

## Israel Is Not Palestine

Israel is not Palestine and the land has never ever belonged to Arabs, Moslems or the descendents of Ishmael. It is important for people to know the facts about Israel, given the misinformation sent to us via the media who are almost always biased in favour of Israel's enemies. Some of the people who promote the most negative attitude towards Israel, is the media. They are wickedly biased against the Jews. Shame on the media and shame on their organisations for allowing such biased reporting. Now we will read the truth about God's promises to Abraham regarding Israel, and then we will look at the disputed territories.

Note: Don't ever call the land, Palestine. In the Bible it is called the land of Israel and that has never changed. Palestine means the land of the Philistines and it was named that by the Romans. Israel and Judea had been nations for over 1,000 years, but were defeated by the Roman Empire. The Romans exiled or murdered hundreds of thousands of Jews, then in order to obliterate any connection of the Jewish people to their land, renamed it Palestine after the Jews' Biblical enemy, the Philistines. For the next 2,000 years no other national group developed in that land and no ruler ever chose Jerusalem as its capital. Instead, different peoples came, colonised, ruled then disappeared. Jews remained a constant presence throughout these changes, and always kept Jerusalem as their capital, as Jews were always the majority. The number of Jews slowly grew as exiled Jews returned in periodic waves of immigration; their numbers growing and at times, falling. The region was an impoverished, barren and thinly populated area. There was plenty of room for returning Jews to settle in Israel, without displacing the few Arabs who lived there.

The Lord promised Abraham a huge swathe of land for his descendants. 'On the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land; from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates.'" (Genesis 15:18). One day, as the Lord promised, Israel will include all of this land. When the Lord God of Israel makes a statement, it always comes true because He has spoken it. God's covenant with Abraham guarantees that the boundaries stated in Genesis will one day hold true. God promised to Abraham and his descendants, as a perpetual inheritance, the land between the Euphrates and the Nile Rivers.

The land of Israel is deeply embedded in the hearts of the Jewish people. See Psalm 102:14; 'For your servants take pleasure in the stones and favour her dust'. Israel is their land, given to them by God and every non-Jewish person on earth needs to realise that. See Jeremiah 32:41; "Yes, I (the Lord) will rejoice over them (the Jews) to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly and in truth, with My whole heart and with My whole soul. I will restore their fortunes, says the Lord." We can see that the Lord has indeed 'planted' His people back into the Holy Land and they will stay there. Read Jeremiah 30:3; "The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will release from exile My people Israel and Judah, says the Lord, and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they will possess it." God is calling Jews from all over the world to return to their land.

Why is Israel the 'Holy' land? Because the Lord has chosen to establish His name there as we can see in Nehemiah 1:9b; 'I will gather them and will bring them to the place where I have chosen as a dwelling for My Name'. Isaiah 60:21; "Also your people (the Jews) shall all be righteous; they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of My (God's) planting, the work of My hands, that I might be glorified."

We have established that Israel was promised to Abraham and his descendants (the Jews) so it is their land and will always be their land. It was originally known as Hebron (Genesis 13:18) and later as the land of the Hebrews (Genesis 40:15). What is now known as the West Bank, was once divided peacefully between the original tribes of Issachar, Zebulun, Naphtali, Gad and Manasseh and was later called Judea and Samaria, which were cities within ancient Israel. Gaza was known as Gaza way back in Genesis 10:19 and was owned by Noah's son Ham, Ham's son Canaan and his descendants. The Canaanites became a wicked people and through the judgement of God, were ejected from the land of Canaan by the Israelites (Deuteronomy 9:4) who were then known as Hebrews. The land allotted to Judah was from the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea (Joshua 15:1). Gaza became part of the territory owned by the tribe of Judah, so it was part of the land of Israel from the beginning. The Lord changed Jacob's name to Israel (Genesis 32:28) and his twelve sons who fathered the twelve tribes and all of their descendants, were known as the children of Israel.

Jewish habitation in the land of Israel has been continuous ever since the twelve tribes moved there. Even after the Romans exiled or murdered much of the Jewish population, many remained in Israel and flourished throughout the region. While in the Diaspora, Jews always promised to rejoin those who had never left Israel. Judaism was the majority religion in Jerusalem. Throughout history, much has been written about the exiled Jews, but little was known about the Jewish families who have lived continuously in Israel for thousands of years. Only 160 years before the birth of Jesus, the Jews warred against the might of the Greek/Syrian Empire and won, securing Israel once again as the land belonging to the Jews. That happened before the Roman Empire invaded Israel.

No Arab Palestinian nation had ever existed in Israel. After Rome fell, Israel became a minor district ruled by a succession of empires. Arabs living in Israel were Syrians left over from the Greek/Syrian occupation prior to 160 BC. These Arabs did not have a distinct Palestinian identity prior to the 1967 war, so until then, they never demanded their own land. Because the Jewish settlements were built on uninhabited land, they did not displace any Arab families. Since over a million Arabs live in Jewish Israel, why should Jews not be allowed to live in Arab territories?

