

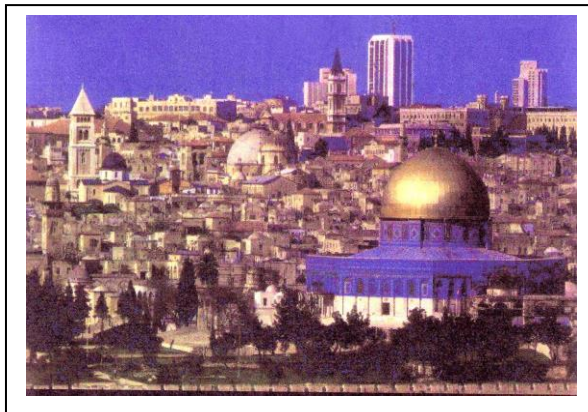
THE ISRAELI - PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

- The Land, the City & the Temple

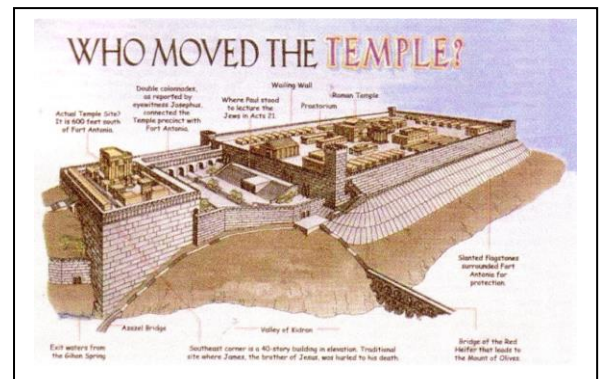
Speaker: Tan Sin Liang



The Land



The City



The Temple

“THE ISRAELI - PALESTINIAN CONFLICT”

- the Land, the City & the Temple”

Tan Sin Liang

Introduction

- Is there an explanation to The Israeli - Palestinian Conflict?
- Clarification: the name “Palestinian” does not just refer to people living in Palestine today but include wider players to the conflict – the Arab states.
- You cannot begin to understand the Middle East conflict unless and until you understand the history behind the conflict.
- And we’re talking about 4000 years of history!
- Journey with me thru amazing history and see
 - how a nation that twice disappeared from the face of the earth for 2,000 yrs, come back against all the odds?
- No nation has ever achieved that.
- Did you know that before 1948 you could not find “Israel” on the world map?
- Did you know that about 100 years ago, the Hebrew language virtually did not exist?
- Do you know that “Assyrians,” the “Jebusites” etc mentioned in the OT have disappeared
 - but the Jews, as a race, have not disappeared (despite Holocaust)

- since the time of Abraham.
- We now see the re-birth of this ancient nation in our life time.
- What were the events leading to the birth of Israel?
- What role did Great Britain and the UN play in the creation of Israel? How did they get involved?
- The Holocaust was the greatest tragedy for the Jews in Jewish history.
 - What role did it play in the birth of Israel in 1948?
- What is this conflict all about?
 - is it over territory?
 - is it over homeland?
 - is it over religion?
 - is it over race?
- Whose land is it anyway?
- Why fight over 9,000 square miles when there's 5,000,000 square miles of land in the Middle East over 22 countries?
- What is so special about the land, Israel? No oil.
- How did it all begin?
- As we journey thru 4,000 years of history of Israel
 - as you look into History & Bible.
 - hope you will see, not so much the Bible confirming History but History affirming the Bible (history fulfilling the Bible)
- As you look into Bible

- you will see all prophecies in Bible concerning Israel in the past (ie before founding of Israel in 1948), have been fulfilled
 - there're other prophecies concerning future of Israel, Jerusalem, the Temple, yet to be fulfilled.
- As you juxtapose historical events of Israel & the Bible
 - you'll see as it were, God is the "Script writer",
 - the world leaders through centuries are merely "actors" on the world stage "acting out their roles" according to God's Script (God's prophecies)
 - these "actors" can't change the "Script" because they're, as it were, cast in stone
 - Finally, is there a solution to this Conflict?
 - Is this conflict part of God's eschatological plan?
 - Is this leading to the 2nd coming of Christ?

Theme : The Land

The Abrahamic Covenant

Prophecies

- I will establish my covenant as an **everlasting covenant** **between me and you (Abraham) and your descendants** after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your generations after you (v.7)”
- “The whole **land of Canaan** where you are now an alien, I will give you as an **everlasting possession** to you and your **descendants** after you....(v.8) (Gen. 17: 7&8)

How It all Began

(1) The call of Abraham to The Promised Land (2000 BC)

- “Terah took his son Abram, his daughter-in-law Sarai, and his grandson Lot (his son Haran’s child) and left *Ur of the *Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan. But they stopped instead at the village of Haran and settled there. Terah lived for 205 years and died while still at Haran.”

* Chaldeans – modern Iraq

* Ur – near to city of Basra

(Genesis 11:31 & 32)

- coincidentally Terah was planning to go to Canaan
 - however, he never made up to Canaan. He settled down ½ way in Haran (modern day Syria) and died.

- “Then the Lord told Abram, ‘Leave your country (i.e. Haran) and your relatives and your father’s house and go to the land I will show you.’” (v.1)

- “I will cause you to become the father of a great nation” (v.2)

- “I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. All the families of the earth will be blessed through you” (v.3)

- “So Abram left, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was 75 years old when he set out from Haran. He took his wife Sarai...” (v.4)

(Genesis 12:1, 2,3 & 4)

- So God called Abraham out of his homeland to a land without a name
 - but God said “I will show you.”
 - so Abraham did not know where he was going but he knew who he was going with (lesson to learn in our life?)
 - important: not where you’re going but who are you going with
- So Abraham packed his bags (with his wife, nephew & servants) and headed for the land God would show him
 - No questions asked. No maps. No compass
- Upon arriving at Canaan, God promised Abraham –

“To your descendants I will give you this land” (Gen. 12:7)
- What sort of land did God give to Abraham?
- When Abraham arrived, 2 things about this land that probably shocked him & disappointed him -
 - the land was already occupied by Canaanites *(Gen. 12:6)* (How to settle down?)
 - there was a severe famine
- The famine was so bad Abraham had to flee to Egypt
- If you were Abraham, what would you say to God?
- So God gave Abraham a “Promised Land” that did not look promising
- One night as Abraham fell into deep sleep God spoke to him –

- “Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated for 400 years.
- But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions.
- In the 4th generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”

(Genesis 15:13, 14 & 16)

(2) Where was the Promised Land?

- On that same night God made a covenant with Abraham (“Abrahamic Covenant”)

- “On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham and said —
- ‘To your descendants I give this land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates
 - the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadomites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites’ ”

(Genesis 15:18-21)

- “river of Egypt” i.e. W.el-Arish River
- So the Biblical Promised Land is “The Land Between 2 Rivers”.
 - River of Egypt & Eupharates River.

