

## Israel Is A Modern Day Miracle

'Yahweh said to Abram, "Get out of your country, away from your relatives, away from your father's house and go to the land I will show you. I will make of you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great. You will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and I will curse those who curse you. In you will all of the families of the earth be blessed." Abram went as Yahweh had spoken to him ... Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed out of Haran. Abram took Sarai his wife ... all their substance they had gathered, the souls (servants) whom they had gained in Haran and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan ... Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem to the oak of Moreh. The Canaanites were then living in the land. Yahweh appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants." Abram built an altar there to Yahweh Who appeared to him. Abram left from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel (then called Luz) and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to Yahweh and called on the name of Yahweh. Abram travelled towards the South' (Genesis 12:1 to 9). At that time, Bethel was called Luz. Abraham's grandson Jacob changed the name of Luz to Bethel (Genesis 28:19).

'Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold. He went on his journeys from the South to Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, to the place of the altar he had made there at first. Abram called on the name of Yahweh ... Yahweh said to Abram ... "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward, southward, eastward and westward, for all the land you can see, I will give to you and to your offspring forever. I will make your offspring as (numerous) as the dust of the earth, so if you can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants may be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in its length and in its breadth for I will give it to you." Abram moved his tent and lived by the oaks of Mamre in Hebron and built an altar there to Yahweh' (Genesis 13:2 to 4, 14 to 18). 'Yahweh brought Abram outside and said, "Look toward the sky and count the stars if you are able to count them. So will your descendants be." Abram believed in Yahweh and He reckoned it to him for righteousness. God said to Abram, "I AM Yahweh Who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldee's to give you this land to inherit." ... In that day Yahweh made a covenant with Abram saying, "To your descendants I have given this land from the river of Egypt (Nile) to the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15:5 to 7 & 18).

'When Abram was ninety-nine years old Yahweh appeared to him and said, "I AM God Almighty. Walk before Me and be blameless. I will make My covenant between Me and you and will multiply you exceedingly." Abram fell on his face. God talked with him saying, "As for Me, behold My covenant is with you. You will be the father of a multitude of nations. Your name will not be Abram (high father) but your name will be Abraham (father of nations), for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful and I will make nations of you. Kings will come out of you. I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant to be a God to you and to your descendants after you. I will give to you and to your descendants after you the land where you are travelling, all of the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. I will be their God." ... God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife you will not call her Sarai but her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and I will give you a son by her. Yes, I will bless her and she will be a mother of nations. Kings of peoples will come from her" (Genesis 17:1 to 8 then 15 & 16). God said, "I will certainly return to you when the season comes round. Behold Sarah your wife will have a son" (Genesis 18:10). 'Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him' (Genesis 21:5). Sarai and Sarah both mean, 'Princess' but with different connotations. Sarai means 'My Princess', a name given by loving parents to a new baby daughter. Sarah means 'The Princess', a highborn woman, the mother to kings and nations as she has become. Abraham was seventy-five when God first promised him children but Abraham and Sarah had to wait a further twenty-five years before Isaac was born.

God said to Isaac, "Stay in this land and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands and I will establish the oath I swore to Abraham your father. I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the sky and will give to your descendants all these lands. In your descendants will all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 26:3 & 4). Isaac was the chosen son who was instructed by God Himself, not to leave their land. Abraham confirmed that when he wanted to choose a wife for Isaac. He sent his trusted servant back to Haran to seek Isaac's wife from his blood family. Abraham would have known about Rebekah who was a suitable woman to be Isaac's wife. Apparently Isaac, who was forty years old, had no say in his father's choice of wife although he would have known what Abraham was doing. Abraham said to his servant, "Go to my country, to my relatives and take a wife for my son Isaac." The servant asked, "What if the woman is not willing to follow me to this land? Must I take your son to the land you came from?" Abraham said to him, "Beware, you do not take my son there. Yahweh, the God of heaven, Who took me from my father's house and from the land of my birth, Who spoke to me and Who swore to me saying, 'I will give this land to your descendants.' He will send His angel before you and you will take a wife for my son from there" (Genesis 24:4 to 7). Abraham was adamant, Isaac would never leave the land that

would become Israel. Abraham had left behind a land steeped in idolatry and paganism and to qualify to become the leader in Israel, Isaac had to remain there. Jacob was able to go.

