



The Mystery of the Kingdom

An excerpt from the third chapter of the *Mystery of Zion – Israel and the Last Days*

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The term “mystery” is specifically used twenty-six times in the passages of the Bible, but it is also often referred to in various forms and inferred in other passages. Mysteries are inherent throughout the Bible and have long been the subject of debate, speculation, and even the excuse or the cause for disbelief. References to these “mysteries” can be found throughout both the Old and the New Testament.

The reality is that these mysteries will only be revealed by a revelation from the Holy Spirit. Paul, writing to the church in Corinth, states, “This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed” (1 Corinthians 4:1 NIV). Clarence Larkin adds, “In Romans 16:25, 26, Paul speaks of what he calls ‘My Gospel,’ which he calls the ‘Revelation of the Mystery,’ which was kept ‘Secret’ since the world began, but now is made ‘manifest.’ It was the ‘revelation’ that was promised to Paul at his conversion (Acts 26:16–18), and which comprises the ‘Mysteries of God.’”ⁱ

Reference and inference to the concept of mystery in the Bible include:

- Interpretation of dreams—Daniel 4:9
- Mystery of the kingdom of heaven (Jesus speaks through parables)—Matthew 13; Mark 4; Luke 8; 13
- Mystery of iniquity (Satan manifest in the flesh)—2 Thessalonians 2:1–10
- Jesus Christ—Romans 6:25
- Hardening of Israel / mystery of Israel’s blindness—Romans 11:25
- Mystery of the translation of living saints / Rapture—1 Corinthians 15:51–55
- Mystery of the union of Jews and Gentiles in one Body—Ephesians 3:1–11
- Mystery of God’s will—Ephesians 1:9
- Mystery of the restoration of all things—Ephesians 1:9–10
- Gentiles are heirs together with Israel—Ephesians 3:6
- Hidden in God—Ephesians 3:9
- Mystery of the Church as the Bride of Christ—Ephesians 5:22–33
- Christ and the Church—Ephesians 5:32
- The gospel—Ephesians 6:19
- Hidden from generations—Colossians 1:26
- Mystery of divine indwelling (Christ in you)—Colossians 1:26–28
- Mystery of God (namely, Christ)—Colossians 2:2
- Mystery of Christ—Colossians 4:3
- Mystery from which godliness sprang great—1 Timothy 3:16
- Mystery of the Incarnation (God manifested in the flesh)—1 Timothy 3:16
- Seven stars and seven golden lampstands—Revelation 1:20
- Mystery of God accomplished—Revelation 10:7

I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written: “The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob” (Romans 11:25–26 NIV).

To summarize these mysteries, it would be safe to say that each of them in some manner has Christ intricately woven within the hidden tapestry of God’s plan. I assume it would also be safe to confirm that each of these have at their foundation the purpose God’s plan of forgiveness, mercy, and grace. In the words of Robert Farrar Capon, “The Messiah was not

going to save the world by miraculous, Band-Aid interventions; a storm calmed here, a crowd fed there, a mother-in-law cured back down the road. Rather, it was going to be saved by means of a deeper, darker, left-handed mystery, at the center of which lay his own death.”ⁱⁱ It is also safe to infer from these citations that God will provide revelation to these mysteries in various ways: through His prophets; His divinely inspired Word, and ultimately, through the leading of the Holy Spirit as a result of study, meditation, interpretation, and divine revelation.

Clarence Larkin was a Bible scholar who lived during the late eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century. For a man of his time, he had profound insight into the plans of God and His purpose for Israel and the Jews. I believe this knowledge was a divine revelation from God. Larkin shares what could be considered divine insight regarding the context of “mystery” within the pages of the Bible:

A “Mystery” in the New Testament sense is not something that cannot be understood, but is some plan or purpose of God that has been known to Him from the beginning, but which He has withheld from the knowledge of men until the time came for Him to reveal it. . . .

In his letter to the saints at Ephesus (Eph. 3:1–11) Paul says, that God by revelation made known to him the “Mystery,” which in other Ages had not been made known unto the sons of men, “That the Gentiles should be ‘Fellow Heirs,’ and of the ‘Same Body’ and partakes of His promise in Christ by the Gospel.”

