

The Testimony of Israel

God has a wonderful plan for Israel. They have been a part of His plan since the beginning, and they continue to be an important part of God's plan today and in the days to come.

It's quite fascinating to see such a small country (the size of New Jersey state) see such a target on it. It can seem at times like the whole world is fixated on this small country and stands opposed to it. Yet, this country still stands.

I believe the reason for it is because as much as people can dispute the Jewish right to this land, this land is not their land, this land is not my land, this land is God's land. And the Lord has promised this land to Israel.

- **Ezekiel 36:5**, *"Therefore thus says the Lord God: "Surely I have spoken in My burning jealousy against the rest of the nations and against all Edom, who gave My land to themselves as a possession, with wholehearted joy and spiteful minds, in order to plunder its open country." "*
- The animosity towards Israel, and the fixation on this land, is not just to provide for an alleged displaced people group, it's a spiritual battle against Israel and the God of Israel.

The Lord's promise of the land to Israel:

Genesis 13:14–17, *"And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; ¹⁵ for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. ¹⁶ And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. ¹⁷ Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you." "*

The promise confirmed to Jacob:

Genesis 28:13–14, *"And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: "I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. ¹⁴ Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed." "*

This is an unconditional promise made by the Lord. In Abraham's day a covenant was guaranteed by cutting animals in two and the two people walking between them. By doing so both parties were bound by the agreement. But in the account of **Genesis 15:7-18** only God was bound by the covenant. It was not dependent upon what Abraham did, nothing was required of Him.

*What a great picture of salvation.

What is one way that we see God at work in the world today? How do we see the truth of the Word of God today?

- By the survival of the Jewish people as a nation and the keeping of His promises towards them.

The price of disobedience:

First of all, we need to look back at what has happened to this nation.

The Word tells us that the Israelites would be scattered for their disobedience and forced to live in other nations.

Leviticus 26:33, *"I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste."*

Deuteronomy 28:64, *"Then the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known—wood and stone."*

1 Kings 14:15, *"For the Lord will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River, because they have made their wooden images, provoking the Lord to anger."*

We are seeing the evidence of this today, and we are seeing the effects of this today. The Word tells us that their land will be desolate (bleak and barren). As the rightful inhabitants of this land were scattered the land was no longer cared for as it was.

- "The land was under Turkish control from 1517 to 1917, and Turkey destroyed this land thoroughly. The rulers enacted ridiculous laws; for example, one which required taxes to be paid for live trees. The people cut down the trees so they wouldn't have to pay taxes! This country therefore

ended up in a truly wretched condition.” (from Unto Kunnas, *Kaarlo Syvanto - Pioneer: Forty Years in Israel* pg. 303-304) ¹

In 1866 in “The Land and the Book”, W.M. Thompson said: “How melancholy is this utter desolation! Not a house, not a trace of inhabitants, not even shepherds...to relieve the dull monotony...Isaiah says that Sharon (coastal area in Israel) shall be wilderness, and...(it) has become a sad and impressive reality.” ²

“In 1867, Mark Twain remarked about his visit to the Holy Land in his book, "The Innocents Abroad." He lamented, "Stirring scenes occur in the valley [of Jezreel] no more. There is not a solitary village throughout its whole extent – not for 30 miles in either direction. There are two or three small clusters of Bedouin tents, but not a single permanent habitation. One may ride 10 miles hereabouts and not see 10 human beings.”” (Hal Lindsey, 2009 WorldNetDaily.com)

A new day:

Beginning in the mid to late 19th century, many Jews began to return to the land. **Jeremiah 23:7–8**, “*Therefore, behold, the days are coming,*” says the Lord, “*that they shall no longer say, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’* ⁸ *but, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ And they shall dwell in their own land.*”

“In 1920 the League of Nations designated British-occupied Palestine as a homeland for the Jewish people.

“In 1948 Israel became a State. For the first time in 2000 years Jews could return to the Land unhindered. Since then millions of Jewish people have returned.” ³

Amazing the Lord’s timing in all this, doing such things when planes were becoming a means of transportation:

“...Nearly 50,000 Yemenites who had never seen a plane were airlifted to Israel in 1949 and 1950. Since the book of Isaiah promised ‘They shall mount up with

¹ Archbold, Norma Parish (1993). *The Mountains of Israel* (p. 25).

² Archbold, Norma Parish (1993). *The Mountains of Israel* (p. 29).