- According to the Bible, the biblical Promises Land promised to Abraham is many times larger than present day Israel
 - would cover whole of Jordan, parts of Saudi Arabia, Iraq & Syria
- The occupation of this part of Promised Land has not been fulfilled, some believed it will be fulfilled when Christ come again.
- Interestingly, the Koran similarly defined and claim the Promised Land as follows -

“God, the Supreme Being, has blessed what lies between Al-Arish (in Egyptian Sinai) and the Euphrates, with special sanctification of Palestine”.

(3) The Abrahamic Covenant - The Promised Land (Gen. 17:7-14)

- (i) Everlasting Covenant between GOD & Abraham & his descendants.

- “I will establish my covenant as an **everlasting covenant** between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you” (v.7)
- “The whole land of Canaan where you are now an alien, I will give you as an **everlasting possession** to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God”. (v.8)
- “Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your generations to come”. (v.9)

(ii) Sign of Covenant: Circumcision

- “This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised”. (v.10)
- “You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. (v.11)
- “For the generations to come every male among you who is 8 days old must be circumcised...”(v.12)
- “My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant” (v.13)

Summary

- The Abrahamic covenant was over the Promised Land
- Everlasting covenant (“1,000 generations” 1 Chr. 16)
- Evidence of Covenant = circumcision (covenant in flesh)
- God’s covenant was with Abraham & his descendants
- Q: Which descendants of Abrahams?
 - Abraham had 2 sons (Ishmael & Isaac)
 - the Muslims lay claim to the Promised Land thru lineage of Ishmael
 - the Jews lay claim to the Promised Land thru lineage of Isaac
- How did this come about?

(4) Children of Abraham & His Descendants

(a) Ishmael vs Isaac

One day while God was talking to Abraham, he asked God

- “O Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer (Abraham’s servant)

- Then the word of the Lord came to him

“This man will not be your heir but a **son coming from your own body will be your heir**”

(Genesis 15:2 & 4)

- That night God took Abraham for a walk under the star-lit sky, God said to Abraham -

- “Look up at the heavens and count the **stars** – if indeed you can count them. Then He said to him “**So shall your descendants be**”.

- Abram believed the Lord and he credited it to him as righteousness.”

(Genesis 15:5 & 6)

- And Abraham (at least 75 yrs old with a wife, barren & past child bearing age) believed God
 - that he will have a son
 - and from his son there will be descendants as many as stars in the sky (that’s what you call a “quantum-leap faith)

- When Abraham broke the news to his wife Sarah
 - they were the happiest couple in whole of Canaan
- But did God say when? No
- After waited for 10 long years (& consulting all the gynaecologists in Canaan) Sarah probably said :

“Since God has not been doing much the past 10 years, let’s help God”.
Let’s try surrogacy” (common practice then)

- With Sarah’s blessing, Abraham slept with their servant Hagar, Ishmael was born (Abraham 86 yrs old, Sarah 76 yrs)
- But Ishmael was not God’s covenanted child
 - Sarah banished Hagar & Ishmael into the desert
 - Ishmael had 12 sons & they formed the 12 tribes of Ishmael (*Gen. 25:16*)
- So Sarah stepped in to help God (since God wasn’t doing very much), messed things up and sowed the seeds of Middle East conflict between Jews & Muslims. And we’re paying the price today!
- 13 years later (Abraham 99 yrs)
 - God spoke to Abraham

- “You will be the **father of many nations**”
- “No longer will you be called Abram (which means “father”);

your name will be Abraham for I have made you a father of many nations.”

(Genesis 17:4 & 5)

- After waiting for 25 years (Abraham 100 yrs & Sarah 90 yrs)
 - Isaac was born (God’s covenanted child)

(b) Esau vs Jacob

- Isaac married Rebekah
 - like Isaac’s mother (Sarah), Rebekah was also barren
 - so what did he do?

■ “Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. (v.21)

■ The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, “Why is this happening to me?” So she went to inquire the Lord (v.22)

■ The Lord said to her,

“2 nations are in your womb, and 2 people from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.” (v.23)

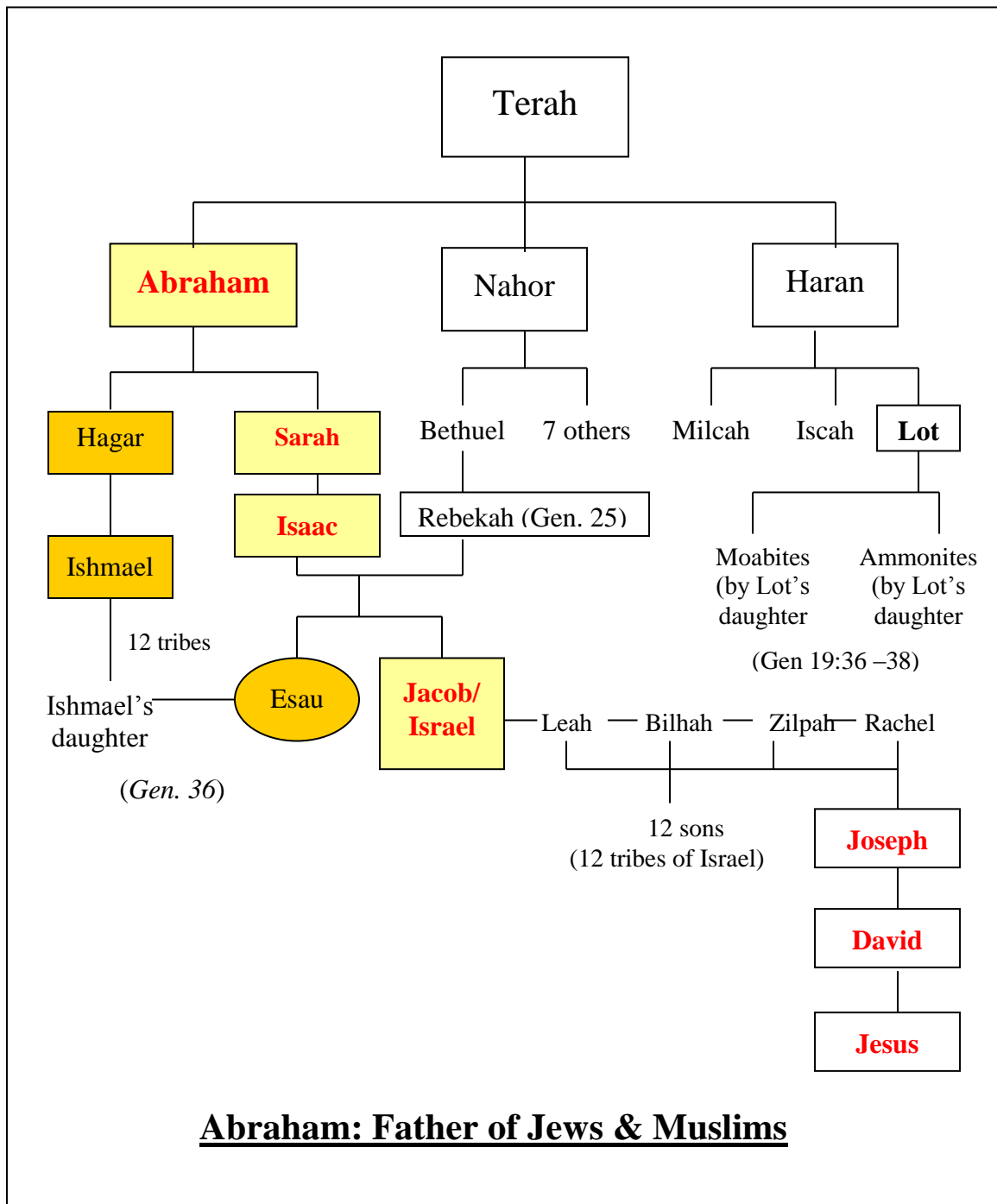
(Genesis 25:21 & 23)