It is almost impossible to overestimate the bitter “Race Hatred” which existed in Christ’s day between Jew and Gentile. It was a lofty “middle wall or partition” between them. The Jews looked upon the Gentiles as “dogs” and the Gentiles “despised” the Jews. . . . It was therefore to them a revelation that God was going in this Dispensation to take some Jews and some Gentiles and form of them a “New Body” called the Church. In Christ all race and class distinctions disappear, and it is only in the Church that such a “Holy Brotherhood” can be found as the world is seeking.ⁱⁱⁱ

God’s kingdom falls into the realm of being a mystery, even though it isn’t listed in the scriptural notations above. John the Baptist helped bring this terminology into the mainstream of daily language just before Jesus began His earthly ministry:

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him’” (Matthew 3:1–3 NIV).

Even Jesus used similar terminology as He shared God’s message with the people in the land who were starving to hear more about this proclaimed kingdom:

When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee. Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali—to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah: “Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.” From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near” (Matthew 4:12–17 NIV).

For thousands of years, religious leaders, scholars, teachers, and students have questioned the concept of “God’s kingdom.” Did it refer to the heavenly realm, an earthly experience, or maybe some place in between? Is it a reference to a spiritual realm, a physical realm, or maybe an emotional realm? The exact definition for this is as elusive as anything else within the pages of the Bible.

When Jesus made His triumphant entry into Jerusalem during that fateful Passover celebration, most of the people—including his closest followers—believed He was the promised Messiah, the deliverer of Israel. Little did they know that God’s plan, the details of His mysterious motives, had nothing to do with setting up an earthly kingdom at that particular time. God had something different, more spectacular, and more glorious in mind. He was looking at things from the “big picture” perspective, and His blueprint was even more extravagant than anyone could imagine.

God’s plan for the salvation of humanity is intricately woven through the fabric of Israel and the Jewish people. According to the *Prophecy Study Bible*, “The first time, the Lamb of God came to take away the sins of the world, but when He returns, He will come as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah in victory, power and judgment to destroy the enemies of God.”^{iv} That plan is founded on an everlasting covenant the Creator of the universe promised to Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation. That covenant included two specific aspects: first, that Abraham would be the father of a great nation; and second, that through this nation, the people of the earth would be blessed:

Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will

bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12:1–3 NKJV).

The definitive “blessing” would come through the form of the Messiah, who would provide hope and redemption to the world as He claimed victory over death and sin. Ultimately, the world was blessed through the nation of Israel and its people. That blessing will culminate on the great and glorious time the Bible describes as the Day of the Lord. As Christians living in a time that has all the prophetic indicators revealing that the time is near for the end of the current age, it’s important for us to be aware of the signs spoken of regarding those days. This is not so we can serve as apocalyptic fanatics, running around our communities in a white robe like an animated cartoon character crying out, “Behold, the end of the world is at hand!” Rather, it is because Jesus Himself told us to be ready, to be vigilant, and to be faithful servants and witnesses:

Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect (Matthew 24:42–44 NKJV).

The Day of the Lord is fast approaching. Jesus took the time to inform His disciples of the events leading up to this amazing time. Actually, this is more than just a “day.” It is a climactic event that sets eternity into motion as all humanity who believed realizes the ultimate relationship with the Creator. The Gospel writers, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, felt it worthy of inclusion within their writings. If Jesus said it, and the Gospel writers included it in their perspective records, then as Christians we need to take heed.

We are living in an age that signals a fast-approaching appointment to “that Day.” The Bible refers to “that Day” or “the Day of the Lord” more than 1,800 times throughout its pages, so it seems obvious there is something special about gaining detailed insight into the actual facts associated with it in order to gain as much understanding as possible regarding this upcoming major event. According to the *Prophecy Study Bible*, “It is not possible, therefore, to understand the last days without understanding Israel’s role in all this. Israel is central to the return of the Messiah, through both their promised return to their land and their recognition of Him as their promised Messiah.”^v

Surprisingly, the concept of the Day of the Lord is found for the first time in the first chapter of Genesis, which records the creation story. Within the first words recorded in the

Bible, there is a revelation regarding the mystery of not only creation but also God's plan for humanity and the Millennial Reign. One of the amazing aspects of God's Holy Word is that for much of the information contained within its pages, there is not only a literal interpretation or translation but also a mysterious or prophetic application that can only be deciphered through intense study, research, and divine enlightenment. Within our limited ability to think, at best, in a two- to three-dimensional capacity, it is difficult for us to understand the intricacy of God's multi-dimensional nature as His plans unfold. The records in Genesis highlight God's infinite capacities as we read the record of the creation of life as we know it:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day (Genesis 1:1–3 NIV).