Isaac was forty when he and Rebekah married and twenty years later, Jacob was born (Genesis 25:20 & 26). 'Jacob left Beersheba and went towards Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there all night because the sun had set. He took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. He dreamed a stairway was set upon the earth and its top reached to heaven and behold, the holy angels of God ascending and descending on it. Behold, Yahweh stood above it and said, "I AM Yahweh, the God of Abraham your grandfather and the God of Isaac. The land whereon you lie, to you will I give it and to your descendents. Your offspring will be as numerous as the dust of the earth and you (through them) will spread abroad to the west, to the east, to the north and to the south. In you and in your descendents will all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I AM with you and will keep you wherever you go and will bring you again into this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised to you." Jacob woke out of his sleep and said, "Surely Yahweh is in this place and I did not know it." Jacob was in awe and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than God's house and this is the gateway of heaven." Jacob rose up early in the morning and took the stone he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured (olive) oil on its top. He named that place Bethel (meaning House of God) but the name of the city was Luz at first' (Genesis 28:10 to 19; Judges 1:23). 'Jacob went on his way and the holy angels of God met him. When he saw them Jacob said, "This is God's army." He named that place Mahanaim (meaning two camps)' (Genesis 32:1 & 2). 'Jacob travelled to Succoth, built himself a house and made shelters for his livestock. The name of the place is Succoth (meaning shelters). Jacob came in peace to the city of Shechem in the land of Canaan when he came from Paddan Aram (Northwest Mesopotamia) and encamped before the city. He bought the parcel of ground where he had spread his tent ... He erected an altar there and called it El Eloe Israel (meaning, God, the God of Israel)' (Genesis 33:17 to 20). 'God appeared to Jacob again after he came from Paddan Aram and blessed him. God said to him, "Your name is Jacob (supplanter). Your name will not be Jacob any more but your name will be Israel (Prince with God)." God named him Israel. God said to him, "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations will come from you, and kings will come out of your body. The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give to you and to your descendents after you" (Genesis 35:9 to 12). 'Jacob lived in the land of his father's travels, in the land of Canaan' (Genesis 37:1). Our salvation comes from Jesus via the Jewish people and the land that was later called Israel, so Jacob was correct when he said that land is the gateway of heaven.

By reading these verses it is plain to see, the Lord promised the land of Israel to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and to all of Jacob's descendents. God is continuously the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and that will never cease. Abraham sent away his seven other sons so Isaac could inherit all of the land. 'Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac but to the sons of Abraham's concubines (Hagar and Keturah), Abraham gave gifts. He sent them away from Isaac his son while he yet lived, eastward to the east country (now Egypt and the Middle East)' (Genesis 25:5 & 6). The Lord completely rejected the children of Abraham's concubines because they were not from the pure bloodline of Abraham's family. Sarah was Abraham's half sister (Genesis 20:12) so Isaac was from a pure bloodline. Isaac's wife Rebekah was his cousin so she was from the same family line. The Lord accepted Rachel and Leah and their children born to Jacob because they were cousins of Jacob so they too had a pure bloodline. Their maids Bilhah and Zilpah were not related to them but the Lord still accepted their children.

