

# **THE FRIENDS OF ISRAEL TODAY**

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Chris Katulka, Looking Back and Forward

Hello everybody and welcome to the last show of 2015... it's been quite an exciting year for us here at The Friends of Israel Today. This year we launched our newly formatted magazine style radio program on 350 stations all around the United States and Canada... in addition we've been streaming our program globally on our Friends of Israel Today podcast for people to listen online... and we've seen countries like Israel, Australia, Germany, England, countries in Africa and South America all tune in to listen, which is such an encouragement to us here because we believe the message of the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah needs to be heard!

This year we've studied God's Word together... some of the passages that we looked at were Scriptures like the life and promises made to Abraham, we looked at the temptations of Jesus, we studied certain feasts of Israel like Passover, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah. We even looked at the book of Leviticus and tried to see it a little bit differently so that we can appreciate how God was working in the life of the ancient Israelite believer who desired to worship Him.

On top of studying God's Word together we had some amazing guests join us on the program this year. We had Dennis Prager

earlier in the year... he was such an exciting interview... he came on to talk about the power of the 10 commandments and how the 10 commandments impact our lives today even though they were written more than 3000 years ago.

We spoke with Dr. Dan Wallace of Dallas Theological Seminary on the validity of the New Testament text... that as we enter into an age of skepticism when it comes to the Bible as a whole... Dr. Wallace argued that the New Testament text is one of the best preserved and most documented manuscripts in human history... and we have enough evidence to prove they are reliable... even today.

We were blessed to have UK based Melanie Philips on our program in the Fall to talk about the rise of anti-semitism in Europe and how many Jewish people are leaving Europe for safety... leaving for places like Israel. And In the same vein we also had Erick Stacklebeck from CBN news on to talk about the rise and threat of ISIS globally.

Finally, we had Director of the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus... Josh Reinstein and Israeli Consul General Yaron Sideman on the program to talk about events happening in Israel and ways Evangelical Christians can show Israel their support.

My friends we have been busy here trying to bring you great content that fits within our mission statement as an organization... and that mission statement just to remind you is that we are a worldwide Christian ministry that desires to communicate biblical truth about Israel and the Messiah, while fostering solidarity with the Jewish people.

This means that we want the world to know the truth about the life changing power of the gospel of the Lord Jesus... the Messiah! And that's why we teach biblical truth about the Messiah of Israel... who we believe is Jesus! We also desire to teach biblical truth about Israel and God's plan for Israel both past, present, future! We believe that God laid out a detailed plan for Israel in the Scriptures, and we feel called to make sure Christians understand the richness of God's plan for Israel... and all of what that means to them as Christ followers today!

Finally, we want to make sure we stand in solidarity with the Jewish people. For as long as the Jewish people have existed, this tiny group of people in the world... bear in mind even today the Jewish people make up less than 1% of the world's population... this tiny group of people has experienced anti-semitism... and for those of you who don't know what anti-semitism is... anti-semitism is any form of hatred toward the Jewish people.

Think about this.... God made a promise to Abraham the father of the Jewish people... that through him all of the families of the earth would be blessed! That through Him God's redemptive plan would be realized. That through him all nations would come to know the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob through His promised Son. Because of that promise the Jewish people have been the target of Satan from the beginning. Massive empires like Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome... these massive empires all tried to stomp out the tiny little group of Jewish people, and yet through God's grace and the promise He made to Abraham God has kept them from being destroyed.

You know anthropologists who study the existence mankind from during the days of Abraham, Moses, King David, and even Jesus argue that a majority of mankind in the ancient world were either assimilated into another culture or annihilated. You know many small cultures like the Jewish people in the days of Rome were swallowed up by the Romans and they disappeared... same thing with the Assyrians and Babylonians... you were either assimilated or you were annihilated.

Think about it my friends... do you know any Canaanites? How about Hittites? Do you know any Babylonians who worship the way Babylonians worshiped more than 2500 years ago? Even though there is still an Egypt... the Egyptians of Egypt today are nothing

like the Egyptians of Moses day. These ancient empires are relegated to nothing more than museum artifacts.

Yet... somehow over the course of more than 3000 years in the face of physical and spiritual opposition the Jewish people have outlived everyone of these ancient empires. And to think that just 70 years ago... ONLY 70 years ago a man full of pure evil attempted to annihilate all the Jewish people... and succeeded in killing 6 million. And yet who stands as a testimony of the power of the God we serve... the Jewish people. On top of simply still existing today and being identified as Jewish... they also made their way back to the Land God promised them... this my friends has never happened in human history!

You know whenever I think about the Jewish people and all that they have been through throughout the course of their history my focus turns to my God. If God's promise to them is still tangible and real today... then how much more real are the promises of God in Christ Jesus for us... His church!

Think about the beautiful promises He made to us like... why be anxious about things... look at the way I freely clothe the lilies of the field, and the feed the birds of the air... "if this is how God clothes the wild grass or feeds the birds of the air, won't he clothe you even more!"

Or what about the promise of eternal security... that your belief alone in Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in your life has sealed you until the day Jesus returns. You are always His... through all the circumstances life throws our way.

Or one of my personal favorites... when Jesus says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Whenever I meet a Jewish person... or read about the nation of Israel today I am reminded of God's faithfulness to fulfill what He has started!

And that's how I want us to enter into the new year! I want us together in 2016 to stand confidently on God's promises and to remember He is the faithful promise keeper!