

6 Reasons 4 Ezra

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1 RESCUE

“Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter. If you say, But we knew nothing about this, does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay each person according to what he has done?” (Proverbs 24 11-12)

The plight of the Jewish people was prophetically described by Isaiah when he characterized them as people looted and plundered with no one to say, *“Send them back” (Isaiah 42)*. Throughout history the Jewish people have faced persecution and captivity. Although the captivity of communism ended some years ago, the aftermath still haunts the Jewish people of the former Soviet Union, and many face the captivity of impoverishment.

The clash of spiritual kingdoms and economic crises have caused further entrapment and a pressing need for rescue initiatives for Jewish people from Muslim nations, former Soviet Central Asia, and Latin America—in particular, Argentina.

Ezra International is committed to a program of rescuing those who are most at threat in all of the areas affected. Teams currently are working in all of these areas while there is still an opportunity to do so.

2 RETURN

“This is what the Sovereign LORD says: “See, I will beckon to the Gentiles, I will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders” (Isaiah 49:22)

The burden of the prophets and the focus of the scriptures directed towards Israel from the point that they became a nation was that obedience led to blessing, while disobedience led to exile (Deuteronomy 27-28). The Lord proclaimed that following their scattering, one day the people would be returned to the Land as part of the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21) to greet the Lord upon His return

to the Mount of Olives (Zephaniah 14).

The return would be of a greater magnitude than the first Exodus to the extent that people would no longer look back upon it as the Lord's greatest act of deliverance (Jeremiah 16:14-15).

It is the privilege of the Gentiles to provide the means, method, mode, and monies to process this miracle taking place in our time (Isaiah 49:22)—a time the prophets, and those who were exiled, dreamed of for over 2,500 years.

3 RESTORATION

“When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad! “ (Psalm 14:7b)

Aliyah is much more than a journey—it is the dynamic of the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21). As a result of Israel's disobedience, a number of defilements happened. Firstly, the defilement of the Lord's Holy Name (Ezekiel 36:16f), the defilement of worship and pure speech (Zephaniah 3:9), and the defilement of the physical land (Isaiah 24:4-6). The defilements are restored to a state of sanctification when the Lord reaches out His hand a second time (Isaiah 11:11-12) and the people are returned to the Land (Ezekiel 36:16f).

4 REVELATION

“Come let us reason together” (Isaiah 1:18)

As a biblically based ministry, a major task of Ezra International is to bring the revelation of God's plan for the Jewish people to their attention through the sharing of His word. Teams are trained to introduce Jewish people to the scriptures concerning their relationship with the Lord, their calling as a nation, and their place in the Land. The role of Gentiles in accord with Isaiah 49:22 is introduced, illustrating the reasons for the Christian-sponsored *aliyah* initiatives.

A second task of the ministry is in bringing the revelation of Israel and the role and destiny of the Jewish people to the church as well as explaining the “Mystery of Israel” from the scriptures (Romans 11:25). Teaching the full counsel of God on these matters is the divine method of combating the Christian anti-Semitism that paved the road to Auschwitz, and return the church to its rightful consideration of the Jewish people in salvation history and their role in redemption. The errors of replacement theology are explained along with the relationship between God, the Land and the Jewish people, plus their role in the drama of salvation history.

5 RECONCILIATION

“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Messiah and gave us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:18)

The relationships between Jews and Christians from the earliest days of the church have been marred by anti-Semitism—a hatred of the Jewish people without logical cause. Anti-Jewish teaching by the church fathers and various legislative measures by the church led to the Jews’ being persecuted, finding its worse expressions in the Crusades, the Office of the Inquisition, and, ultimately, in the Holocaust. The yellow star and the ghetto both find their origins in Christianity.

In the view of many Jewish people, the cross is nothing more than a sword that wants to destroy them rather than the vehicle called by God to bring them comfort (Isaiah 40) and return them to their ancient homeland (Isaiah 49:22).

The compassion and care involved in guiding them through the process of *aliyah* is the most effective method of healing the grievous wounds of nearly two millennia.

6 RESOURCES

“Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you” (Is 60:10b)

Aliyah initiatives must have a beginning (fishing), a middle (return), and an end (restoration). All of this needs resourcing. The cost of an individual's *aliyah* is hard to assess because the amount of work time, travel, and distances involved vary so much from case to case. Sufficient to say that the needs are great and the costs escalate due to the financial strains worldwide in all of the areas involved. Although Ezra International has a very minimal infrastructure, there are the costs of providing transport, passports, visas, and any number of other services, as well as physical items to help the olim on their way.

An Ezra International initiative in Israel has been the provision of housing and care for the elderly who would not otherwise be able to return and be welcomed by family members. Additionally, Ezra International is supporting two feeding programs in the Land, largely attended by new immigrants.

An overwhelming need is to resource teaching within the church worldwide in services, prayer groups, Bible studies, seminars, and conferences that will encourage churches to be an authentic expression of their calling to the Jew first (Roman 1:18). Contact your country's Ezra International office for details on arranging any of these activities in your area.

A most needed resource is prayer. Can we encourage you to start a dedicated Ezra prayer group in your church? Contact our offices to sign up for weekly prayer points by e-mail.

All funding to Ezra International's projects is by donation; no contribution is too small or too big. May we encourage you to support this prophetic work in action by regular giving?

About the Author

Dr. Frederick Wright and his wife, Maria, have worked with the Jewish people, with emphasis on the return, for 26 years in the former Soviet Union, former Soviet satellites, Ethiopia, and Israel. Author of a number of books and numerous academic articles on Jewish related matters, Fred is considered a pioneer and leading authority in the study of Christian anti-Semitism and post-Auschwitz theology.

About Ezra International

Since its founding in 1995, Ezra International has assisted more than 70,000 Jewish people from across the globe return to Israel, the land of their forefathers. Ezra International representatives work in Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, and other countries of the former Soviet Union, South America, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States.

Ezra International remains committed to assisting the Jewish people in agreement with the promises and prophecies of the Scriptures (Isaiah 49:22, Jeremiah 30:3, Isaiah 14:1, Jeremiah 3:18, Ezekiel 28:25, Ezekiel 37:21).

For more information about Ezra International, please visit our Website, **www.ezrainternational.org**

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