The covenant promise giving the land to the Jewish people was spoken by the Lord to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. The Children of Israel settled in the land under the leadership of Joshua and some Jews have lived there continuously since then. King David made Jerusalem the capital of Israel 4,000 years ago and it has been Israel's capital ever since. Israeli's were dispersed after the Romans destroyed the temple but the Lord has made it possible for the Jewish people to return to their rightful, God-given land. God has promised they would never again be uprooted. "Behold, the days will come," says Yahweh, "When I will turn again the captivity of My people Israel and Judah and I will cause them to return to the land I gave to their forefathers and they will possess it" (Jeremiah 30:3). "I will bring My people Israel back from captivity and they will rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them. They will plant vineyards and drink wine from them. They will also make gardens and eat the fruit of them. I will plant them on their land and they will never again be plucked up out of their land which I have given them," says Yahweh your God' (Amos 9:14 & 15). "You, mountains of Israel, you will shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel for they are at hand to come. Behold, I am for you and I will come into you and you will be tilled and sown. I will multiply men on you, all the house of Israel, all of it and the cities will be inhabited. The waste places will be built and I will multiply on you man and animal. They will increase and be fruitful and I will cause you to be inhabited like your former estate and will do better than at your beginnings. You will know I am Yahweh. Yes, I will cause men to walk on you, My people Israel and they will possess you and you will be their inheritance" (Ezekiel 36:8 to 12). The other seven sons of Abraham plus his grandson Esau all travelled around and finally settled in what is

now called the Middle East, Egypt, North Africa and all Arab lands, which collectively makes up many nations and some kingdoms, just as God promised Abraham.

Israel is mentioned in the Bible over 2,300 times but God has never, ever referred to Israel as Palestine, which was named Philistina by the Romans after the enemies of Israel. Arabs pronounced it as Palestina. The Land of Israel definitely belongs to God. He calls it, "My Land," many times (Ezekiel 38:16). "The Land is Mine" (Leviticus 25:23). "I have spoken against the residue of the nations and against all Edom (Esau's nickname) who have appointed My land to themselves for a possession" (Ezekiel 36:5). 'The Jewish people went forth out of His land' (Ezekiel 36:20). "They have divided My land" (Joel 2:3). The birthplace of the of the Jewish people is Israel. Their connection to their land dates back thousands of years where much of their history took place. We all need to remember, there has been a vibrant continual Hebrew speaking Jewish presence in Israel since the days of Abraham. Jacob and his family went to Egypt for four hundred and thirty years before returning to Israel and settling there but other Hebrew people did not travel to Egypt, they stayed in Israel. While Jacob's family were in Egypt, the righteous man named Job was in Israel. One of Job's friends Eliphaz (Job 2:11) was the eldest son of Esau (Genesis 36:15) and Job's tragic story was played out in Israel. Isaac, Jacob and Esau were all born in Israel. Esau (hairy) was born covered in red hair like a red, hairy garment and was later nicknamed Edom (red) (Genesis 25:25 & 30). The battle between David and Goliath was not played out in some remote area far, far away. It happened centre stage in the Land of Israel. Many more miracles have taken place in Israel since young David killed the giant.

Although the Children of Israel settled in Israel, they have not yet inherited all of the land the Lord promised to Abraham and his family. When the promise is fulfilled in its entirety, Israel will be huge (Genesis 15:18). The promised territory will extend from the River Euphrates, from Turkey south to modern day Kuwait, right across to the Egyptian Nile, taking in a great swathe of the Mediterranean Sea coastline and much of the Middle East. God selected the location for Israel plus all of the original nations. 'When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the children of Adam, He set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the Children of Israel. God's portion is His people. Jacob is the lot of His inheritance' (Deuteronomy 32:8 & 9). God had good reason for choosing that central location for His land and His people. Israel was the major crossroads on international trade routes connecting the areas now called Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. God carefully placed the Jewish people right in the centre of the known world to be His shining Light to the world. God's intention was for the world to see how they lived, worshipped and prospered under His rule. 'Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances as God commanded me so you should do so in the midst of the land where you go in to possess it. Keep and do them for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what great nation is there, that has a God so near to them as our God is whenever we call on Him? What great nation is there that has statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law that I set before you this day? ... Make them known to your children and your children's children' (Deuteronomy 4:5 to 9).