After the Balfour Declaration in 1917, Article 80 states that Israel's only impediment to settlement building was self-imposed. The territories of the West Bank and Gaza were never allocated to a sovereign nation nor were they assigned any fixed boundaries. That means both Jews and Palestinian Arabs may have equal claim over all of that land and the Israeli's can put their fence wherever they want to. Israel's boundary once included all of what is now Jordan. So we can see that Israeli control of the disputed territories is not an 'illegal occupation' and Israeli settlements do not violate any international laws. The media reporters who make such claims are lying, simply for reasons of anti-Israel political propaganda. Israel has given vast swathes of land to the Palestinians just to make peace and that highlights Israel's willingness to make significant compromises for the sake of peace in their region. Every time Israel tries to make peace with the Palestinians, it is the Palestinians that reject it.

Palestinians are actually a 'made up' race. The term Palestine was coined by the Romans, who named the land Palestine after Israel's ancient enemies, the Philistines. Those who lived there were then known as Palestinians. Arabs did not consider the land of Israel theirs and they refused to call themselves Palestinians. During the British Peel Commission in 1937, an Arab leader said there was no such place as Palestine. In the Anglo-American Committee during an inquiry in 1946, another Arab leader said there was

no such thing as Palestine in all of history. To the UN Security Council in 1956, yet another Arab leader Shukairy, said Palestine was nothing but southern Syria. Then eight years later, the very same man, Ahmed Shukairy became the founding chairman of the PLO and said he would drive the Jews into the sea. Today's 'Palestinians' are actually Arabs, and are close relatives of those living in neighbouring countries, and from where most of them or their ancestors came from.

Now back to our introductory sentence: Israel is not Palestine and the land has never ever belonged to Arabs, Moslems or the descendents of Ishmael. The land of Canaan was never promised to the Arabs nor did they live there in any great numbers until modern times and they make a number of conflicting claims. The Arabs could not have descended from the original Palestinians – the Philistines; nor could they have descended from Abraham's eldest son, Ishmael. They make these claims to try to 'prove' they are the legitimate heirs of the land God gave to Abraham.

Arabs are a mixed race of several people from that region. They are made up of the ancient descendants of Noah's three sons. As we have already read, the people in the area were Ham's descendants. As they broke away into various family groups they called themselves Kenites, Kenizites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizites, Rephaims, Amorites, Canaanites, Gergashites, Jebusites or Egyptians but never Palestinians. There is no direct genealogy tracing today's Arabs back to Ishmael, and they could not be descended from the land's original inhabitants. God promised the land to Abraham before Ishmael was born. Since it already had many inhabitants, how could Arab descendants of Ishmael be at the same time, descendants of the original inhabitants of the Promised Land? That is quite impossible! Further to that, Abraham was not from Canaan, he was from Ur of the Chaldees and had immigrated to Canaan. Ishmael's mother Hagar, was an Egyptian. Neither Abraham nor Hagar were among the original inhabitants of Canaan and are not even remotely related to the Canaanite people. As we know, Hagar and Ishmael were banished from the Promised Land to live permanently in the Wilderness of Paran (Genesis 21:21), which is near Beersheba (Genesis 21:14). The Lord told Abraham to send Ishmael away so he would not be an heir with Isaac and therefore could have no claim on the land (Genesis 21:10; Galatians 4:30). Ishmael's descendants never lived in Canaan but settled in the Arabian Peninsula. They did not live in Israel when it was called Palestine so they cannot with any honesty claim to be the 'original inhabitants'. Today's so-called 'Palestinians' are promoting a lie but it is the lie, encouraged by the secular media that the world loves and gladly uses as a 'cudgel' against Israel.

It wasn't until about the seventh century AD, when the rather despicable religion based on the demonic 'dreams' of a mentally sick man called Muhammad took hold in Mecca and Medina. If 'Palestine' is so important to the Moslems, why is it not once mentioned in the Quran? In Exodus 15:13 to 15 the Bible talks about the peoples of the area being afraid of the Israelites and they included the 'inhabitants of Philistia' and the 'inhabitants of Canaan' who melted away. Isaiah 14:29 & 3 and Joel 3:4 also mention Philistia but never refers to Philistia as the land of Canaan or Israel. Philistia was where the Philistines lived and it was where Gaza was then and is today. This is true history not mentioned in the Quran. Even the Philistines were not the original inhabitants of the land; they were an Aegean race. Arabs living in Israel today cannot claim ethnic, linguistic or an historical relationship to the Philistines and cannot justify calling themselves 'Palestinians'. Those who claim to be Palestinians are in fact Arabs by birth, language, Islamic religion and culture and have emigrated from surrounding Arab countries. Most are attracted by Israel's prosperity, created by Jews returning to their Promised Land.

