

STUDY GUIDE

A M I R
T S A R F A T I

I S R A E L

A N D T H E

C H U R C H

A N I S R A E L I E X A M I N E S
G O D ' S U N F O L D I N G P L A N S
F O R H I S C H O S E N P E O P L E S

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A N D T H E

C H U R C H

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Israel and the Church Study Guide

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CONTENTS

PART 1: TWO CHOSEN PEOPLES

- 1. Fear Not 7
- 2. Two Trumpets Are Better Than One 19
- 3. Getting the Full Picture 29

PART 2: TWO DISTINCT PLANS

- 4. A Wife and a Bride 41
- 5. God's Tough Love 53
- 6. God's Appointed Times 65

PART 3: TWO PATHS IN REVELATION

- 7. The Beginning of the End 79
- 8. The Church in Revelation 89
- 9. Israel in Revelation—Part 1 99
- 10. Israel in Revelation—Part 2 109

PART 4: TWO PEOPLES, ONE FAMILY

- 11. Who Goes Where? 123
- 12. A Sinister Strategy 131
- 13. The Blessing of the Blessers 137

PART 1:

TWO
CHOSEN
PEOPLES

LESSON 1

FEAR NOT

“We must understand the truth of God’s presence in the midst of the imperfect times. God didn’t create the imperfect. God doesn’t cause the imperfect. But God works through the imperfect. That’s who He is. He is a perfect God who carries out His perfect will in imperfect people who live in an imperfect world. When God first created this universe, everything was perfect. The perfect God established His perfect creation by His perfect Word. Then humanity expressed the free will with which the Lord had gifted it, and everything blew apart. Sin entered the world, and with sin came death. Creation was separated from Creator.”

Israel and the Church, pages 16-17

As the world all around us continues to decline morally and spiritually, it’s easy to become discouraged. With evil running rampant, we may feel as though there is no hope. All of this is a result of sin’s entrance into the world. With sin comes separation from God, which, in turn, brings corruption, decay, wickedness, and ultimately, death.

As Scripture says, “The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one” (1 John 5:19). Satan is “the prince of the

power of the air, the spirit who works in the sons of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2). This is why we are given the warning to “be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

Yet God does not want us to live in fear. All through Scripture, He has given us many reminders of the hope we have as believers. The more we read His Word, the more confidence we have that no matter how bad things get, God is still in control. And He has already secured the victory that assures us of a future totally free from sin, a future in which all will be perfect again.

A NEED FOR HOPE

First Peter 1:3 says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”

What does the passage say God is abundant in?

What has God “begotten us again to”?

What do the words “living hope” tell us about the kind of hope we have?

What makes this hope possible?

Romans 15:4 tells us, “Whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”

For what purposes did God give His Word to us?

In what ways have you received hope during your most recent readings of the Bible?

Why do you think it is so important for us to keep our eyes on the hope God has given us?

In 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, Paul wrote, “We do not lose heart.

Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

For what reasons did Paul say “we do not lose heart”?

How does Paul describe our affliction, then our glory?

What are we called to look at?

In 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, Paul reveals to us the power of keeping our focus on that which is eternal. As believers, we are to look heavenward. That is why so much of the Bible is filled with prophecy. The more we read prophecy, the more our hope increases. In this way, we can replace our fears with hope.

GOD'S LONG-SUFFERING GRACE

Though sin separates us from God, He didn't give up on humanity. This is true for all people, including the Old Testament nation of Israel. Even though the people repeatedly rejected their Lord, He reached out to them, inviting them to return to Him. Even in their unfaithfulness, God pleaded,

You have burdened Me with your sins,
You have wearied Me with your iniquities.
I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions
for my own sake;
And I will not remember your sins.
Put Me in remembrance;
Let us contend together;
State your case that you may be acquitted
(Isaiah 43:24-26).

God did not abandon Israel. We can take great comfort in that, for if He has long-suffering patience for the Jewish people, then He will show that same patience to us today even when we fail Him.

Hosea 3:4-5 says, "The children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days."