No other nation emanating from one family, from one couple (Abraham and Sarah) has lived continuously in their own land for thousands of years while maintaining their own national identity, ancient language, culture and religious beliefs. We are living in the days of the fulfilment of ancient prophecies. 'The Lord said, "Again will I build you and you will be built, O young Israel. Again you will be adorned with your tambourines and will go forth in the dances of those who make merry. Again you will plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria. The planters will plant and will enjoy its fruit. There will be a day when the watchmen on the hills of Ephraim will cry out, 'Arise you and let us go up to Zion to our God'. Sing with gladness for Jacob and shout for the Chief of the nations. Publish you, praise you and say, 'Lord, save your people the remnant of Israel.' Behold, I will bring them from the north country (northern hemisphere) and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth ... a great company will return here. They will come with weeping (for joy) and with petitions will I lead them. I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters in a straight way so they will not stumble for I am a Father to Israel and Ephraim is My firstborn ... They will come and sing in the height of Zion and will flow to the goodness of God, to the grain, to the new wine, to the oil, to the young of the flock and of the herd. Their soul will be as a watered garden and they will not sorrow any more. Then will the young women rejoice in the dance and the young men and the old together for I will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them and make them rejoice from their sorrow. I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness and My people will be satisfied with My goodness" says God' (Jeremiah 31:4 to 14).

Why did the Lord choose the Jewish people? Abraham was a very righteous man and wholly followed the Lord. Abraham's father was an idolater who actually made and sold idols so he did not teach Abraham anything about our Creator God. After Noah and the Ark, Abraham seems to have been the only wholly righteous man on earth. Ten generations after Noah, Abraham was born. How could Abraham be so knowledgeable about God? A simple calculation can explain that. Abraham was born 1,949 years after creation. Noah died 2,006 years after creation. That means Noah and Abraham were on earth at the same

time for fifty-seven years! The Ark landed on Mount Ararat (Genesis 8:4) up the mountain from Mesopotamia. Abraham's birthplace, Ur of the Chaldees was in Mesopotamia. It is very possible Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5) could have personally taught Abraham. How did Gentiles learn about creation, Noah's Ark, the Tower of Babel, Moses and the foundation of Judaism? We learned all of it from Jewish prophets, scribes and from those who were told by God to write it all down. It was the Jewish people who wrote down what God told them to write so we have an exact record of everything God wants us to know about Him and His plan for our redemption. All of this knowledge comes from faithful Jewish people who very carefully copied the Scriptures, word for word and gave the knowledge to the Gentiles after Jesus came. The Jewish people have done an extraordinarily good job of bringing the knowledge of God our Creator to the entire world. Without the dedication of the Jewish people, Gentiles would have no knowledge of the Lord. We have so much to be thankful for. God chose Abraham for the purpose of creating a special nation to teach the entire earth about God so He could reach out to the unsaved world and give them a chance of salvation. God needed someone to reveal Himself and His great works to the world and Abraham was there, righteous, believing, humble and just right for the Lord to create His nation through Abraham and his descendants. This happened at a time in history when the entire known world was lost in idolatry and wickedness, but God loved them and wanted to offer them a solution.

The Jewish people are the physical race through which our Saviour came and the Land of Israel is the only land on earth for which our Creator God gave the title deeds to people. God created and thus owns the earth and everything on it, including mankind. He chose to give His Land of Israel to His people whom He calls His inheritance (Isaiah 19:25). Just as Israel was made ready for the first coming of Jesus, so now Israel is being made ready for the second coming of the Lord. The return of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel, as a unified people after over 2,000 years of being dispersed around the world is in itself an absolute miracle and is unprecedented in all of human history. They speak the ancient language of Hebrew, albeit a modern version. The ten tribes previously thought of as being lost are now returning to Israel. If God had rejected His people, they would have been lost to assimilation in the countries where they fled and the Jews as a people would no longer exist. No other people have ever been dispersed for thousands of years yet remained a cohesive society. They were not assimilated into the various countries, Jews remained Jews wherever they lived and they are still returning to their rightful God-given home. This is all about the sovereignty of Almighty God. The Jewish people as a whole are a literal and precise fulfilment of ancient Biblical prophecies spoken by several prophets over hundreds of years. God has pardoned the Children of Israel and Gentiles are called on to comfort them, to speak kindly to them and about them! "Comfort, comfort My people," says your God. "Speak words of comfort to Jerusalem and call out to her, her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned" (Isaiah 40:1 & 2). Modern day disciples are the ones who are listening to the Lord's request for us to comfort and support the Jewish people returning to Israel. We support them in any way we can.

