ISRAELU

LOVE WHAT GOD LOVES:

SEEING ISRAEL THROUGH THE FATHER'S EYES

COURSE STUDY GUIDE

COURSE ONE | LESSON EIGHT





GOD IS ASKING EACH OF US TO STEP FURTHER INTO THE STORY OF ISRAEL'S RESTORATION.

ISRAELU

What's Our Role? *The Not-So-Fine Print of the Great Commission.*

In this lesson we'll consider how God invites all believers, through prayer and effective witness, to participate in Israel's restoration to the Father.

WHAT'S OUR ROLE? THE NOT-SO-FINE PRINT OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

IN ESSENCE

Jesus fully surrendered to His heavenly Father and did nothing on His own initiative, but only what He saw the Father doing. He called His disciples to "Follow Me." When we're aligned with Jesus, we'll be aligned with the Father's heart, and our feet will follow into daily action. The things on God's heart will be on ours.

Israel, God's firstborn, is today far from home and with limited ability to find the way back without help. The Father has asked us, His children by faith, to go, and bring His son home. We've been summoned by the Father to step further into the story of Israel's restoration. Will we do it? Will we share the hope of the gospel with Jewish family and friends? Will we pray for the veil to be lifted from their eyes?

GETTING STARTED

Group leader, read the In Essence *summary as you begin your time together. This will help set up the direction for this lesson.*

As you open the group time, give everyone an opportunity to answer this question.

- If you had to get the word out quickly, how would you go about it?

(What the *word* is, what *quickly* means — all open to personal interpretation.)

To get the word out, God chose you! He chose each of us to partner with Him in getting the greatest word, the gospel, to every nation, including back to the Jewish people, the original carriers. In our concluding lesson, let's consider our role in God's quest for a family.

LESSON EIGHT VIDEO

Group leader, stream the video teaching.

As you watch the video teaching, use the following prompts and space provided to record anything that stands out to you.

1. **"What would Jesus do?"**

2. **God is asking each of us to step further into the story of Israel's restoration.**

3. **Ezekiel's first assignment, and it's a mandate for us as well, was to prophesy to the bones, speak to Israel saying, "Hear the Word of the Lord."**

4. **Prophesy to the breath.** Call for the Holy Spirit to breathe spiritual life into the bones. *Pray!*

5. **Would you allow God to break your heart for Israel?**

6. **God, help us to be so like Jesus, that the sound of our cry becomes melted with His.**

> *Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off.'"* **Ezekiel 37:11**


O DRY BONES, HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD.
EZEKIEL 37:4

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Group Leader, read aloud the questions and prompts below and lead the discussion.

As we begin the final discussion of *Love What God Loves*, let's summarize what we've covered so far, which will then lead us into the discussion questions below.

- **God is establishing a people for Himself.** It's an international family of faith made possible by the blood of Jesus and His indestructible life.

- **God chose Abraham and his natural family, Israel, as vessels through whom the revelation of God, His plan of salvation, and the Messiah would be offered to the world.**

- **Gentile believers in Jesus are grafted into Abraham's family by faith and become co-heirs with Israel of the promises and partakers in the Great Commission of making disciples of Jesus in every nation.**

- **Over the millennia, Satan has made countless efforts to derail God's purposes by silencing and eliminating Israel (the messengers), disqualifying Jesus, and dividing Abraham's family of faith.** But all God's purposes will be fully upheld. We have a blessed hope.

Discuss these questions.

1. **The Church, made up of Jewish and Gentile believers, is God's Plan A in reaching the world with the gospel.** Who is God's Plan A in reaching the Jewish people with that message? Read Romans 11:11-14.

Several years ago, a Messianic Jewish ministry conducted a survey and asked a cross-section of Jewish believers how they came to faith in Jesus. Ninety percent reported they did so through the friendship and influence of a Gentile friend.

Read Ezekiel 37:1-8 and answer the questions below.

2. **How confident are you in sharing the gospel with Jewish friends or family members?** Is there a degree of fear and uncertainty involved? If so, discuss it within your group.

It's very possible some group members have not yet had the opportunity to have a friendship with a Jewish person. We encourage you to ask the Lord to bring His people into your life.

3. **What are the most effective ways to share your faith with others – Jewish or not?** Are there nuances when sharing your faith with a Jewish person?

Read Ezekiel 37:9-14 and answer the questions below.

4. **Has your prayer life been affected as you've participated in Love What God Loves?** If so, in what way(s)?

5. **Read Isaiah 62:11-12.** What are we called to proclaim?