After a time without king or prince, what will the people of Israel do?

What will Israel do “in the latter days”?

Do you see this prophecy as one that offers hope to Israel? Why?

About three decades after the church had been born, Paul wrote the book of Romans. What did he say about the Jewish people in Romans 11:1?

What did Paul later add in Romans 11:29? Will God ever go back on His promises?

How is God’s love for Israel described in Jeremiah 31:3?

What do the above passages tell you about God's commitment to Israel?

THE POWERFUL PRESENCE OF GOD

One vitally important fact we must understand about God's love for His people is that just because He disciplines them doesn't mean He will abandon them. When God disciplined the nation of Israel, He did so out of love; His desire was to get the people's attention so they would return to Him. The hand that disciplines is the same hand that restores and protects. We see this clearly in Isaiah 43, where God warns Israel that punishment is about to come, yet that doesn't mean He will abandon His people.

Read Isaiah 43:2. What promise did God make to the people of Israel before they were attacked by the powerful Assyrians?

What assurance does God give in Isaiah 43:5?

When God disciplines, He does so out of love—in the same way a loving parent disciplines a wayward child. Hebrews

11:5-6 says, “Do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the LORD loves He chastens.”

In what way can we say that rebuke or chastening is evidence of love?

In what ways have you seen God’s discipline in your own life be beneficial for you?

A PROVEN FAITHFULNESS

Read Nehemiah 9:5-15, and list all the ways you see God’s faithfulness demonstrated to Israel from the time of Abraham to Nehemiah.

In Psalm 77, Asaph said, “In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord...I am so troubled that I cannot speak...Has His mercy ceased forever? Has His promise failed forevermore?” (verses 2,4,8). He thought God had abandoned him. Then we see a change of heart in verses 10-15. What happened, according to verses 11-12?

What does Asaph credit God with doing in verses 14-15?

THE DAY OF SALVATION

“When you open your heart to the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ, He will make you a new person. He will spark a light in you—a light of new life, a light of eternity. Then He will use that light in you to shine His truth to the world.”

Israel and the Church, page 24

Read Romans 1:16. What does Paul say the gospel has the power to do?

And who is the gospel available to?

The church had its beginning in Jerusalem in Acts 2, and many of the first believers were Jews. After Paul became a believer, he traveled far and wide to proclaim the gospel. According to Acts 17:1-2, what was Paul’s custom each time he traveled to a new town?

What does this custom reveal about God's perspective regarding the Jewish people—a perspective that continues through today?

As Christians, we're called to share the gospel to all people, no matter what their background. How does God's faithfulness to Israel serve as an example to you with regard to your thoughts about and interactions with Jewish people?

Taking This Lesson to Heart

What truth or principle had the greatest impact on you in chapter 1 of *Israel and the Church*?

In this chapter, we learned a lot about God's faithfulness. What do you appreciate most about this characteristic of God?

Take a moment now to pray, both praising and thanking God for His love, patience, and mercy in your life.



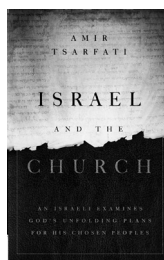
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ISRAEL

Behold Israel is a nonprofit organization founded and led by native Israeli Amir Tsarfati. Its mission is to provide reliable and accurate reporting on developments in Israel and the surrounding region.

Through Behold Israel's website, free app, social media, and teachings in multiple languages, the ministry reaches communities worldwide. Amir's on-location teachings explain Israel's central role in the Bible and present the truth about current events amidst global media bias against Israel.

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As a native Israeli of Jewish roots, Amir Tsarfati provides a distinct perspective that weaves biblical history, current events, and Bible prophecy together to shine light on the mysteries about the end times. In *The Day Approaching*, he points to the scriptural evidence that the return of the Lord is imminent.



Jesus Himself revealed the signs that will alert us to the nearness of His return. In *The Day Approaching Study Guide*, you'll have the opportunity to take an up-close look at what those signs are, as well as God's overarching plans for the future, and how those plans affect you today.