- We know what happened when these twin boys (Esau and Jacob) were born and grew up
 - Jacob grabbed Esau’s legs at birth (grabber & schemer)

- years later Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew/porridge
- Jacob tricked his father Isaac at death bed to bless him instead of Esau (being the 1st born son)
- Jacob became the “supplanter”
- Esau (or Edom) married Ishmael’s 2 daughters
 - became father of the Edomites (*Gen. 36*)
 - perpetual enemies of Israel (to this day?)

Summary

- Abraham is the father of both Jews (Isaac, Jacob) and Muslims (Ishmael, Esau).
- The Jews are claiming the Promised Land through Isaac & Jacob as the descendants of Abraham.
- The Muslims are claiming the Promised Land through Ishmael & Esau as descendants of Abraham.



(5) With Whom Did God Affirm Abrahamic Covenant?

(i) God Affirmed His Covenant with Isaac (Abraham's son)

(a) God's Affirmation Before Birth of Isaac (Gen 15:18-21)

- Abraham thought God's covenant was with Ishmael but God corrected him that His covenant was with Isaac (unborn).

- “And Abraham said to God, ‘Yes, may Ishmael enjoy your special blessing’ (v 18 NIV)
- “But God said, ‘No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name ‘Isaac’; and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him’ (v 19 NASB)
- “As for Ismael, I will bless him also, just as you have asked, I will cause him to multiply and become a great nation. Twelve princes will be among his descendants. (v 20 NIV)
- “But my covenant is with Isaac who will be born to you and Sarah....” (v 21 NIV)

(Gen. 15 : 18-21)

(b) God's Affirmation – Fleeing To Egypt (Gen 26 : 2-4)

- When Isaac (Abraham's son) was tempted to go to Egypt (because of famine), God told him to stay in Canaan.

“Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live. Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands.

(Genesis 26:2-4)

(ii) God Affirmed His Covenant with Jacob (Abraham's grandson)

- When Jacob (Isaac's son) left Canaan to look for a wife, God re-affirmed His covenant with Jacob.

“I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the lands on which you are living. Your descendants will be like dust of the earth... All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring...I will bring you back to this land...”

(Genesis 28:13-15)

Summary

These 3 passages in Genesis clearly demonstrate –

- God's affirmation of Abrahamic covenant with Isaac & Jacob and their descendants.
- According to Genesis, God's everlasting covenant was not with Ishmael or Esau

Theme: The Land

Establishment of Kingdom of Israel

Prophecy

- “Know for certain that your Abraham’s descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated for 400 years.”
- “In the 4th generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites have not yet reached its full measures” (Gen.(15:13,6))

(1) How the Israelites settled in Egypt

- Jacob (or Israel) had 12 sons
- Joseph was sold by his brothers as a slave in Egypt
- Joseph rose from apprentice slave to become the governor/Prime Minister of Egypt
- 7 years of famine re-united Joseph's family
- Jacob's family settled down in Egypt (70 direct descendants (Exodus 1:5))
- After several generations, Jews grew and multiplied in Egypt
 - from 70 to 2 million within 4 generations
 - Pharaoh felt threatened by increased Jew population
- New Pharaohs (did not know Joseph) treated the Jews as slaves
- Israelites became a community of slaves for 430 years in Egypt (Exodus 12:40)
 - fulfilling God's word in Genesis 15:13

“ Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated for 400 years.”

- Israelites were a community of slaves (2 million) without a nation.

(2) How Israelites got out of Egypt: The Exodus (1280 BC)

- God called Moses to deliver all the Jews out of Egypt (the land of bondage) to The Promised Land (the “land flowing with milk & honey” called Canaan (Exodus 1:3))
- It took 10 miracles that almost destroyed the whole of Egypt before Pharaoh finally relented & let God’s people go
- God created one of the most spectacular miracles recorded in the Bible
 - He opened up the Red Sea to enable Israelites escape from Pharaoh’s marauding army
- But because of the disobedience of Israelites
 - they spent 40 years wandering in wilderness (instead of 40 weeks) in entering Promised Land

(3) Entering the Promised Land (Joshua) (1240 BC)

- Moses died. Joshua took over as leader of Israelites
 - to lead them into The Promised Land (Canaan)
- Joshua led Israelites into Promised Land
- Fulfilling God’s promise in Gen. 15:16
“In the 4th generation your descendants will come back here...”
- This was the 1st time, Israel became a nation

(4) The United Kingdom of Israel (under Saul, David & Solomon) (1050 BC to 931 BC)

- King Saul (1st King of Israel) (about 1050 BC)
 - rallied all tribes of Israel & defeated Phillistines
- King David (succeeded King Saul) (1011 BC to 971 BC) was more successful
 - defeated Phillistines, Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites & Aramites
- In 1000 BC King David captured Jerusalem & made it capital of Israel
- Under King David, the kingdom of Israel was at its zenith
- During reign of King Solomon (David's son) (971 BC to 931 BC)
 - Israel enjoyed longest period of peace
 - that's why he had time to write Proverbs & Songs of Solomon
- Most memorable achievement of King Solomon
 - building of Temple of Solomon in 960 BC
 - destroyed in 586 BC by Babylonians, rebuilt in 515 BC by Zerubbabel and destroyed again 70 AD
 - many believe rebuilding of The Temple of Solomon will be eye of the storm in modern Israel/Palestine conflict

(5) The Divided Kingdom (Israel & Judah) (931 BC – 722 BC)

- After death of King Solomon (931 BC)
 - 10 northern tribes revolted against his son (King Rehoboam)

- Israel was divided into 2 kingdoms
 - Northern Kingdom (i.e. Israel, capital at Samaria)
 - Southern Kingdom (i.e. Judah, capital at Jerusalem)

Theme: The Land

Successive Conquests Of Israel & Judah (586BC – AD70)

Prophecies

- “And if you defile the land, it will vomit you out as it vomited out the nation that were before you.” (Leviticus 18:28)

- “The truth is you will be in Babylon for 70 years...I will bring you back home again” (Jeremiah 29:10)

- “He determines the course of world events. He removes kings and sets others over the throne” (Jeremiah 2:21)

Did God give absolute right to Jews to Promised Land?