Even though a great deal of the Quran is plagiarised from the Bible, there is no mention of Jerusalem even once. King David established Jerusalem as the capital of Israel more than 3,000 years ago. Islam has been around for about 1,200 years. Even when Moslems controlled all of the Middle East, Jerusalem was not given any importance and was largely ignored. The population was mostly Jews, some were Christians but only a very few were Arabs. As late as 1964, there was no reference to Jerusalem in the Palestinian National Covenant. Suddenly and inexplicably, the Moslems began to insist that Jerusalem belonged to them as much as the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and had always belonged to them. Moslem writers only very recently began to pretend that Jerusalem was as holy as Mecca or Medina, and even call Jerusalem 'our most sacred place'. The Palestinians demand the 'return' of Jerusalem as their capital, when it has never in history been their capital. Even when the mosque was built in Jerusalem, the area was not given any special significance in Islam. It may come as a surprise, that Yasser Arafat's grandfather, Amin Mohammed al-Husseini was a Jew-killing partner of Hitler, was a terrorist in his own right and he was also Arafat's mentor and guide. The PLO was formed in 1964, not in Israel but in Cairo by Egypt's President, Nasser. The Moslems have invented a 'history' to suit themselves.

Jerusalem is the capital of God's chosen land and is loved by God and was lamented over by Jesus in Matthew 23:37 to 39. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, murdering the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a mother fowl gathers her chicks under her wings, and you refused! You would not! You were not willing! Behold, your house is forsaken. For I declare to you, you will not see Me again until you say, 'Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Jesus said He would not come back until the Jewish people could say of Him 'Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord'. In other words – to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah. The Jewish people have to be made ready to welcome Him back. God is at present, preparing Israel for that great event. The way the Lord gave Israel back to the Jews, and the gathering of the exiled Jewish people back to their own land is nothing short of a miracle. Our Jewish Messiah will one day return to the Jewish capital, Jerusalem. Jerusalem does not and never ever did belong to the Arabs. Moslems do not want the Messiah to come because He would prove their religion to be false, and so they are resisting the return of Jews to Israel and they are resisting the return of Jesus. Anybody who resists the regathering of the Lord's people, resists the return of the Messiah. Read Jeremiah 30:3 & 24 (this is God the Father speaking); "For behold, the days are coming when I will release from captivity (exile) My people Israel and Judah, and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they will possess it." Now turn to verse 24; "In the latter days you shall understand this." That makes it clear, that this prophecy is about the latter days, which is now. All of Jeremiah chapters 30 & 31 tell us all about the return of the Jews to Israel, which precedes the return of the Lord Jesus.

The Jews have been exiled into hundreds of different nations around the world for over 2,000 years, yet by a miracle, they have remained Jews. If we took a Minoan family and exiled them to far away lands for only two hundred years, their bloodline, culture, religion and beliefs would assimilate into the countries where they lived, which is probably what happened to the Minoans and other ancient races of people. However, the Lord has kept His chosen people, the Jews, as they are and they have always remained Jews in spite of terrible persecutions and vast distances. They are still a distinct people with their own customs, language, culture and music. That in itself is an amazing miracle. Another amazing miracle is their return to the land promised to Abraham about 4,000 years ago.

Israel is like a melting pot, blending the new arrivals into one people with one culture, one language and their own unique holidays, feasts and celebrations.

In Jeremiah 31:10 it says; 'Hear the word of the Lord, O you nations, and declare it in the isles and coastlands far away and say: "He Who scattered Israel will gather him and will guard him as a shepherd guards his flock'." That verse is a message from God to all nations, islands and people all over the earth. God is telling the whole earth that He is gathering His people to Israel. This prophetic scripture is being fulfilled in our time. Despite all the pressure, opposition, wars and struggles, Israel will continue to be populated by Jews in their own land. God has decreed it, spoken it, and is performing it, and there is nothing anyone can do to stop God's plan for His people. Read Jeremiah 31:40; "Jerusalem shall not be plucked up or overthrown any more to the end of the age." Amos 8:14; "I will bring back the exiles of My people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards and drink the new wine from them. They shall also make gardens and eat of the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land and they shall no more be torn up out of their land which I gave them, says the Lord your God."

When God set Israel apart, He set them apart as a people, not as individuals. When God forgave them and reconciled with them, He reconciled with them as a people (Jeremiah 31:34). God has reconciled with them in the exact same land as He once disowned them, then once in their own land, they will appoint themselves a head, or in modern language, a Prime Minister, which they have done. Read this in Hosea 1:10 & 11; 'Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea which cannot be measured or numbered; and instead of it being said to them, "You are not My people" it shall be said to them "You are sons of the Living God." Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together and appoint themselves one head, for they shall go up out of the land, and great shall be the day for the reborn Israel'. The regathering of Israel is one of the main themes of Biblical prophecy. The above scriptures are just a few but there are at least twenty more following the same theme.

There is no place named Palestine: it is Israel, it has been Israel since the Israelites moved there and it will always be Israel, occupied by Jewish people. Israel was erroneously and temporarily called Palestine by pagans, who did not believe in God the Father or our Saviour Jesus. If there ever is a Palestinian state, it will wither before it grows. See Psalm 129:5 & 6; 'Let them all be put to shame and turned backward who hate Zion. Let them be as the grass upon the housetops, which withers before it grows up'.

Amen and God bless you.

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