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# ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

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THEME

*Israel  
at war*







REV. JAAP DE VREUGD

# *A reeling cup and a heavy stone*

Sermon outline

**'Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem  
a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around;  
and when the siege is against Jerusalem,  
it will also be against Judah.  
It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem  
a heavy stone for all the peoples;  
all who lift it will be severely injured.  
And all the nations of the earth  
will be gathered against it.'**





**THEME ISRAEL AT WAR**

REV. CORNELIS KANT

**In numerous Bible studies, articles and sermons in recent decades, the conflict between Israel and the surrounding Arab nations, has been explained as an age-old fraternal dispute. A conflict that dates back to Isaac and Ishmael.**

**Although Hagar and her son Ishmael are being sent away from the Promised Land, they are given promises and a blessing: 'Behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly; He shall become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But My covenant I will establish with Isaac' (Genesis 17:20-21).**

**This does not sound like a curse on Ishmael and his Arab descendants.**

*Israel and Hamas  
A conflict between brothers?*











THEME  
ISRAEL AT WAR



DR. TOBIAS KRÄMER

*The woman  
and the dragon  
(Revelation 12)*

WHAT IS BEHIND THE WORLDWIDE HOSTILITY  
TOWARDS ISRAEL?



what about the woman? What happens to her next? Firstly, back to the starting point: the woman is brought into the desert by God. Here she is cared for and safe. However, the time in the desert is limited. It is designed for 1260 'days' or a specific sequence of 'times' (6+14)<sup>5</sup>. We are therefore talking about a period of time that has a beginning and an end. This means that the 'wilderness period' of the woman will end and therefore Israel will one day 'emerge' again. That sounds promising! But how should we visualise this?

From Israel's point of view, the desert is 'outside'. Far away from Jerusalem, perhaps even outside the land of Israel. If Israel is 'in the desert', this means that Israel has disappeared from the scene. The Jews are no longer there. They have left their land and are outside it. And that is how it actually happened. The Romans literally wiped Israel off the map in the 1st/2nd century. Thousands of Jews were murdered, tens of thousands were deported into slavery and uncountable numbers were expelled from the land. Israel was finished, there was no longer a people of Israel in the land of Israel!

Not in the land, but *outside* of it there was. In the 'desert' outside, in the worldwide dispersion and far from their homeland, the Jewish people survived throughout the centuries. Despite all the hardships and difficulties, the dispersion throughout the world was actually a place of safety for the Jews. The devil could not get hold of Israel. Even the last and greatest offensive against Israel, the Holocaust, could not wipe Israel out because the Jews were scattered all over the world. As strange as it may sound, the dispersion saved the

## The devil's means against Israel are manifold

Jewish people from total annihilation. Israel survived. Outside, in the dispersion, in the 'wilderness' (14-16).

Anyone who knows the biblical prophets even a little, knows that Israel will not remain in the 'wilderness' outside, i.e. in the dispersion. One day, the wilderness period will end and God will bring his people back. Israel will be restored and live in its land forever. This is a basic feature of biblical prophecy. Today we see Israel returning to its land. God is bringing his people from all over the world back home. And so, we can rejoice: *Am Israel chai*, the people of Israel are alive!

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Today we are living in the time of the return of the Jews. Israel's time of desolation is over, Israel is back! But what awaits Israel on its return? The answer is simple: the old enemy, the dragon. His hatred has not diminished and so he will once again attack Israel. With all the means at his disposal. This is to be expected until he is taken out of circulation (Revelation 20).

The devil's means against Israel are manifold. These include worldwide anti-Semitism, globally widespread anti-Israelism, the anti-Israel course of the United Nations, the Islamist anti-Jewish currents behind the Middle East conflict ('Throw the Jews into the sea'), the perpetuation of refugee status for Palestinians in the Middle East, the BDS movement and more. Satan's hatred of Israel resonates in people's hearts and leads to active hostility towards Israel in word and deed. That is the situation.

At the same time, however, God holds His

protective hand over Israel. God preserves His people and brings them to their goal. That is for sure. And so it says in Isaiah 43:1-6:

[1] *But now, thus says the Lord, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!* [2] *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you. [3] For I am the Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place. [4] Since you are precious in My sight, Since you are honored and I love you, I will give other men in your place and other peoples in exchange for your life. [5] Do not fear, for I am with you;*

*I will bring your offspring from the east, And gather you from the west. [6] I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth.*

An extended version of this Bible study can be found in Dossier #7 Die UNRWA und die Flüchtlingsfrage (Bad Homburg 201). Available from [www.israelaktuell.de](http://www.israelaktuell.de).

### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> For the identification of the woman, see Dossier #7, p 69-70. Mary cannot be meant. For in biblical times, Mary was not yet accorded the sovereign dignity as in v. 1.
- <sup>2</sup> On Satan's fall from heaven, cf. Luke 10:18; John 12:31b.
- <sup>3</sup> The desert as a place of safety has a long tradition in the Bible. Just think of the prophet Elijah, who fled from the persecution of Jezebel into the desert and was cared for by God there (1 Kings 17).
- <sup>4</sup> Since we are talking about Christians here, a new and different group is actually meant. The translation 'the others' therefore fits better than 'the rest'.
- <sup>5</sup> For these dates, see Dossier #7, pp. 70-74. In my opinion, this is the period of time until the beginning of the messianic kingdom.













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