Introduction

- The Bible says God gave Promised Land to Israelites
- Did that mean Israelites can become any kind of people living in the Promised Land?
- In other words, is the right of Israelites to dwell in the Promised Land an “unconditional” or absolute right? (No)

Conditional right of use of the Land

- 1st starting point, God said in Leviticus 25:23 “The Land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants”.
- This meant, God is the landlord (ie owner) of Promised Land & Jewish people were merely tenants of the Land.
- What do landlords do with tenants who misbehave?
 - Landlord will throw recalcitrant tenant out.
- Likewise, the right of dwelling by the Israelites in the Promised Land.
- God constantly warned the Israelites of this conditionality
- If you defile the Land, it will vomit you out of the Land

- Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, because this is how the nations that I am going to drive out before you became defiled
- Even the land was defiled; so I punished it for its sin, and the land vomited out its inhabitants...
- And if you defile the land, it will vomit you out as it vomited out the nation that were before you”.

(Leviticus 18:24-28)

How did the Israelites defile the Land?

- by practising detestable customs & religious acts which were abomination to God.
 - e.g. sorcery, witchcraft, infanticide, consulting the dead, idolatry

(Deut. 18:9-15)

“Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord, and because of these detestable practices the Lord your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the Lord your God”.

(Deut. 18:9-15)

God’s reminder - no right of possession because of “righteousness”

- The Jews were supposed to be “God’s chosen race” – but not “Righteous people.
- God reminded Israelites that possession of the Land is not their right nor because they’re righteous.

- “It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going into take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations...
- Understand then, that it is not because of your righteousness that the Lord your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stiff-necked people”.
(Deut 9:1, 4-6)

God’s warning of Cutting off from the Land

“If you or your sons turn away from me and do not observe the commands and decrees I have given to you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut Israel off from the Land I have given them...”

(1 Kings 9:6-7)

Summary

- God is the landlord /owner of the Promised Land, Israelites were merely the tenants
- God has imposed a condition to Israelites right to dwell in the Promised Land
 - they’re not to defile the land (doing detestable acts)
- If they breach God’s condition, they will be thrown out of the Land (ie the “Land will vomit you out”)

So what happened?

- The Israelites did exactly what God warned them not to do.
- They forsook God and committed all sorts of detestable sins and abominable acts against God.
- As promised, God punished Israel & Judah by throwing them out of the Land
 - allowed the Assyrians and Persians to invade Israel & Judah & take them captives

(1) Israel Under Assyrian Empire & Deportation (722 BC – 586 BC)

- 200 years later (722 BC), Israel (N. Kingdom) was conquered by the Assyrians in fulfilment of God's warning in Leviticus, Deuteronomy

“The king of Assyria invaded the entire land, marched against Samaria.... the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria... All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the Lord their God... They worshipped other gods and followed the practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before them”.

(2 kings 17:5-8,18)

- large population of Jews were deported to various parts of Assyria
- Israel came under the Assyrian Empire (ancient Syria)

(2) Israel Under Babylonian Empire and The Babylonian Exile (586 BC to 539 BC)

- 100 years later, it was Judah's turn to be invaded by the Babylonian kingdom (ancient Iraq)
- In 586 BC, the Babylonians, under King Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Judah and captured Jerusalem
- Temple of Solomon was ransacked and destroyed
- Jews (including Daniel, Ezra, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah) were exiled to Babylon for 70 years
- Significance of Babylonian reign.
 - Jews lost their homeland for 1st time (only to lose it again in AD 70).

- “God handed them (i.e. Judah) all over to Nebuchadnezzar. (v.17)
- Then his army **set fire to the Temple of God**, broke down the walls of Jerusalem, burned all the palaces, and completely destroyed everything of value. (v.19)
- **The few who survived were taken away to Babylon** and they became servants to the King and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. (v.20)
- So the **message of the Lord spoken through Jeremiah was fulfilled.**” (v.21)

(2 Chronicles 36:17-2)

- Prophet Jeremiah earlier prophesied 66 years before conquest of Jerusalem the destruction of the temple of God & return to Jerusalem to rebuilding the temple :-

- “Then, after the **70 years of captivity** are over, I will punish the king of Babylon and his people for their sins, says the Lord.” (*Jer. 25:12*)
- “**The truth is that you will be in Babylon for 70 years.... I will bring you home again.**” (*Jer. 29:10*)

- Isaiah had prophesied even earlier, 150 years ago (688 BC)
 - on the restoration of the Temple of God.

“When I say of **Cyrus**, ‘He is my shepherd’, he will certainly do as I say. **He will command that Jerusalem be rebuilt and that the Temple be restored.**”

(*Isaiah 44:28*)

(3) Israel Under Persian Empire (539 BC to 330 BC)

- True to God’s word, 50 years later in 539 BC
 - the Babylonian Empire was overthrown by Persian King Cyrus (ancient Iran)
- God is the scriptwriter. This script is cast in stone, you can’t change the script. All the actors (ie leaders & protagonists in this world) can only act out their roles.