6. **Over the years and in various circles, there has been a criticism or concern that too much emphasis on Israel gives the impression of divine favoritism.** What are your thoughts on that? Is it an issue of favoritism, or God's faithfulness?

7. **What is a primary take-away for you from Love What God Loves?**

CONCLUSION

When we see Israel through the Father's eyes, we'll find a people who are waiting, whether they know it or not, for the Church to present a true and loving witness of Jesus, their Messiah. All believers are summoned into this calling to some degree. Israel is God's firstborn and He is passionate for their restoration, not because of favoritism, but according to His name and His faithfulness to His promises.

Will you prophesy to the bones, speak to the Jewish people, and give them the gospel?

Will you prophesy to the breath, pray, on their behalf?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you close your time together, see if anyone within your group has a need for prayer, and take a few minutes to cover those.

Since the Church is Plan A for seeing the Jewish people come to know the Lord, pray that the Lord will bring more Jewish people into your paths.

Pray for opportunities to share with others what you've learned from *Love What God Loves: Seeing Israel Through the Father's Eyes.*

THEREFORE GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS...

MATTHEW 28:19



PERSONAL STUDY FOR BETWEEN SESSIONS

This section is designed for your personal study to help you dig deeper into some of the themes from the teaching and discussion.

DAY ONE

TO THE JEW FIRST

Do you remember this famous phrase from our parents: "Because I said so!" Not a few of us committed to never using it. It's doubtful we were successful. Sometimes it's just the best answer.

We might be tempted to employ "because God said so" to answer the question of why the gospel is to the Jews first. Hear Paul's words in Romans 1:16:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

The word ***first*** in the Greek is ***proton*** and speaks of priority and not just a chronological order.

Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, put a priority on the gospel going to the Jewish people. Why?

God is a God of order. We see it in the natural world with time and seasons, animal migration – endless examples. God set an order within the family and in our finances. We see detailed purpose and order in the building of Moses's Tabernacle, and God gave an order to the gospel – to the Jew first.

In the Old Testament Law, the "firsts" were important to the Lord.

1. **What do you learn about every firstborn and first fruits of the harvest in Exodus 13:1-2 and Exodus 22:29-30?**

Read Leviticus 27:30. What do you learn about the tithe (first ten percent)?

2. What is Israel called in Exodus 4:22?

The firstborn opened the womb of the mother with the expectation and hope of more children. In a similar way, Israel opened God's "womb," if you will, with the expectation of more spiritual sons and daughters.

Jesus is called the "first fruit" of those who have been raised from the dead, but the great expectation is the resurrection of the dead at His return (1 Corinthians 15:23). It's the same pattern of expectation - more will follow.

The firstborn was "holy" to the Lord, which doesn't mean perfect, rather set apart. Israel was called a holy nation – not perfect but set apart for purpose.

3. These may be review but read these verses and note God's purpose for Israel. What did He call His people?

- **Isaiah 43:1, 10; Acts 1:8**
- **Isaiah 41:8-9**
- **Isaiah 42:6; Matthew 5:14**

for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.
Romans 11:29

Israel was perfectly fashioned and prepared because of their revelation of God and His truth. No other nation had the message of one God, monotheism – instead, the world worshiped many false gods. No other nation received the revelation of God's holiness and the message of life being in the blood and a substitutionary sacrifice for sin – only Israel, when God gave the Torah. God gave Israel the covenants, the Scriptures, the prophecies and the promise of a Messiah, the Anointed One, who would carry our sin away, heal our diseases, and reign as a King. No other nation was looking for a king from Bethlehem, from David's lineage – only Israel. The Holy Spirit gave Daniel the timeframe for the Messiah's appearance. No one else had this.

Israel had been perfectly prepared to receive Jesus, which is why He was often angry at the religious leaders for not discerning the signs of the times, the days in which they lived. They should have known and so many didn't.

Today, Israel is mostly separated from the Father with the exception of the wonderful believing Remnant. The Father wants His son home. He wants the light relit. The servant needs to again be about the Father's business of carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth.

The late Elie Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor and author, once compared modern Jewry to a messenger who had been hit on the head and knocked out. When he woke up, he couldn't remember the message, who had sent him, to whom he had been sent, or the very fact that he was a messenger.

The Father wants His messenger to carry His message. The Jewish people have a message, and they are a message. They are a message of God's faithfulness – not favoritism – faithfulness.

4. **Read Ezekiel 36:19-23.** On what basis can we be sure God will uphold His promises?

Read also verses 32-36. Who also benefits when Israel is restored to the Father?