The Jewish people are the indigenous people of Israel and as such they have the right to their land, territory and all of the resources of which they have always owned, occupied, used or acquired. Sadly, Israel has ceded 88% of the land it acquired during the 1967 war. This territory was land to which the Jewish people had valid legal and historical claims, all of which are part of the ancestral homeland of all Jewish people. Judea and Samaria is territory that has historically, an important Jewish presence. It is the Biblical heartland of the Land of Israel. Hebron is where Abraham purchased a burial cave for his wife Sarah (Genesis 23:1 to 20), it is where Abraham is buried (Genesis 25:10), where Isaac, Jacob, Rebecca and Leah (Genesis 49:31; 50:13) are all buried. Shiloh is where the Tabernacle sat for 369 years and is where Joshua led the Children of Israel into the Promised Land (Joshua 18:1 to 10). Shechem is where Joshua declared he and his household would serve the Lord and where Joseph is buried (Joshua 24:15 & 32). Bethlehem is where Rachel is buried (Genesis 35:19), where King David was born (1 Samuel 16:4 & 13) where Ruth lived and married Boaz (Ruth 4:11) and where King Jesus was born (Micah 5:2; Luke 2:4 to 11). Bethel is where Jacob had the vision of the entrance to heaven (Genesis 28:11 to 19). Jericho is where the walls miraculously fell (Joshua 6:1 to 26). Jerusalem is where Abraham met Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18 to 20) and is where King David set up the capital of Israel (2 Samuel 5:7 & 9) and Jerusalem has been Israel's capital ever since. Jerusalem is where the two Temples were built (2 Chronicles 2:1; Ezra 6:5) and where the remnants of the second Temple still stand. Jerusalem is where Jesus lamented over His beloved city (Matthew 23:37), where He prayed for His disciples (John 17:1 to 26) and where He prayed and agonised over His coming torturous death (Matthew 26:39 & 42). Jerusalem is where Jesus walked, where He died, where He was resurrected and where the very first meeting took place with the disciples that ushered in the movement then called 'The Way' (Acts 9:2) and later became known as Christianity. Jerusalem is where the Last Supper was held (Luke 22:15). Jerusalem is where the Holy Spirit was poured out in the upper room and the gift of tongues was first given to believers (Acts 1:12 & 13, 2:1 to 4). The River Jordan is where Jesus was baptised (Matthew 3:13). The Sea of Galilee (in Hebrew, Kinneret) is where Jesus walked on the water (Matthew 14:25). It is obvious Israel is the home of the Jewish people, the descendants of Jacob. No other nation can claim such detailed history as the Israeli's.

We will take a brief look at the gradual building up of the miracle of modern Israel. Jerusalem was sometimes called Zion. 'King David took the stronghold of Zion, the city of David' (2 Samuel 5:7). From the word Zion we have the movement called 'Zionism' dedicated to the re-establishment of the Jewish homeland. Zionism is an international movement originally for the re-establishment of the Jewish national and religious community in Israel and later for the support of modern Israel. Zionism is embedded in very essence of God Himself, Who was the very first Zionist. His plan was to take the Jews from among the nations, gathering them out of all countries to bring them back to their homeland (Ezekiel 36:24). God's Zionist agenda throughout the Bible has been for Him to use His own chosen people to establish and inhabit His chosen land. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua and Caleb brought about the fulfilment of God's Zionist agenda. The prophets foretold of the Jewish people's dispersion then their current ingathering. The very existence of this small democratic Jewish nation of Israel thriving as it is, is truly a modern-day miracle. Israel emerged from the ashes of the terrible holocaust to ascend to great heights in every area of expertise and professionalism. We have the Bible's account of this miracle but we also have written historical accounts. About 160 years before Jesus was born in Israel, the War of the Maccabees triumphed over the Syrian/Greek Empire making sure Israel was ready to receive Jesus the first time. The Books of the Maccabees are not included in the Bible but Jewish passion for Israel along with the assistance of the Lord was an early taste of Zionism. The Hasmonean Family Zionist movement resulted in the new Feast of Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication, celebrated by Jesus (John 10:22). Ever since the Jewish people were scattered around the world, faithful Jewish believers continued to meet in their synagogues to read aloud the promises of God to all Israeli's, all over the earth. They constantly prayed, "Next year in Jerusalem." That prayer is slowly being fulfilled for millions of Israeli's.