- History is confirming the Bible, not Bible confirming history (if so, Bible is merely a historical book).
- Thus, Israel came under the Persian Empire for 200 years.
- And true to God's word, one of the first thing that King Cyrus did was to sign a decree to rebuilt Jerusalem

■ “In the **1st year of King Cyrus of Persia**, the Lord fulfilled Jeremiah's prophecy by stirring the heart of Cyrus to **put this proclamation** into writing and to send it throughout his kingdom :
(v.1)

■ “This is what King Cyrus of Persia says :

The Lord God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has appointed me to build him a Temple at Jerusalem in the land of Judah. (v.2)

■ All of you who are his people may return to Jerusalem in Judah to rebuild this Temple of the Lord, the God of Israel, who lives in Jerusalem.” (v.3)

(Ezra 1:1-3)

- True to God's word, after 70 years of captivity (some complications in calculation)
- 3 separate groups of Jews returned to Jerusalem from 536 BC to 445 BC (\approx 100 years)

3 Returns

- 1st Return under Zerubbabel (538 BC)

- rebuilt the Temple in 515
- 2nd Return under Ezra (Priest)
 - rebuilt spiritual lives of Jews in Jerusalem
- 3rd Return under Nehemiah
 - rebuild the walls of Jerusalem

(4) Israel Under The Greek Empire (330 BC to 60 BC)

- In 300 BC, Alexander the Great overthrew the Persian Empire
- His kingdom extended from Greece to the Indus Valley and Hindu Kush Mountains
- Israel came under Greek reign for 200 over years

(5) Israel Under The Roman Empire (63 BC to AD 132)

- After the death Alexander the Great, Greek Empire disintegrated & was overthrown by the new super power - the Roman Empire
- In 61 BC, the Romans under Pompei invaded Israel and sacked Jerusalem
- Hence, Israel came under the Roman Empire for nearly 200 years

- This was the time of Pontius Pilate, King Herod and our Lord Jesus Christ
- It was King Herod, despite his crime of infanticide, who enlarged the rebuilt Temple of Solomon (hence “Herod’s Temple”)
 - Solomon’s Temple referred to as “1st Temple”
 - Herod’s Temple referred to as “2nd Temple”
- This was the Temple that Jesus was looking at when he wept and prophesied

■ “Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. (v.5)

■ “But Jesus said, “As for what you see here, **the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down.**” (v.6)

(Luke 21:5 & 6)

- In AD 70, (37 years after Jesus was crucified & ascended)
 - King Titus crushed a Jewish revolt (at Masada near Dead Sea)
 - completely destroyed Temple of Solomon (until this day)
 - having stood for 586 years since Ezra’s time
- The Roman soldiers torched the beautiful fabrics of the Temple
 - fire was so intense, it melted all the gold on the wall & seeped into stones

- to recover the gold, Roman soldiers dug up every stone in the wall and floor
- thus fulfilling Jesus's prophecy on the destruction of the Temple in Luke 21:5 & 6
- To-day the only stones left are the outer wall
 - now known as "The Wailing Wall"
 - one of the holy sites for Jews to-day
 - all that is left of Herod's Temple to-day
- 2nd Jewish Revolt in AD 132 was crushed by Romans

Significance of Roman reign (AD 70 – AD 132)

- (i) Jews lost their homeland for nearly 2000 years from this period
- Jews were expelled from Israel & scattered all over the regions
 - Small communities of Jews remained
- For 2nd time in history, nation of Israel disappeared

From AD 70 to 1948, there was no country called "Israel" (nearly 2,000 years)

(6) Israel Under The Byzantine Empire (AD 330 – AD 634)

- In AD 395 the Roman Empire broke up and was divided into

- (i) the Western Roman Empire (capital Rome)
- (ii) the Eastern Roman Empire / Byzantine Empire (Capital, Constantinople)
 - Israel (or Palestina) became a Byzantine province for 350 years
 - Emperor Constantine declared Christianity to be official religion of Roman Empire
 - It was during this time the Roman churches were at its zenith & adopted the Replacement Theology
 - condemning the Jews, no longer God's chosen people' because they've lost favour with God
 - the church has replaced the Jews as God's chosen people.

(7) Palestine Under The Arabs & Seljuk Turks (AD 634 – AD 1096)

- In AD 634 (after death of Prophet Muhammad in AD 632), Arab armies invaded Palestine and captured Jerusalem
- Palestine (biblical Israel) became part of Muslim empire for the next 450 years under various Arabian dynasties
 - the Umayyads (from Turkey)
 - the Abbasids (from Iraq)
 - the Mamluks (from Egypt)

- In AD 1071, the Seljuk Turks gained control over Jerusalem & ruled Palestine for 30 years before expelled by the Crusaders (1st Crusade)

(8) Jerusalem During The Crusades (AD 1099 – AD 1517)

The Battle for the Holy Land

- In 1099, 1st Crusade declared by Pope Urban II
 - Crusaders defeated the Seljuk Turks captured Jerusalem
 - massacred almost entire population of Muslims as well as Jews
- here we see some evidence of The Replacement Theology
- Jerusalem came under “Christian” rule for next 88 years before 2nd Crusade
- In 1187 (2nd Crusade) the Crusaders were defeated and expelled by the Muslim ruler Saladin
 - Palestine & Jerusalem came under Muslim rule once more
- 3rd Crusade (proclaimed by Pope Gregory VIII was led by Richard the Lion Heart (England), Roman Emperor, Fred Barbarossa & French King Phillip Augustine
 - ended in failure to re-capture Jerusalem
- Altogether there were 7 Crusades
 - the Crusaders only succeeded in 1st Crusade to capture Jerusalem; the 6 later Crusades ended in failure.

- The last Muslim power to rule over Jerusalem before the Ottoman Turks took over 1516 was the Egyptian dynasties of the Mamluks
- The Muslims lay their claim on “Palestine” (ie including Israel & Jerusalem) based on this period
 - ie they had long & continuous residence for 1,000 over years

Palestine under Ottoman Empire (1517-1918)

- In 1516 Ottoman Turks (under Sultan Salem) defeated the Mamluks & captured Jerusalem
- Therefore, Palestine became part of Ottoman Empire until end of World War I (ie 400 years)
- It was during this time “Sulaiman the Magnificent” built the walls round city of Jerusalem
 - now the Old City of Jerusalem, which still stands today
- Jews fleeing from Catholic inquisitions known as the “Spanish Inquisition” were invited by Turkish Sultan Salem to settle in Turkish Empire and certain parts of Palestine.
 - thus Muslims were kinder to Jews than Crusaders (“Christian”)
 - again you see evidence of The Replacement Theology
- Thus, started 1st Aliyah (ie Return of Jews) (3Aliyahs)
 - 1880, 24,000 Jews (out of population 480,000)
 - by 1914, 80,000 to 100,000 Jews

Theme : The Land

Events Leading to Birth of Israel



Prophecies

- Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there the Lord your God will gather you and bring you back.
- He will bring you back to the land that belonged to your fathers and you will take possessions of it”

(Deut. 30:15)

- Therefore give to the exiles this message from the Sovereign Lord. Although I have scattered you in the countries of the world, I will be a sanctuary to you during your time in exile.”
- I, the Sovereign Lord, will gather you back from the nations you are scattered, and I will give the land of Israel once again.”

(Ezekiel 11: 16 - 17)

(1) How Great Britain got involved in birth of Israel?

- During World War 1, Turkish Ottoman Empire decided to join forces with Germany, Austria & Hungary to fight against the Allies (ie Britain, France, Russia).
- Both Arabs and Jews joined British to fight against the Turks.
 - hoping that for their sacrifices in helping Britain to fight Turks, they will each was hoping to be rewarded a national homeland.
- World War I ended with Germany & its allies defeated.
- The price for the defeat for the Turks was its Ottoman Empire was carved out among Great Britain, France & Russia.

