning of God in the last days to the nations, because God said, I will send them into exile, and they went into exile, and God said, I will gather them again, and he gathered them again, and God said, I will defend them, and he has defended them. Oh dear people of God, how wonderful this whole matter is, the significance of Israel. We suffer in this matter with those who go overboard on Israel.

They become so Israel-conscious, and so Israel-centered, that one almost wonders whether Israel died for them, and Israel saved them, as if they've been born again to Israel. The subject has suffered tremendously from people who've gone overboard on the whole matter, but dear people of God, what a terrible thing it is when we don't understand the significance of Israel. The last thing I want to say this evening is this, about the significance of Israel, the fourth thing, is that here we have the truth finally given concerning the Messiah.

I don't know whether I'm right or missed, but my own understanding of the prophetic word has led me to the conclusion that the Jewish people will not repent only on the day when they see Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven. I understand from the prophet Zechariah that the spirit of grace and supplication will be

poured upon them, and in the Hebrew it says, they will look unto me whom they pierce, not on me physically, but unto me, which has a feeling of spiritual recognition, and they shall be in mourning for him as for an own less son, and in bitterness for him as for a firstborn, and then it says, and the mourning in that day shall be greater than it was in the valley of Hadadrimon. That was the great national mourning over the godly king Josiah when he died, and then it goes to say something very strange, it says, and all the families of the houses of Israel will mourn, each family apart, husbands and wives apart.

Now for those who believe that Israel's all going to be converted in one single moment of time, this must surely constitute a problem, because if you know Jewish mourning habits, you know that there are seven days of total abnormality in mourning, you can't shave, husband and wife mustn't sleep together, the whole house is turned upside down, it's called the Shiva, the seven days, and then for 30 days life is pretty abnormal. Now that's what it means here, it's as if suddenly due to the Spirit of God being poured out upon the Jewish people, upon Israel, something happens, not every Jew will automatically be saved, but there will be those who will turn unto Him, to look unto Him, and they will recognize in someone in their history two thousand years ago, what was done to him and with him, is the key to our fall, to our restoration, and to our destiny. Dear people of God, I can't think of anything more wonderful than that day, I really cannot.

I imagine it to be a day that will probably be quite ordinary and seemingly routine, when God starts. I don't think myself that it will be sensational and dramatic to begin with, that something will happen. I said to you, I think last year or the year before, forgive me, that when the great Gentile mission of the Jewish church began, in a Roman naval city called Caesarea, in some flea-bitten apartment of a Roman officer, I cannot possibly believe that anyone realized where it would end, least of all dear Peter.

Because why later did he have to defend himself and say, well you know, almost apologetically, you know, I mean what was I to do? I mean the Holy Spirit fell upon them and they spoke in tongues and prophesied, I mean I couldn't stop them, I had to baptize them. If the Apostle Peter had realized that this was the great Gentile mission of the church, in which millions and millions and millions of Gentiles would be made partakers of the commonwealth of Israel, surely he would have said, dear friends, let me say this quite clearly. God gave me that word and I must defend it, because this is the beginning of the great Gentile mission of the church.

He apparently wasn't over sure about it. It wasn't in the great sports arena or the great Colosseum that he packed it out in an evangelistic campaign and preached to the Gentiles a Jewish gospel and they believed, and then he had the problem of what to do with them. It was in a Gentile Roman officer who was a God-fearing man.

In his apartment, in his home, before evidently a whole number of friends who were like-minded, that the Apostle Peter began to preach a Jewish gospel, in a Jewish context, about a Jewish Messiah who had been crucified, buried, and raised by God on the third day, and had ascended to the majesty, to the right hand of the majesty on high, where he was waiting till he came back, almost unwittingly, the key turned in the lock, and the door of the Gentile swung open. And all of you are the result. One day, somewhere, sometime, probably not very dramatic, not very sensational, someone will be speaking, perhaps it will be in a home I don't know, or somewhere, and unwittingly the key will turn in the door, and the door will open to the Jewish people again, and they will be received.

Then this blindness that David and Lisa spoke about on the Jewish heart will suddenly, this vein will suddenly be taken away, with the most startling results. People will see, suddenly, like people waking up

out of a dream, they will say, what is it, what is it? We see. And in that moment of recognition it will be like a sword piercing through the heart, not of condemnation, but godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation.

In that day, there will be a fountain open for uncleanness, and multitudes of Jewish people will wash themselves. This is the significance of this thread. God will put the last bit of evidence before the nations.

He will say, this Jesus is both Lord and Christ. This Jesus King of the Jews has become King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Dear friends, if that is the significance of Israel, are you not thankful that God gives you a bit of light, that somehow you even with our dim understanding, we understand something of this? Thank God for it.

Thank God for it. May He stir us up to be involved in this matter, not in a way that is strange or weird or unbalanced, but in a way that is realistic, genuine, right down to earth as it were. May God help us.

It will be the most wonderful day for us all, will it not? If we with the eye of faith have seen that this is going to come to pass, and we have given ourselves in prayer and in many other ways to it, if by the grace of God we shall live to see it, oh what joy, what joy that even if we don't live to see it, it makes no difference. It will come, as surely as I stand.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/23/SID23983.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/lance-lambert/the-significance-of-israel-1980/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net