For the first six days of creation, as recorded in the book of Genesis, we are allowed a brief glimpse into an abbreviated perspective of God's creative genius. On the first day, He created light. On the second day, He created the sky and the water. On the third day, He created the land, sea, and vegetation. On the fourth day, He created the majestic expanse of the heavens—the sun, moon, and stars. On the fifth day, He miraculously created the fish and the birds to fill the waters and the sky. On the sixth day, God created all the animals to fill the earth. He capped off the magnificence of His creation with humanity, creating them in His own image. He placed humanity in the sinless and perfect paradise of the Garden, tasking them to care for the earth and share in the fellowship with the Creator Himself. Within each of these six days of creation, we are told "there was evening and there was morning." The next part of the creation story reveals a hidden mystery, as it shares significant prophetic insight essential for understanding the end times—or, more specifically, the Day of the Lord:

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created (Genesis 2:1–4 NIV).

The peculiar part of this last passage—the one that references the seventh day, the blessed and holy day when God rested from all His work—is that there is no mention of either

morning or of night. The Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God, and within its pages are the key to life for all those who believe, so it seems strange to think that Moses somehow forgot to mention within the foundational beginning of the greatest story ever told that on the seventh day there was morning and night. Could it be that we are to assume if it was mentioned for the first six days, it was to be understood it also happened on the seventh day? Or could it be that its omission was not an oversight at all, but rather it was intentionally left out because it provides significant meaning and insight for future consideration of prophetic proclamation?

It is my contention there is no mention of morning or night on the seventh day because, in fact, it has prophetic significance. I believe that seventh day of rest spoken of in Genesis alludes to the most frequently cited proclamation found within the pages of the Bible: the Day of the Lord. Henry Thiessen, a Bible scholar, is credited with saying, "Understanding the Bible is difficult or impossible without understanding the 'Day of the Lord.' The fundamental teaching of the Lord's return is the key to the scriptures." To compound this thought, we cannot understand the great and glorious Day of the Lord without a basic understanding of the Mystery of Zion and Israel's Final Days.

God's ultimate goal since the fall of humanity will be realized on "that Day." Many biblical scholars believe that the Day of the Lord is a reference to the thousand-year reign of Christ in the Millennial Kingdom:

Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare (2 Peter 3:1–10 NIV).

What makes this passage particularly interesting is that it not only talks about the Day of the Lord but also notes that to God a “day” is like “a thousand years.” This reference indicates the Day of the Lord is the Millennial Reign of Christ. This passage also refers back to the creation account told in the first chapter of Genesis, which could indicate that on the holy blessed day that lasts one thousand years, God will finally rest. On “that Day” that lasts a thousand years, there will not be a morning and an evening. Why? Because the “Light” of the world will reign on the Davidic throne of Israel. Eternity will no longer rely on the current sun, moon, stars, and rotational forces upon the earth that make up time as we know it. Jesus will be the light, and no darkness can overcome the brilliance of His glory!

The Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11–32)

The Parable of the Lost Son (or, as it is often referred, “The Prodigal Son”) is exclusively recorded in the Gospel of Luke. Jesus told this parable to “tax collectors and sinners” (Luke 15:1 NIV). One of the rulers of the Pharisees had invited Jesus to his home to eat bread on the Sabbath. We are told the Pharisees and the scribes were keeping a watchful eye on Jesus, listening closely to try to trap Him with His words.