(i) The Sykes - Picot Agreement (1916)

- Under this Agreement, the Turkish Ottoman Empire was carved among the 3 Allies as follows -
 - (i) Iraq & Palestine - under British control
 - (ii) Syria & Lebanon - under French control
 - (iii) Armenia - under Russian control

(ii) The MacMahon Promise to Arabs (1915)

- According to Arabs, for their contribution, Sir Henry MacMahon, Commissioner to Egypt, promised them,
 - that Britain would cede Palestine to them.

Sherif Husein, Mecca

"I am authorized to give you the following pledges on behalf of the Government of Great Britain...

1. That..., Great Britain is prepared to recognize and uphold the independence of the Arabs in all the region lying within the frontiers proposed by the Sharif of Mecca (i.e. the area now corresponding to the Arabian Peninsular Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine...."

Dated 24 Oct. 1915

(Sir Henry MacMahon)
Commissioner to Egypt

(iii) The Balfour Declaration (1917)

- At the same time, British government offered Jewish Zionist movement to establish a national home in Palestine ("Balfour Declaration)

Dear Lord Rothschild

"...His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people....."

Yours sincerely,

Arthur Balfour (British Foreign Secretary)

- So we have 2 high ranking British officials representing Great Britain promising the same country to the both Arabs and the Jews as their exclusive homeland!
- a sure formula for conflict between Arabs & Jews

Reasons for Balfour Declaration

- (i) Great Britain needed support of the Jews in US, Russia and GB to fight against Germany.
- (ii) With establishment of Jewish homeland in Palestine thru sponsorship of GB.
 - GB in control of Suez Canal, their interests in India & Far East safeguarded.
 - avoid influx of Jewish refugees into Britain.

Importance of the 1917 Balfour Declaration

- Balfour Declaration laid the foundation for birth of Israel.
- Balfour Declaration gave the Jews the right to establish a “Jewish homeland”
- This Declaration was ratified by the League of Nation in 1920
 - eventually led to the 1947 Partition Plan of creating a Jewish state and a Palestinian state.
- Israel’s 1948 Declaration of Independence was based on Balfour Declaration.

- However the Jews felt betrayed because under Balfour Declaration they were promised territories on both sides of River Jordan (ie included part of Transjordan) as the Jewish national Home.
- The Arabs felt even more betrayed: the British (through Sir Henry MacMahon) broke their own promise.

- To appease Arab leaders over GB's "two timing", GB ceded entire Transjordan (present day Jordan) to Emir Abdullah in 1921.
- This time Jews felt betrayed by GB because 70% of their "promised" home land was taken away & given to Arabs.

Palestinian Revolt & The Peel Commission (1937)

- 1920s - 1930s, violent clashes between Palestinian and Jewish settlers as more and more Jews emigrated to Palestine.
- 1936 Palestinian revolt against GB for continued Jewish immigration was crushed
- The Peel Commission (1937)
 - concluded that 1920 Mandate was unworkable.
 - recommended partition of Palestine into 2 separate states (a larger Arab state & smaller Jewish state)
- Arabs opposed Peel Commission recommendation because they opposed national home for Jews.

(2) How UN got involved in birth of Israel

Events leading to UN's involvement

- When World War II broke out, more & more Jews emigrated to Palestine, Arabs felt very threatened.
- To appease Arabs, GB blocked Jewish immigration (eg "Exodus" ship)

- 70,000 European Jews attempted to get round British blockade.
 - 1000's of them died
- Jews started underground resistance against British forces to get them out of Palestine
- These Jewish underground resistance groups would form the skeletal core of the infantile Israeli army in 1948 Independence war
- Jewish anger exploded when GB granted independence to Emirate of Transjordan in 1946 (creating Hashemite Kingdom of Joran)
 - Jews felt robbed of 4/5th of their home state by GB.
 - They accused GB violating their own Balfour Declaration/
- Jewish revolt against British presence in Palestine intensified.
 - Both Jewish & Palestinian revolted against British in Palestine.
 - continuous Palestinians - Jews violence
- After 30 years occupying Palesitine, GB found Palestine ungovernable
- In 1948, they handed the 1920 Mandate back to UN (which succeeded League of Nations).

The Holocaust (World War II)

- During World War II, Hitler exterminated 6 million Jews (1/3rd of Jewish global population) ("Holocaust")

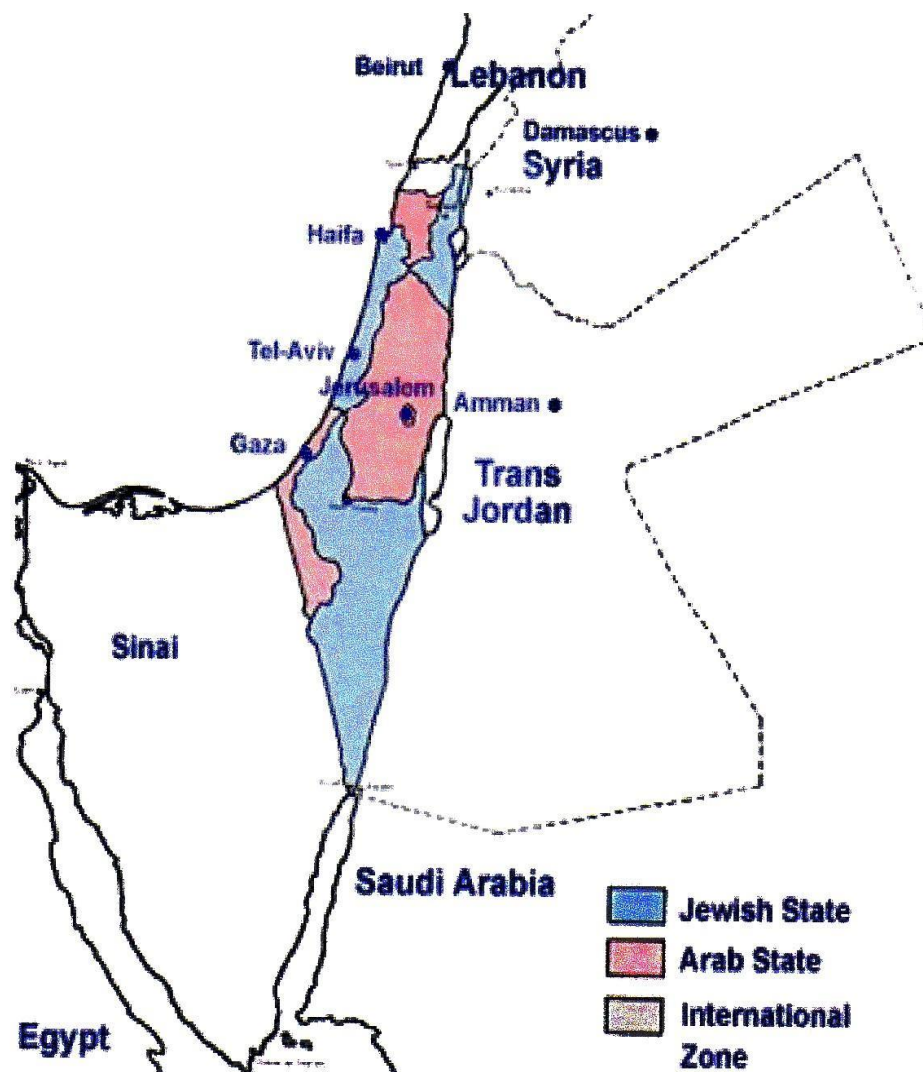
- This was the worst tragedy for the Jews in its entire Jewish history.
- During Holocaust the Jews in Europe had no where to go.
- US, Britain & other countries were afraid to accept them for fear of opening flood gates into their countries.
- Palestine their ancient homeland, was their best option
 - to re-establish their own homeland
- So waves upon waves (“Aliyah”) of Jews started to head towards Palestine in ships
- So Holocaust precipitated founding of Jewish homeland.
 - This was acknowledged in Israel’s Declaration of Independence
- Thus Holocaust was both a tragedy (of the worse kind) and also a “blessing” (led to founding of Israel).