REFLECTION

"To the Jew first" was Jesus's ministry pattern (Matt. 15:24). It was the order given to the disciples (Matt. 10:5-6). It was the pattern of the apostle Paul, although he was an apostle primarily to the Gentiles. When he entered a new city, he went to the synagogue first before turning to the Gentiles (Acts 13:5, 46; 14:1).

5. **Below is a quote from a participant in a focus group for this course.** Does it resonate?

> *"I'm troubled at why I am treating these people as 'other' and considering them 'could have been Christians' and 'those who rejected Jesus' - instead of evangelizing them. Tonight, I've been forced to confront what is in my subconscious."*

6. **When you read or hear that the priority of the gospel is "to the Jew first," what thoughts come to your mind?**

Let's trust God's divine order and His perfect heart of love. At the end of the day, if the above isn't convincing, we can always agree the gospel is to the Jew first "because God said so."

FURTHER STUDY

If you'd like more on God's priority pattern of "to the Jew first," scan this QR code, or click on this link for an article written by FIRM staff, titled "To the Jew First - The Meaning of Romans 1:16."

DAY TWO

ENTERING THE TRAVAIL

To see the spiritual awakening of the Jewish people something needs to change within the Church — **tears are needed.**

Dr. Michael Brown said only a baptism of tears for Israel can wipe away the stain of blood – speaking of the Jewish blood spilled in the name of the Church since the early centuries.

It's true in the natural and the spiritual: *birthing comes with a travail.*

We rightly call for God's power, but we're seldom aware of His pain.

1. **Paul counted all things as loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Jesus.** Read Philippians 3:10 and note what Paul desired to know about the Lord.

2. **Read Colossians 1:24.** What was Paul's response to suffering? What was he willing to do?

In Isaiah 25:6 we read of a magnificent banquet prepared on Mount Zion that the Lord will prepare for His Bride – it's the marriage supper of the Lamb. It's a beautiful and sure hope we have, but in verses 7-8 we learn what must be swallowed up – that which has covered all peoples, a veil that has stretched over all nations. In verse 8, the Lord *will swallow up death for all time.* Even the wedding feast will come only after the travail over death is finally over.

Birthing, bringing something to life, involves pain and resilience. We need to have a vision for what God wants to accomplish and a steel dedication to see it through. Jesus is our example.

Hebrews 12:2: *...who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame*

Will you allow God to break your heart for what breaks His? Are you willing to enter the travail for the lost in every nation? Would you step into the travail for Israel's salvation? Would you have God allow you to feel the pain the Jewish people have experienced? The Bible says God weeps with those who weep.



TO SEE THE SPIRITUAL AWAKENING OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE, SOMETHING NEEDS TO CHANGE WITHIN THE CHURCH

—

TEARS ARE NEEDED.

If this is something you're ready to do, we encourage you to use your own words, even now, and ask the Lord to reveal His heart to you. Tell Him you're willing to join His travail over His lost sons and daughters.

If we're to see Israel through the Father's eyes, what will we see?