Most scholars agree that all the parables found in the Gospel of Matthew relate to the end times and the kingdom of God. However, I have never heard any scholar support the possibility that this parable in the Gospel of Luke had any type of kingdom or end-time application. I’ve heard many messages on this parable, and no one that I know has ever associated this with any type of application, other than in the literal sense. The only other perspective I’ve seen was shared by Philip Yancey in *The Jesus I Never Knew*:

The priest Henri Nouwen sat in the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia, for many hours meditating on Rembrandt’s great painting Return of the Prodigal Son. While staring at the painting, Nouwen gained a new insight into the parable: the mystery that Jesus himself became something of a prodigal son for our sakes. “He left the house of his heavenly Father, came to a foreign country, gave away all that he had, and returned through a cross to his Father’s home. All of this he did, not as a rebellious son, but as the obedient son, sent out to bring home all the lost children of God. . . . Jesus is the prodigal son of the prodigal Father who gave away everything the Father had entrusted to him so that I could become like him and return with him to his Father’s home.”^{vi}

This is an interesting interpretation of this parable, yet I feel a different interpretation can also be applied. I believe this parable in Luke is directly linked to the Millennial Kingdom and speaks directly about both Israel and the Christian believers, known as the Church.

There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, “Father, give me my share of the estate.” So he divided his property between them.

Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

When he came to his senses, he said, “How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.” So he got up and went to his father.

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

The son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”

But the father said to his servants, “Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” So they began to celebrate.

Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. “Your brother has come,” he replied, “and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.”

The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, “Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!”

“My son,” the father said, “you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found” (Luke 15:11–32 NIV).

Luke was the only author of a Gospel who was a Gentile. Matthew, Mark, and John were all Jews. Luke's Gospel contains many of Jesus' parables that are not contained in any of the other Gospel writings. According to the *Prophecy Study Bible*, Luke's Gospel portrays "Jesus as the compassionate Savior of the world, with love for all people, whether rich or poor, Jew or Gentile; He reaches out especially to women and the poor and the outcast of society."^{vii} Luke's Parable of the Lost Son has a direct correlation to the dynamics of God's children, or two sons. The older son was the one who stayed home, taking care of business, while the younger son demanded his inheritance so he could run off to experience the tantalizing life, searching for all the material things the world had to offer. John Hagee shares a bit of insight regarding this first-born son in his book *Jerusalem Countdown*: "The nation of Israel was made God's children, which is clearly confirmed in Exodus 4:22, 'This says the Lord: 'Israel is My son, My firstborn.'"^{viii}

So, if Israel is the firstborn son, then who is the "lost" or "prodigal" son? I believe this son is the embodiment of the Gentiles. The reference to feeding pigs alludes to the Jewish perspective of being unclean. No Jew would lower themselves to wallowing in a pigsty. Pigs were not only considered unclean but also untouchable by respectable Jews. Remember, when Jesus cast out the demons in the region of Gadarenes, he allowed them to enter a herd of swine, who then ran over the edge of the cliff (see Matthew 8:30–37; Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:27–38). As far as Jews were concerned, pigs were filthy and one of the most unrighteous critters in creation. They were to have nothing to do with swine; pigs were distasteful and unclean in accordance with Levitical Law. The inference could be applied here, noting a parallel between Jewish perspectives on swine and Gentiles.

After a famine had enveloped the land and the lost son was starving, he repented of his ways, realizing his only hope for life was to beg forgiveness from his father. This son represents anyone who accepts the free gift of salvation that is offered through the grace of the New Covenant or the blood of Jesus Christ. A person's life is transformed by Christ through repentance and asking forgiveness for his or her sins. It requires a person to accept the Father's free gift in order to be welcomed home—back into fellowship with the father.

The next thing we read in this passage is that when the father welcomed the lost son home, he not only accepted the son back into the fellowship of his kingdom, but he also gave the son the best robe, placed sandals on his feet, and put a ring on his hand. The robe represents the robe of righteousness, the sandals represent the shoes of the gospel of peace (see Ephesians 6:15), and the ring is the symbol of the royal lineage associated with the father's kingdom. A ring was used to designate authority, honor, and ownership. It is believed this practice originated in ancient Egypt. In those days, rulers used signet rings to officially seal documents. In Daniel, we read about the significance of a signet ring: "A stone was brought and

placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation might not be changed" (Daniel 6:17 NIV).