1947 UN Partition Plan

- UN (basically adopted 1935 Peel Commission) decided to partition Palestine into 2 separate states.
 - Jews State & Arab State
- Jewish State (55% of Palestine, but 60% barren land, Negev).
 - 510,000 Arabs vs 500,000 Jews (about equal).
- Arab State (45% of Palestine).
 - 750,000 Arabs vs 9,500 Jews.

- Jerusalem = “International Zone” (100,000 Jews).

Zion Partition Plan **1947**



What was the response to UN Partition Plan?

- Jewish people accepted it.
- Arab leaders rejected it because -
 - they were not consulted.
 - the division of land not fair (45%).
 - they oppose nationhood of Israel.
- Jewish people saying today Palestinians missed golden opportunity because -
 - this is what they're fighting for today (ie separate independent state for Palestine). ie they're back to where started before 1947!
 - had they accepted UN Partition Plan in 1947, they would have far much more territory today.
- UN Partition Plan was never enforced because Arab leaders did not accept it.
 - that's why some territories between Israel & Palestine are "disputed territories".

(3) Rebirth of Israel (14 May 1948)

- British Mandate in Palestine ended on 15 May 1948
 - On 14 May 1948 British troops withdrew from Palestine
- On the same day as the British withdrew, 14th May 1948, Jewish leaders under David Ben Gurion, proclaimed the indepedence of State of Israel

- Dr. Chaim Weizmann became 1st President of Israel
- David Ben Gurion became 1st Prime Minister of Israel

THE DECLARATION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL May 14, 1948

On May 14, 1948, on the day in which the British Mandate over a Palestine expired, the Jewish People's Council gathered at the Tel Aviv Museum, and approved the following proclamation, declaring the establishment of the State of Israel. The new state was recognized that night by the United States and three days later by the USSR.



Text:

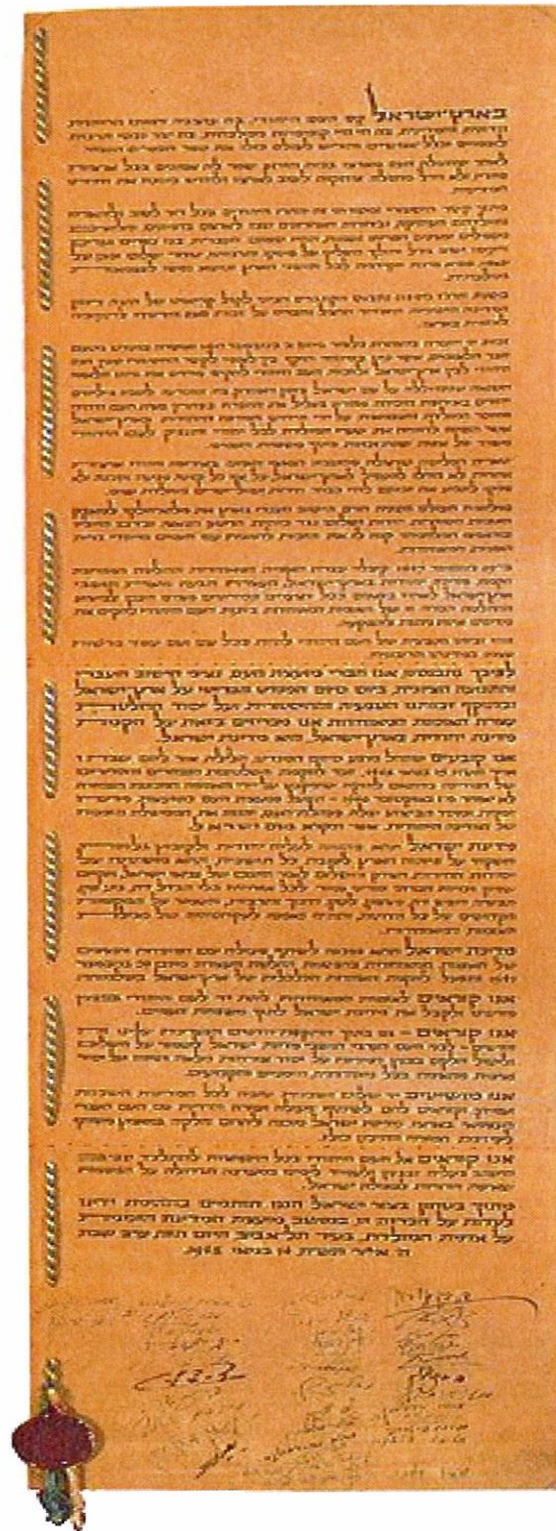
ERETZ-ISRAEL [(Hebrew) - the Land of Israel, Palestine] was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses. Pioneers, *ma'pilim* [(Hebrew) - immigrants coming to Eretz-Israel in defiance of



Declaration of Independence



“The long exile was over. From this day on, we would no longer live on sufferance in the land of our forefathers. Now we were a nation like other nations, masters for the first time in 20 centuries of our own destiny. The dream had come true...”

Golda Meir (PM of Israel, recalling the day Ben Gurion declared Israel’s independence).

