

Prologue

“...a little reviving in the midst of our bondage.”
(Ezra 9:8)

NEARLY SIX YEARS in the making, *Holy Ground* was published in the wake of three significant dates relative to the State of Israel. On September 28, 2016, former Israeli President and Prime Minister Shimon Peres—the last living patriarch who was present with David Ben-Gurion at Israel’s birth—passed away at the age of 93. Dr. Daniel Gordis (author of a dozen books on Judaism and Israel) wrote in the *Bloomberg View*, “...there is no denying the dark clouds overhead. Now, with Peres’s death, the curtain is dropping on the Jewish state’s founding generation. There’s an inescapable sense that, with their last father figure gone – whatever the future may hold – Israelis are entirely on their own.”¹

November 2, 2016, marked the onset of the Balfour Declaration centenary. Israel’s sixty-seven-word founding charter was addressed in the name of Arthur James Balfour, then United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, to Lionel Walter Rothschild, a leader of British Jewry, for delivery to the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland.

On November 8, 2016—after eight years of unprecedented strained US-Israel relations, the direct result of Barack Obama’s closet Muslim mindset—Donald Trump trounced Hillary Clinton in the presidential race, becoming America’s 45th chief executive on January 20, 2017. The surprise come-from-behind victory by Mr. Trump, a strong supporter of Israel, was reminiscent of that iconic 1948 “Dewey Defeats Truman” headline exonerating Harry Truman’s own pro-Israel stand. Within hours of Hillary’s concession speech, Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sent “The Donald” a video greeting:

President-elect Trump, my friend, congratulations on being elected president of the United States of America. You are a *great* friend of Israel. Over the years you've expressed your support consistently, and I deeply appreciate it. I look forward to working with you to advance security, prosperity, and peace. Israel is grateful for the broad support it receives from the American people. And I am confident that the two of us, working closely together, will bring the great alliance between our two countries, to even greater heights. May G-d bless America, may G-d bless Israel, and may G-d bless our enduring alliance.²

That the 2016 election result was a bona fide divine intervention—the *specific answer to millions of Christians' prayers*—there can be no doubt (Jeremiah 33:3). About the time Bibi's video was airing, this author received the following email from a long-time Jewish acquaintance, a gruff, Manhattan-born, one-armed Yom Kippur War veteran living in Israel: "Thank G-d, and thank you, my Christian friends, for restoring my belief in miracles. My wife and I can't stop laughing and crying. And praying." The added blessings of a rescued Supreme Court, a Republican majority in both houses of Congress, and the so-called "nuclear option" (the 2013 back-room Democrat maneuver eliminating the sixty-vote requirement to prevent a filibuster), coming back to bite Harry Reid in the "tuchus" by handing Trump his dream team Cabinet, all coalesced to illustrate Ephesians 3:20, "*Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us....*"

Like his campaign theme song warned, "You can't always get what you want," Mr. Trump will not satisfy *every* GOP camp, especially Christians. While the Presbyterian president's personal testimony falls short of a born-again experience—e.g., his bizarre views on forgiveness and Christ's person, his unabashed endorsement of the LGBTQIA *ad nauseum* perversion, his "Two Corinthians" faux pas, his praise for Ivanka's conversion to Judaism (i.e., at the expense of Jesus Christ)—his populist, anti-globalist agenda more than meets the scriptural ideal for secular rulers (Romans 13:3-4; I Timothy 2:1-2). Believers can also rejoice in the supportive role of their evangelical vice president, Mike Pence (the very antithesis of Jesuit Tim Kaine), the providential office conforming to the Bible patterns of Joseph, Daniel, and Mordecai.

At the end of the day, given Team Clinton's over-the-top hubris, vitriol, and slander, exacerbated by a steady echo chamber of media bias,

negative poll numbers, and “infallible” pundit predictions, Donald Trump was an unknowing surrogate for God’s honor; specifically, on matters of right and wrong (see Jeremiah 27:6 and Isaiah 44:28 for more extreme cases). The sudden shock of it all would also resonate with Christians awaiting the surreal and final vanquishing of evil (Daniel 2:44, 45; Revelation 11:15; 19:11-21).

The Trump phenomenon was ultimately about seven things: 1) the LORD putting the focus on Himself (Isaiah 46:5); 2) the open punishment of Bill and Hillary Clinton (Proverbs 28:10); 3) the total repudiation of Barack Obama, who subsequently accused Mr. Putin of doing exactly what *he* did to Israel in *their* 2015 election³ (Galatians 6:7), then brazenly betrayed Israel with an end-of-term lame duck diplomatic initiative on December 22, refusing to veto a UN Security Council resolution condemning Jewish settlement expansion on the West Bank; 4) the open mockery of the academia-media-celebrity elites (Psalm 2:4); 5) blocking the sure destruction of the United States that would have occurred mainly from anticipated Supreme Court picks; 6) providing a long overdue breath of fresh air to patriotic Americans (Proverbs 29:2), i.e., Hillary’s “basket of deplorables,” demonized white men in particular; and 7) offering Christians—as a pastor friend of this author put it in his Sunday morning sermon following the election—“a last chance to engage the enemy.”⁴

Thus, the most appropriate Scripture to define the surprising Trump victory would be Ezra 9:8, “*And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.*” However, if history is any guide for the future, unfortunately, like the respite under Josiah in II Kings 22 & 23, the Church will fail to profit from this window of opportunity (repeating her anemic response to MacArthur’s request for thousands of missionaries to capitalize on Japan’s post-WWII disillusionment). And just for the record—to whatever degree euphoric Laodicea “[*does*] despite to the Spirit of grace” (Hebrews 10:29)—the metaphorically deemed “[*T*]rump of God” (I Thessalonians 4:16) could just as easily become America’s worst nightmare (Matthew 12:45; II Peter 2:20).