Haggai also contains a reference about a ring, specifically a signet ring: "'On that day,' declares the LORD Almighty, 'I will take you, my servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,' declares the LORD, 'and I will make you like my signet ring, for I have chosen you,' declares the LORD Almighty" (Haggai 2:23 NIV). In the records of the Bible, Zerubbabel led the first group of Jews back to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity and was the governor of the rebuilt Jerusalem. Zerubbabel was a descendant of King David, the grandson of Jehoiachin.

This citation to Zerubbabel in Haggai 2:23 shows that God was giving him a place of authority and honor. It seems apparent this passage could infer that God has placed a seal of distinct eternal purpose on the Davidic lineage, and it highlights the fact that the Davidic Covenant possesses eternal significance. It appears, then, that the significance of the Parable of the Lost Son could be taken in more than a literal sense. Within this interpretation, it could easily be considered one that speaks of the end times for both Israel and the Church. Actually, this seemingly insignificant parable regarding the lost son could have great significant to Christians. As Paul notes in his letter to the church in Ephesus:

Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints (Ephesians 6:14–18 NKJV).

The words "for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found" in the parable possibly represents of the rapture of the Church. We are then told the father had the fatted calf killed, and they all ate and were merry. This could be symbolic to the Wedding Supper of the Lamb, where Christ is the bridegroom and the Church is the bride. The next part of this parable clearly represents the prideful rebellion exhibited by Israel:

Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. . . . But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, "Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood

with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.” And he said to him, “Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours” (Luke 15:25, 28–31 NKJV).

The Hebrew people, ever since the divine covenant with Abraham, have stayed home to take care of the business at hand, working in the field and serving as God’s representative to the world. The older son’s bitterness toward the younger brother is clear by his words “this son of yours”—he does not even want to acknowledge this other son was his brother. Again, this is a profound parallel we see between most Jews and Christians in the world today and throughout the history of the Church. There are few who recognize the brotherly bond between Israel and the Church.

It is true that as of yet, the Father hasn’t killed the fatted calf in honor of the older son. He, along with His family, hasn’t yet had the opportunity to be merry. But that time will come. The Millennial Reign of Christ will finally provide the realization that all God offers to the Jews is theirs for the taking. That is, it is theirs for the taking when they finally realize Jesus is the Messiah and they repent, seek forgiveness, and accept Him for who He truly is! The parallels between the Parable of the Lost Son and the relationship between Christians, Jews, and God Almighty are literally uncanny when interpreted in such a manner.

“God’s time clock for the end-time generation is marked by events involving the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem. This does not mean that God favors the Jews over His church, but that He has appointed Israel as a major sign for recognizing end-time events. This is established in Daniel 9:24 where the phrases ‘thy people’ and ‘thy holy city’ are a reference to the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem.”^{ix}

Clearly, God still has a plan for Israel as a nation. Its rebirth in 1948 was a divine appointment. As the life-giving sap of God’s promise begins to flow to Israel, allowing its branches to become tender and its leaves to grow, we know the summer is growing near. As summer goes on, the days quickly pass—and before you know it, the harvest will be at hand. Hal Lindsey provides an interesting note regarding this time: “Even though Israel is now partially back in her ancient homeland, she isn’t at peace with the world around her. Until Messiah comes again and Israel turns to Him, the nation is still officially under God’s divine discipline.”^x

Even though God is still intimately involved in the affairs of the people of Israel, it doesn’t mean they are not under His discipline. That discipline will not only continue but will also increase in severity, as Israel is destined to endure the times of the Tribulation.

ⁱ Clarence Larkin, *Dispensational Truth* (Philadelphia, PA: Rev. Clarence Larkin Est., 1918), p. 151.

ⁱⁱ Robert Farrar Capon, quoted in Phillip Yancey, *The Jesus I Never Knew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), p. 177.

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- iii Ibid., pp. 151–152.
- iv *Prophecy Study Bible: New King James Version* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishing, 1997), p. 41.
- v Ibid., p. 41.
- vi Phillip Yancey, *The Jesus I Never Knew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), p. 268.
- vii *Prophecy Study Bible: New King James Version*, p. 1258.
- viii John Hagee, *Jerusalem Countdown* (Lake Mary, FL: Frontline, 2006), p. 129.
- ix Allen M. Barber, *The Day of the Lord* (Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing, 2011), p. 109.
- x Hal Lindsey, *The Promise of Bible Prophecy* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1982), p 171.