

“They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed.” (Isa. 44:9)



### A False Witnesses

There are many things that can serve as a witness. Israel is a true witness to the power of God. Idols and graven images are a witness against those who trust in them.

Isaiah uses his prophecy to show the clear distinction between false gods and the living and true God. In Isaiah's day the people made their own gods. It seems strange that they could be so foolish. They would cut down a tree, use part of the wood for a fire to cook their food and to keep themselves warm. Then, from the same tree, they would carve an idol and fall down and worship it. ( See Isaiah 44: 13-19) The witness of idolatry was false. They were only objects with no life in them. This work of men's hands was a witness to the ignorance of the builder and all who worship in such vanity.



### Living Witness

God's witness on the other hand, was a living witness. This is the nation of Israel that He created, corrected, brought through the fire and has now restored to their own land. This nation is His witness that He is God.

There is another living witness to teach us about the one true God, the Creator of heaven and earth. That witness was God's only begotten son, the man, Christ Jesus. Isaiah had also prophesied about the birth of this man.

“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” (Isa. 7:14)

“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name **Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us**.” (Matt. 1:23)

The name Jesus meant “God with us” He was a living manifestation of God, doing only the Father's will and glorifying Him as a witness to all.



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# Things Concerning

The Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ

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“Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD”

### ISRAEL, GOD'S WITNESS

“Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: **therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God**.” (Isaiah 43:10-12)

Isaiah introduces us to a very important Bible Truth. The Nation of Israel is a living witness to our Creator. God has established this nation as His people and through His providential work with them has provided us with ample evidence that He is God.

If we have trouble with our faith in God we can look at this nation, its formation, its history, its scattering in the nations and its restoration, all as evidence that God is and that His word is true.

“But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.” (Isaiah 43:1)

### How does Israel teach us about God?

How does this work? How can we learn about God by looking at Israel? First we must become familiar with the Word of God (the Bible). The Bible is God's record to man that He has made very specific promises concerning the Nation of Israel, and that these promises have been kept.

There is no one else who can make this claim and make it true. Isaiah tells us plainly that only the true God could foretell future events and then bring them to pass.

God's Word is so sure, so certain, so true, that it is likened to the examples in nature that we are all familiar with; the rain and the snow that water the earth.

“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

(Isa. 55:10-11)

**“....Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid.”** (Jeremiah 30:10)

“Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: **though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee:** but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.” (Jeremiah 30:10-11)

#### Promises of God

The Prophet Jeremiah as well as most of the prophets of Israel record the promises that God has made concerning the Nation of Israel. The promise quoted above is one that many peoples have tried to prevent from being fulfilled. Men have tried in many wicked ways to make Israel go away, to destroy them and drive them into the sea, but God has promised that they will not succeed.

Many strong nations have come and gone on the face of this earth. Babylon, Greece and Rome are only a few of the once mighty empires that no longer exist. Israel alone remains as a testimony to God’s truth.

#### Jeremiah’s Prophecy

As we examine the words of Jeremiah we see that there is more than one significant element of promise within the two verses quoted above:

- **“I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”** Because Israel was a special people they were held accountable for their sins. ( See Amos 3:2) We do well to remember that God will hold His modern servants accountable also
- **“I will save thee from afar.”** Israel was punished for turning away from the commandments of God and were driven far away from their promised land, scattered into all nations. (See Luke 21:24) This fact alone made their return seem almost impossible to men, but not to God.
- **“Jacob shall return”** The promise was that no matter how far they were scattered, Israel would return to their own land. (See Ezekiel 37:21-22) Many tried to find alternative homelands for them but God’s promise was sure. They would be a nation again in their own land.
- **“Shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid”** As we consider that all of the other promises have been now fulfilled, we look forward knowing that this also is a true promise. When we look at the current Palestinian controversy we are encouraged in the hope that there will soon be peace on earth, along with rest and quiet for Israel.

**“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,”** (Hebrews 12:1)

#### A Great Cloud of Witnesses

The quotation above from Hebrews 12 follows immediately after what is known as “The FAITH chapter.” ( Hebrews 11)

Hebrews 11 relates the account of several of the faithful witnesses from the Old Testament period who “Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.” (verses 33-34)

#### Witnesses for God

God has not left himself without witness to His greatness as the Creator of heaven and earth. These witnesses leave us without excuse and only the fool has said that there is no God. (See Psalm 53:1)

The following are some of these witnesses:

- **The entire creation** is a witness to the Creator. “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” ( Romans 1:20)
- **The Nation of Israel** is a witness (as discussed on cover page) **“Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he...”** (Isaiah 43: 10)
- **Jesus** was a manifestation of God, a remarkable witness. His actions, his words, his character were so in tune with his father that he could say: “...He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?” (John 14:9)
- **The faithful servants of old** were witnesses to God. Their faith and resulting service provided a living witness that there is a God. (Hebrews 11 all; 12:1)
- **You and I ?** As servants of God today, we have both responsibility and opportunity to be witnesses for God.

God is visiting the nations of the earth at this present time, to “...take out of them a people for His name.” (Acts 15: 14) When we are baptized into Jesus, we begin to bear **the name of the Father**, who was manifested in the son, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We can bear this name with honor, acting as sons and daughters of the Living God, or we can take this name in vain. If we live as Jesus did, dedicating our lives to displaying the will of God, we will bring glory to the name we bear and will be a faithful witness to our God and His word.