Which leads us to the purpose of this timely book. It is certainly an odd coincidence that the word “trump” appears twice in Scripture (the KJV predominantly)—both times regarding the Rapture (I Corinthians 15:52, I Thessalonians 4:16). Consequently, as the Church Age nears its apostate

denouement (II Timothy 3:1 - 4:4; Revelation 3:14-22), the possibilities of a pro-Israel Trump White House (especially moving the embassy to Jerusalem) remain known only to God. However, the best case scenario (a “Debbie Downer” reality check notwithstanding) would be a mere stay of execution, given the prophetic scope of divine wrath in the Great Tribulation, i.e., “*the time of Jacob’s trouble....*” (Jeremiah 30:7)

The most conspicuous bellwether of the Jewish/Trump nexus was the December 20, 2016, front cover of *Forbes* magazine featuring the president-elect’s Orthodox son-in-law, Jared Kushner, above the telling caption, “THIS GUY GOT TRUMP ELECTED.” (Some would argue that the real “hero” of the Trump triumph was another Jew altogether—former New York congressman Anthony Weiner.) According to the exclusive interview, the enigmatic, multi-millionaire father of Trump’s two Jewish grandchildren, whose own skyscraper stands three blocks south of Trump Tower (at the uncanny address of “666” Fifth Avenue), employed Facebook micro-targeting and social media as the campaign’s key voter outreach strategy. (Ironically, the Jewish-impacted election upset was foreshadowed just six days earlier by the equally “miraculous” Chicago Cubs’ World Series win credited to Theo Epstein, the team’s Jewish president of baseball operations.)

Yet, herein lies the age-old Jewish conundrum of internecine strife (i.e., “two Jews/three views”). While several powerful Jews stand ready to *help* President Trump “make America great again”—running the gamut from conservative radio talk show hosts, internet news editors, and comedians Michael Savage, Matt Drudge, Michael Medved (maybe the mercurial Mark Levin), and Jackie Mason, through various aides, advisors, and/or friends, like Elliot Broidy; Michael Cohen; Lewis Eisenberg; Stephen Feinberg; Samuel Fox; Alan Garten; Michael Glassner; Lawrence Glick; John Paulson; Steven Roth; Stephen Schwarzman; Mel Sembler; Ronald Weiser; Andrew Weiss; and Allen Weisselberg to key administration appointees, Stephen Mnuchin (Treasury), Stephen Miller (Senior Advisor to the President), Carl Icahn (Regulatory Czar), Boris Epshteyn (Special Assistant to the President), Jason Greenblatt (Special Representative for International Relations), and David Friedman (Ambassador to Israel)—*another* array of Hebrew heavyweights are poised to *oppose* him.

A short list would include: Senators Al Franken, Dianne Feinstein, and Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, aligned with Representatives Steve Israel and Debbie Wasserman Schultz on Capitol Hill (Jewish Democrats

in the 113th Congress outnumbering their Republican colleagues twenty-seven to one); Mayor Rahm Emanuel in the vanguard sanctuary city of Chicago; Rahm's brother, Ezekiel (chief architect of the Affordable Care Act) in healthcare reform; Mark Zuckerberg in cyberspace; *New York Times* chairman of the board, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, Jr., and *CNN* president Jeff Zucker (aided by Wolf Blitzer, David Gregory, Dana Bash, and Jake Tapper), in the fourth estate; Babs Streisand and Sarah Silverman representing Hollywood; Susan Herman in the ACLU; Justices Ruth Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, and Elena Kagan in the Supreme Court; Chairwoman Janet Yellen and Vice Chairman Stanley Fischer in the Federal Reserve; Hillary's top five campaign donors—Donald Sussman, J. B. Pritzker, Haim Saban, Daniel Abraham, and billionaire atheist George Soros in Wall Street⁵; former presidential advisors, David Axelrod and the unobtrusive, Iranian-born, Valerie Jarrett⁶ in the Beltway-based Obama shadow government; plus a slew of assorted antagonists, such as “burnout” Bernie Sanders, Dr. Jill Stein, Mike Bloomberg, and J Street president, Jeremy Ben-Ami, in the “sour grapes” genre.

Considering such unsettling realities, perhaps the most apropos quote would be Prime Minister Netanyahu's musing in his 2000 book, *A Durable Peace: Israel and its Place Among the Nations*—“No one yet knows what awaits the Jews in the 21st century, but we must make every effort to ensure that it is better than what befell them in the twentieth, the century of the Holocaust.”⁷ Fast forwarding to the eve of Donald Trump's presidency, Jewish author and American diplomat Dennis B. Ross, William Davidson Distinguished Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, concurred with this atmosphere of uncertainty, writing in his 2015 bestseller, *Doomed to Succeed*:

No one predicted the turmoil we are now seeing, least of all the Middle Eastern leaders who have been swept away in its wake or who are now struggling for legitimacy and to define the identity of the region. While humility should be the order of the day in predicting what will unfold in the Middle East, one thing is clear: the U.S.-Israel relationship is going to be buffeted by the transformation that is taking place.⁸

“*The secret things belong to the LORD our God....*”
(Deuteronomy 29:29)