



And He will lift up a standard for the nations,
and will assemble the banished ones of Israel,
and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the
four corners of the earth. Isaiah 11:12

RESCUE | RETURN | RESTORE



May 2016

Your People Shall Be My People

By Rev. Gary Cristofaro

When the Bible introduces us to Ruth she is in her homeland of Moab. Unfortunately, her mother-in-law Naomi like so many Jewish people today was not in hers. Also, much like today Naomi longed to return home only after tragedy had befallen her. After the death of all the men in their lives, Naomi pleaded with her two daughter-in-law's to return to their own families and just allow her to go-it-alone.

Her daughter-in-law's responses differed at so many levels. Orpah feigned the customary sadness along with her brief hesitation, but then took advantage of the circumstances to return to her comfort zone. Ruth, however was adamant and determined. She clung to Naomi and declared the words that have set the standard for Israel loving Gentiles for generations to come. *But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me."* (Ruth 1:16-17)

Understanding Ruth's declaration is vital and key to our faith walk. We are now children of the living God and our inclusion into His family comes through Israel. The pagan world is shrouded in mystery and superstition and the belief that the "gods" of this world had to be appeased. For about four thousand years The Creator of the Universe has chosen to remove the mystery and make Himself known through His chosen. Firstly, to and through Abraham, Isaac and then Jacob who became Israel. Then later through one of Jacob's descendants, Yeshua (Jesus).

Yeshua said to the woman at the well in Samaria; **You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.** (John 4:22) The culture of the Samaritans had been severely corrupted. Their form of Judaism was a product of the influence and inculcation of Babylonian, Assyrian and Greek paganism. Yeshua's desire was to return them to the right path.

This is also Yeshua's desire for all of the Gentile pagan world even to this day. Shaul (*Paul*) tells us; **Therefore, remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without the Messiah (Christ), being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.** (Ephesians 2:11-12)

I believe it is a latter day phenomenon to see God's true church, much like Ruth, aligning itself with Israel and the Jewish people. Sadly, at the same time most of the world and some of the "church" is more like Orpah; giving politically correct lip-service regarding Israel and the Jewish people but acting in their own self-interest when it matters most.

"Fears of increased terrorism abroad and rising anti-Semitism in Europe have fueled a significant uptick in Aliyah over the past few years. With high-profile attacks like the Brussels bombings and November 2015 Paris attacks, European immigration to Israel is likely to pick up even more". {1}

Jewish people in country after country need our help. War, financial turmoil, poverty, anti-Semitism and the ever increasing threat of Islamic jihad are causing a growing number of Jewish people to long for their promised homeland. Our focus is on Jewish people trapped in these countries by poverty. Ezra International donors, staff and volunteers are the Ruth's of today. We do not wish to see one Jewish man, woman or child to be forced to go-it-alone.

“Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.”” (Zechariah 8:23)

{1} Massive increase in French aliyah expected despite slow start

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/210035#.Vxet-JMrLNA>