During the 1890's a Jewish man named Theodore Herzl, a lawyer from Vienna, believed the Jews who wanted their own Jewish State would eventually have it and they would deserve to have it after all the suffering they had endured. It was a very difficult path that led to modern Israel. The people who worked alongside Mr Herzl in his Zionist movement knew their task was an important one, not just for the descendents of Jacob but also for the entire world. Jewish leaders from all over the world joined him. Their resolution was, "Zionism strives to create for the Jewish people a homeland secured by public law." Mr Herzl believed the Jewish State was essential to the whole world. At the time, no one realised just how important Israel would become. The Jewish people have been more successful under worse conditions than any other ethnic group. Millions of people have now finally realised, the world cannot exist without the Jewish people and many world leaders heap praise on the Children of Israel. Even non-believers can see the Jewish people were ordained to bring civilisation and the knowledge of God, our Almighty Sovereign to the world. They have done more to civilise the world than any other nation. Mr Herzl's Zionist dreams have been fulfilled. Secular people who visit Israel often 'feel' something they cannot explain. They describe the 'feeling' as an 'energy' or a 'supernatural influence' but people who know the Lord know it is His anointing over His land and over His people. Israel is the only nation on earth who have been persecuted, scattered and conquered then returned to their original land, on their original territory, under the same name, the same religious beliefs, the same language, the same calendar and the same laws they had thousands of years ago. To be a realist we must concede, Israel is a miracle.

The original founding of the Land of Israel was a miracle lead by Joshua. The nation's deliverance from Egypt occurred after many miracles. Israel's restoration after the Babylonian captivity then the Persian captivity was a miracle. After Haman unsuccessfully tried to eradicate all Jews in the known world then his subsequent hanging was a miracle of deliverance. The War of the Maccabees that occurred to wrest the nation from the Hellenistic influence became a miracle. The founding of the movement called Zionism began with a miracle. The restoration of the Land of Israel to the Jewish people in 1948 was a miracle. The victories won in subsequent wars fought in 1956, 1967, 1973 and others were won by dozens of recorded and unrecorded miracles. The obvious fact of the Lord God keeping millions of hate-filled Muslims at bay, stopping them from openly attacking Israel, is an ongoing and much appreciated set of miracles so constant and so vast, only the Lord Who loves His people could achieve this. Muslims want to annihilate Israel. Their problem is not with how much land the Israeli's have, their problem is the fact Israel exists. This hatred began with the descendents of Shem (the Jewish people) evicting the descendents of his brother Ham from the land of Canaan under Joshua's leadership. Canaan was Ham's son. If we look back in time to just after Noah's flood, Ham mocked his father Noah who cursed him, then Noah blessed Shem and Japheth (Genesis 9:20 to 27).

From 1897 onwards, Jewish people began returning to Israel. By 1914 close to 100,000 Jewish people were living there. In 1917 British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour declared Israel should be a national homeland for the Jewish people. The Australian Light Horsemen liberated Bathsheba and opened up the way for the liberation of Jerusalem, taken away from the Ottoman Turks and returned to Israeli's. The numbers of Jewish immigrants increased. They began to turn the deserts into fertile agricultural land just as God said they would. In 1939 the foolish British Government reneged on their own Balfour Declaration and tried to give Arabs