3. Read Jeremiah 8:21-22; 9:1, 10-20. Summarize Israel's condition and God's heart.

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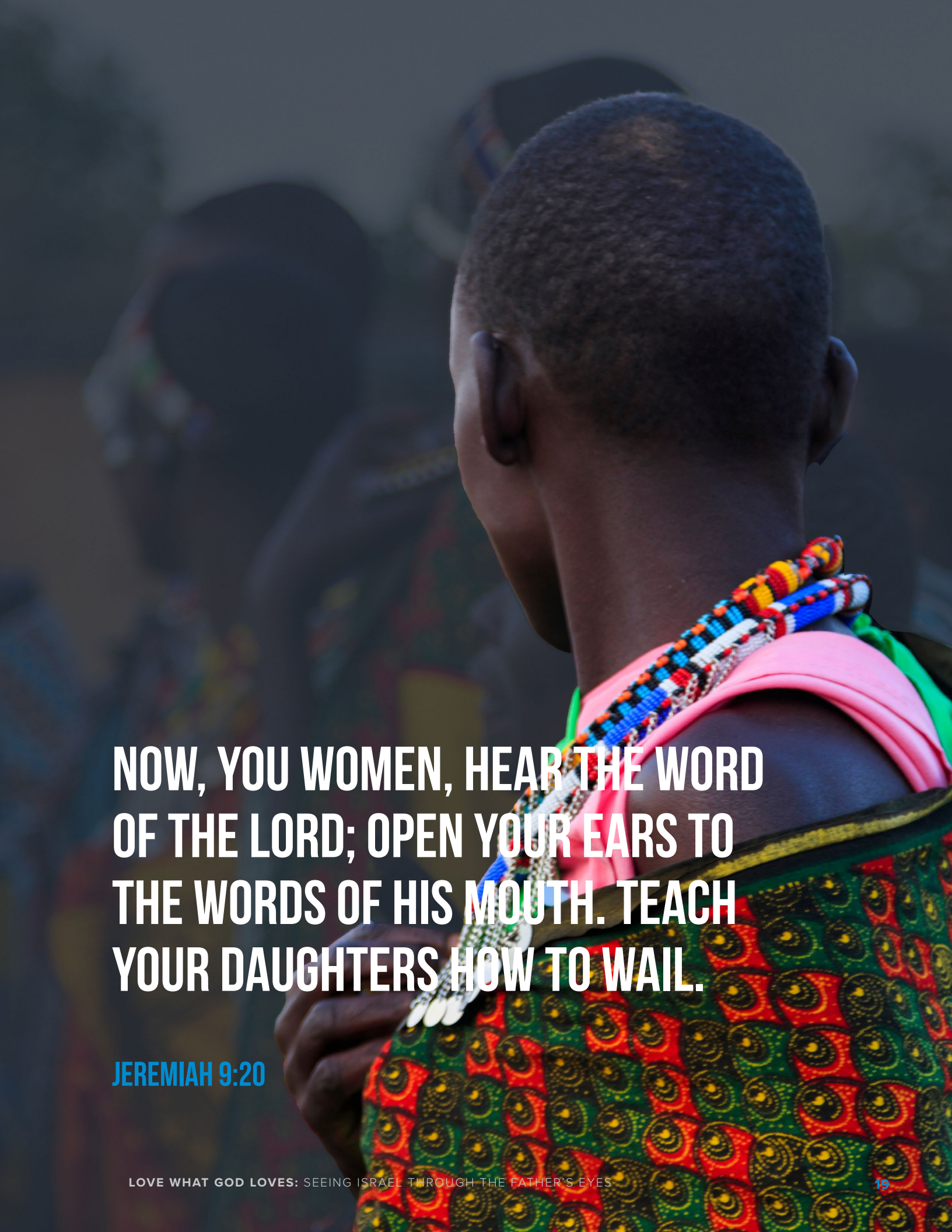
> *Now hear the word of the Lord, O you women, and let your ear receive the word of His mouth; teach your daughters wailing, and everyone her neighbor a dirge.* **Jeremiah 9:20**

"Send for the wailing women, that they may come!" the Lord said, "Make haste, take up a wailing for us."

There is a beautiful tribe of people in Kenya called the Maasai. They are expert herdsmen and it's critical for the family financially and socially to maintain their cattle. The Maasai women are known for their ability to communicate house to house through distinctive cries and wails. Different cries carry different messages. There is a unique wail which becomes a desperate cry for help when the man has discovered one of his cows has been stolen. The woman of the house will let out the distinct cry, a call to the neighbor, "The cow has been stolen! Come!" The women carry the wailing message from house to house and the village will come running and coordinate their efforts to recover the lost cow.

Oh, how much more is the value of a son or daughter, lost in sin and darkness.

Jesus wept over Jerusalem; they were like sheep without a shepherd. Paul had "great sorrow and unceasing grief" in his heart for his kinsmen, natural Israel, who were separated from the Messiah. Jeremiah wept over Israel's condition. God wept. Will you?



NOW, YOU WOMEN, HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD; OPEN YOUR EARS TO THE WORDS OF HIS MOUTH. TEACH YOUR DAUGHTERS HOW TO WAIL.

JEREMIAH 9:20

REFLECTION

4. **Read Psalm 126:1-6.** What is the promise in verses 5-6?

5. **Close your time today in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to reveal His heart to you regarding His lost son.**

> *Thus says the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker: Ask Me about the things to come concerning My sons, and you shall commit to Me the work of My hands.* **Isaiah 45:11**

If you have time and would like to see more of God's heart regarding the lost and His joy over those being found, read Luke 15 where Jesus presents the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son.

FURTHER STUDY

If you'd like more on how to pray for Israel and the Jewish people, scan this QR code, or click on this link for an article written by FIRM Staff, titled "How Do I Pray For Israel? 3 Helpful Tips."

DAY THREE

SHAMMAH THE SON OF AGEE A HARARITE

In our final *Personal Study* section for *Love What God Loves,* let's widen the view to again see the big picture of what God is doing on the earth, and how our individual lives are deeply connected to His story. *You matter in God's story, and you affect God's story!*

In Lesson One, Michael shared that the prophecy in Genesis 3:15 reveals God's plan on our behalf. In the Garden of Eden, after the fall of man, God spoke these words to the serpent (Satan).