³ Archbold, Norma Parish (1993). *The Mountains of Israel* (p. 31-32)

wings as eagles,' the Jewish community boarded the 'eagles' contentedly; to the pilot's consternation some of them lit a bonfire aboard, to cook their food!"⁴

With the land once again being occupied by the Jews (its rightful inhabitants) the land once again is being cared for and becoming fruitful.

Ezekiel 36:8–9, *"But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel, for they are about to come.⁹ For indeed I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown."*

Isaiah 35:1, *"The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose;"*

Isaiah 35:6–7, *"Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.⁷ The parched ground shall become a pool, And the thirsty land springs of water; In the habitation of jackals, where each lay, There shall be grass with reeds and rushes."*

As you drive through Israel you quickly realize that it is now a lush land giving way to abundant trees (palm groves), various crops, and fruit (of which it is becoming a leading exporter of). No longer is it a desolate land. The Lord has done, and is doing, an incredible thing in our day.

The present day miracle of the nation of Israel has been unparalleled in history. The Jews have maintained a national identity for 2,000 years without having a homeland. Never before has an ethnic racial group survived outside of their country for more than 400 years, yet the Jews have done it for 2,000 years. The hand of God is no doubt evidenced through this!

Not out of the woods yet:

The Israelites for all of history have had to battle and fight for their existence. They have always been the scorn of the nations around it. The same is as much true today as it has been through history.

Ezekiel 35:4–5, 9-12, *"I shall lay your cities waste, And you shall be desolate. Then you shall know that I am the Lord.⁵ "Because you have had an ancient hatred, and have shed the blood of the children of Israel by the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, when their iniquity came to an end,"*

⁴ Peters, Joan (1993). *From Time Immemorial* (p. 41)

⁹ I will make you perpetually desolate, and your cities shall be uninhabited; then you shall know that I am the Lord. ¹⁰ “Because you have said, ‘These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess them,’ although the Lord was there, ¹¹ therefore, as I live,” says the Lord God, “I will do according to your anger and according to the envy which you showed in your hatred against them; and I will make Myself known among them when I judge you. ¹² Then you shall know that I am the Lord. I have heard all your blasphemies which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, ‘They are desolate; they are given to us to consume.’”

Psalm 83:2–5, *"For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; And those who hate You have lifted up their head. ³ They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, And consulted together against Your sheltered ones. ⁴ They have said, “Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more.” ⁵ For they have consulted together with one consent; They form a confederacy against You:"*

Today the nations are rising up against Israel as never before. It is not about possessing land they think is theirs, it's about coming into Israel for the purpose of extermination. No matter how much land has been conceded, the other side just wants Israel gone.

The survival of Israel through horrendous events such as the holocaust and now having them reborn as a nation and coming into the land again only incites the anger of Israel's enemies.

Arabs have been boasting for years that they will stop the Israelites from continuing on:

Before the six day war in 1967 President Abdel Rahman Aref of Iraq said on May 31, 1967 – *“The existence of Israel is an error which must be rectified. This is our opportunity to wipe out the ignominy which has been with us since 1948. Our goal is clear – to wipe Israel off the map.”*

Though these words were uttered and Israel gained a great victory in that war of '67 the feelings of hatred remained. President Muammar Qaddafi of Libya said on Nov. 12, 1973 – *“The battle with Israel must be such that, after it, Israel will cease to exist.”*

And more recently: George Galloway, a former Labor Party MP in Britain and married to a Palestinian, said at a discussion at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies on May 2, "The suicide bombers are freedom fighters, not terrorists. I salute all of the fighters and all of the martyrs of Palestine... Children throwing stones and becoming suicide bombers are heroes... we must support the PLO and assist them in wiping out the Zionist entity."

The issue is not about peace or about land distribution, the issue is and always has been about the existence of Israel. This is what the Muslim nations that border Israel are teaching and are inciting this hatred against Israel. Only they are not just fighting Israel but the God of Israel.

Israel needs our prayers!! The Lord is not done with Israel; He still has work to do with them and through them. But it's a wonderful reminder for us too that God will not give up on you. His promises are true and faithful. Keep trusting in God through all of your struggles and battles. He will accomplish all He said He will!

Ezekiel 36:22–24, *"Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God: "I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. ²³ And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord," says the Lord God, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. ²⁴ For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land."*