control. That did not quite work out as Israeli's refused to give up their land again. In 1945 the Arab League united seven countries to intensely oppose Jews living in their Jewish homeland. That did not work out either. Their next step in 1946 was to try to get the United Nations to force Israel to divide into two states, Israeli and Arab. That has never worked. Exactly fifty years after Mr Herzl founded Zionism, in May 14 1948 (in Hebrew, Fifth Iyar 5708) the modern State of Israel was born in one day, fulfilling the prophecy in Isaiah 66:8. David Ben Gurion announced, "The State of Israel, Eretz Yisrael heir to ancient Judea, Hebron and Samaria has been born." The United Nations officially recognised the new State of Israel as an independent nation. There were 650,000 Jewish people living in their own land to celebrate. After twelve hours the surrounding Arab nations declared war on Israel. The millions of Arabs were poised to attack Israel from several different directions at once. Israel only had 3,000 soldiers, 1,000 rifles, about 1,000 machine guns and very little ammunition. They had no armoured vehicles, eleven civilian light aircraft and only twenty pilots. Miraculously, obviously with the help of the Lord, Israel won a resounding victory and all of the Arab forces were decimated. That amazing miracle occurred in our day.

Israeli's won the 'Suez Affair' against Egypt in 1956. A group of miracles occurred during the Six Day War in June 1967. One miracle: The Egyptian commander in the Sinai desert surrendered because a hot desert mirage fooled him into 'seeing' hundreds of Israeli tanks when there was actually only about twelve! Second miracle: Jordanian forces welcomed Israeli tanks into Shechem because faulty communications led the Jordanians to believe they were Iraqi tanks coming as reinforcement! Third miracle: The Northern side of Jerusalem was taken by a lone Israeli scout soldier by mistake when he slipped and fell into a Jordanian trench at about 2:00am during a moonless night and he started shooting. 1973 brought the Yom Kippur War (Day of Atonement) victory. Another convincing Godly miracle took place on a cloudless October evening in 1973. A group of Israeli soldiers were patrolling the Golan Heights when they accidentally stumbled into a minefield. The soldiers poked around with their bayonets in an attempt to locate the mines when a strange wind rose up, blowing away about 50 centimetres of topsoil exposing over 1,000 landmines. As soon as the mines were exposed, the strange wind ceased and the soldiers were able to walk out of the minefield unscathed and the mines could be dismantled without anyone being hurt. No one can seriously believe the Lord has rejected Israel in favour of the church because the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable (Romans 11:1 & 29).

The borders of Israel were firmly established during the Six Day War in 1967. Jewish people are returning to Israel in droves. The Zionist dream is being fulfilled. Israel is a modern, independent state and country with a democratically elected government. God's purposes have been accomplished through His chosen individuals and those who have worked together with them. Israel is in fact the regathered descendants of Jacob/Israel. One day Israel will fully possess every centimetre of land promised to them by the Lord Himself. Israel's future lies in its past promises spoken more than 4,000 years ago. One day tiny Israel will be a massive country. Never again will the people of Israel be plucked out of their land (Amos 9:15). Jewish people have lived continuously in Israel for thousands of years. They have both Scriptural and legal right to live freely in their own land. They are the rightful indigenous people of their region. In reality, the land belongs to God and He has chosen the people whom He wants in His land. He is the divine Landlord and He has chosen His tenants. God's manifest presence has been in Israel since Melchizedek first met Abraham in Jerusalem (Genesis 14:18 & 19). God supernaturally manifested His presence through the fire and cloud as He led the Children of Israel until they eventually reached the Promised Land (Exodus 13:21 & 22). God's manifest presence came when Jesus walked all through the Land of Israel, preaching and teaching as He went. God will manifest His presence again when Jesus returns to rule the earth as our King and He will reign from Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:4).

Both Jews and Christians await our Messiah's triumphant arrival in His holy land to His holy city, Jerusalem from where He will rule the entire earth. Until the Day of the Lord comes, Zion's future is our future. The destinies of Jews and Christians are bound together by one Lord God Who communicates with us through the one Word of God. We all long for the day when the Land of Israel reigns supreme and Jerusalem is a praise in the entire earth. 'For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest until her righteousness goes forth as brightness and her salvation as a lamp that burns. The nations will see your righteousness and all kings your glory. You will be called by a new name which the mouth of Yahweh will name. You will be a crown of beauty in the hand of Yahweh and a royal diadem in the hand of your God ... I have set watchmen on your walls Jerusalem. They will never hold their peace day or night. You who call on Yahweh take no rest and give Him no rest until He establishes and until He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth' (Isaiah 62:1 to 3, 6 & 7).

Amen and God bless you.

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