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise (crush) you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.

The Lord Himself, the Seed of the woman, the Son of God – will crush Satan's head. It's a progressive revelation throughout the entire Bible as to how God will accomplish it, through whom, the connecting promises and provisions, the pitfalls, and the ultimate restoration of all things ever intended to be restored! *What a story!*

What drives God to move on our behalf like this? *Love.* The Father is a God of love, and He desires a family for Himself in a renewed creation with no more sin or effect of sin. And He will have it.

We've used the visual of a family throughout this course. God also uses an agrarian term to express what He's doing. He is working toward and readying all things for the time of the great, ultimate harvest.

1. **Read these verses about the harvest and write out what you learn.**

   - **Matthew 13:24-30 and 36-43**

   - **Matthew 9:37-38**


PRAY. GO. BRING THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS BACK TO THE FATHER.

- **John 4:35-36**

The harvest of souls, the family of God, is in an "already and not yet" process. Now is a time of harvest – today if you hear His voice, respond – now is the time of salvation, but there's coming a day when Jesus will return for the ultimate harvest at the end of the age. He's passionate about it, eager to return, and desires that all would come to the Father through faith. *For God so loved the world.*

Along the way, the good seed of the Word of God has come to you. If you've given your life to Jesus and received His gift of forgiveness and eternal life, then He's called you into His story. He wants each of us to arise and take our appropriate place, fulfill our role on His behalf, clear your throat and give voice to the message of God's love and salvation through His Son, Jesus.

2. **Read Romans 12:1-2 and write out Paul's exhortation to believers.**

3. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:20.** What are we called and what is our calling?

King David was known as a great warrior and had in his company a select group of men who were like the special forces. Men of renown. Men of passion and dedication. Men who understood sacrifice. They were known as "David's mighty men."

4. **Read 2 Samuel 23:11-12 about Shammah and note below what he did.**

Do you see the spiritual truth in this natural story? It's a true story, but it presents to us a spiritual lesson. There was a field full of lentils – there was a harvest that needed protecting. The enemy was violent and the people were afraid, they ran, but not Shammah. He took his stand in the middle of the field, stood his ground against the enemy, and defended that harvest. His love for the king compelled him.

Shammah's name means *desert.*
His father's name, Agee, means *I shall increase.*
He was called a Hararite, meaning *mountain dweller.*

Shammah's name speaks of dryness, barrenness, without water. It's the same condition of our lives before we met the Lord. But we have a Heavenly Father whose all-sufficient supply is ready to pour into our lives – He will bring His increase into us. He will forgive us. He will be our healing. He will wash and refresh us with the water of His Word. Because of the Lord, we are meant to be mountain dwellers, living on the heights, protected, with tremendous vision. *Arise barren one and be filled to overflowing.* For love of King Jesus, take your place in the middle of the field, which is the world, and defend His harvest.

Stay awake. Be alert. Pray. Have a tool in one hand and a sword in the other. Even if everyone around you runs in fear, will you stand? The King is coming, there is a harvest today, but the ultimate harvest is coming. Will you give your life for His story?

REFLECTION

5. **What is your response to Shammah's example?** Write out your thoughts below.

6. **Read the In Essence lesson summary provided at the beginning of Lesson Eight.** As you have considered this topic What's Our Role?, have there been further questions come to your mind, or perhaps poignant moments when some dots were connected for you? If so, write them out.

We thank you from Jerusalem for sharing this time in the Word with us and participating in Love What God Loves: Seeing Israel through the Father's Eyes. Thank you for considering God's full story for creation, especially Israel's role, and our individual roles as sons and daughters by faith.

We pray you've seen Israel through the Father's eyes. We especially pray you've seen the Father and the Son in clearer ways.

If this course has added value to your walk with the Lord, we ask that you share it with others. Let's prepare the way for the Lord's return.

The Lord bless you, and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.
Amen.

FEEDBACK SURVEY

We hope you enjoyed your journey through this IsraelU study, Love What God Loves: Seeing Israel through the Father's Eyes!

Your feedback is incredibly valuable to us as we continue to refine and develop IsraelU resources. Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts by completing a short online survey. Your insights will help us improve this course and better serve future participants.



THANK YOU FOR BEING A PART OF THIS EXPERIENCE!

ISRAEL IS GOD'S CHOSEN VESSEL, ENTRUSTED WITH A UNIQUE PURPOSE THAT HAS EVERYTHING TO DO WITH CONNECTING US TO GOD.

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