- After nearly 2,000 years, (since the days of Roman Empire) Israel was reborn
- It fulfilled many prophecies in the Bible

- “When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come upon you and you take them to heart whenever the Lord your God disperses you among the nations, and when your children return to the Lord your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul... then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you **and gather you again from all nations where he scattered you.**
- **Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there the Lord your God will gather you and bring you back.**
- **He will bring you to the land that belonged to your fathers and you will take possession of it.”**

(Deut 30:1-5)

- “ Therefore, give to the exiles this message from the Sovereign Lord: Although I have scattered you in the countries of the world, I will be a sanctuary to you during your time in exile.
- I, the Sovereign Lord, will gather you back from the nations where you are scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel once again.”

(Ezekiel. 11, 16-17)

Theme : The Land

The Israel – Arab Wars (1948-1973)

The Israeli – Arab Wars

■ 4 Wars since Israel founded

1st: 1948 Independence War (Israel vs 7 Arab states)

2nd: 1956 Suez War (Israel vs Egypt)

3rd: 1967 “6 Days War” (Israel vs 6 Arab States)

4th: 1973 “Yom Kippur War” (Israel vs 10 Arab States)

(I) The 1948 Independence War (15th May 1948)

Background

- Palestinians rejected the UN 1947 Partition Plan
- On 14 May 1948, British withdrew, Mandate ending
- On 14 May 1948, (afternoon before Sabbath) Israel proclaimed Independence State of Israel
- On 15 May 1948, Independence War broke out
 - Aftermath after declaration of independence

Israel vs 7 Arab States

- Israel vs Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan (Saudi Arabia - minor role)
- Israel was warned by Arab neighbours that if it proclaim independence – there’ll will be war.
- So Israel’s declaration of independence would be met with declaration of war by Arab States.

Golda Meir sent as emissary to negotiate with King of Jordan

- Ben Gurion sent Golda Meir (future Prime Minister of Israel) to negotiate with King of Jordan to persuade him not to join in the war.
- She was dressed as a female peasant & smuggled across the Jordan River in the dead of the night to see the Jordan King.

- Jordan King agreed not to join in the war on 2 conditions:
 - (i) stop building settlements along Jordan border;
 - (ii) don't declare independence
- Golda Meir: "That's an impossible request. Then war it shall be. Perhaps we'll meet in war after Israel declares independence".
- Due to political reason, to assert its leadership among Arab nations,
 - Jordan joined the Coalition but played limited role.

- Egypt King Farouk ("Playboy" no military experience) 1st to declare war against, and attacked Israel.
 - he thought that when the Egyptian army march into Jerusalem, the Jews would simply run away.
- On 15th May 1948, (a day after the birth of Israel,) the War of Independence began (lasted for 6 months)
- Israel was helplessly outnumbered
 - ½ million Jews vs 40 million Arabs!
- Israel, a nascent nation, was unprepared for war
- It had no proper army

- Its population were immigrants fleeing Europe, not trained soldiers
- So relied heavily on small Jewish underground resistant groups that fought British.
- It had no planes, no tanks, no navy (just few merchant ships)
- Insufficient guns & bullets (last only 3 days of fighting)
- US refused to sell arms to Israel.
- Field Marshall Montgomery of Allied Army (World War II) predicted that Israel would be defeated within 2 weeks.
- Because Israel was virtually defenceless (no air cover & no tanks) it suffered heavy casualties in the beginning.
- Battle turned with the arrival of
 - 4 Czech aircraft bombers (no time to test these planes)
 - arrival of more smuggled ammunition
- Egyptian army about to reach Tel Aviv, saw these 4 planes
 - they were terrified & retreated from their siege of Tel Aviv.

Consequence of 1948 Independence War

- When the Independence War ended in 1949
 - Israel ended with 1/3 more land the UN Partition Plan!
 - it gained 75% of Palestinian territory.
- The Arabs were fighting for victory, to the Israelis, they were fighting for their survival
- After the War
 - East was occupied by Jordan

- West & Gaza Strip was occupied by Egypt
- North was occupied by Syria
- leaving Palestinians with nothing (700,000 to 800,000 refugees)
- After 1948 War – Israel’s population doubled within 2 years (600,000 to 1.2 million)
- Jerusalem divided into “Old City” & “New City”.
 - “Old City” (including Temple Mount), under Palestinian rule
 - “New City” (West City) under Jewish rule.
- 4 Arab States (excluding Iraq) signed Armistice Agreement with Israel in 1949.

(2) 1956 Suez War

- Israel vs Egypt.

Background

- Suez was controlled by France & Britain
- In 1956, President Nasser of Egypt nationalised Suez Canal & created international crisis.
- Israel construed blockade of Israeli ships into Suez Canal & Gulf of Aqaba an “act of aggression” in violation of 1949 Armistice Agreement.
- This meant Israel had no outlet
- UN Security Council ordered Egypt to lift the blockade,
 - Egypt refused.

- Israel (with airborne support from Britain & France)
 - attacked Egypt thru Sinai Desert (Oct. 1956, “Operation Kadesh”).
- Within 1 week, Israel -
 - overran Sinai & re-capture Suez Canal.
- France & Britain later withdrew from Suez.
- UN stepped in, Egypt re-opened Suez Canal & Gulf of Aqaba.
- Israel withdrew from Sinai after Egypt gave assurance it will not interfere with its shipping in Gulf of Aqaba.

(3) 1967 (6 Days War)

- Israel vs 6 Arab States. (Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia & Lebanon, Iraq)

Background

- 11 years after 1956 Suez War, President Nasser of Egypt again closed Gulf of Aqaba. (to seek revenge for its defeat in 1956 Suez War).
- Egypt sacked UN forces along Suez Canal
- Israel considered closing of Al Aquba Gulf as “act of war”.

In the same year, Syria threatened to divert water from River Jordan for their irrigation projects cutting “life-line” for Israel.

- Israel considered this as “act of war”.

- Jordan entered into alliance with Egypt & Iraq & poised to attack Israel.
- Israel had to fight the war on 3 fronts:
 - Sinai (South) : Egypt (Saudi Arabia)
 - Jerusalem (West): Jordan (Iraq)
 - Golan Heights (North) : Syria (Lebanon)
- Faced with an imminent attack of combined forces of Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Iraq.
 - Israel was hopelessly outnumbered: 2 million Jews surrounded by 60-90 million of Arabs
- On 6th June 1967, Israel launched historic pre-emptive strike.
 - within 3 hours, Israeli jets, destroyed 300 (400) Egyptian planes (still on the ground – Pilots having breakfast)!
- War on Egyptian front, the war was decided within 1st 3 hours!
 - Israeli Air Marshall reporting to General Moshe Dayan: “Egyptian airforce has ceased to exist.”
- Israel counter-attacked Jordanian, Syrian & Iraqi air forces.
 - end of 1st day of war, Israeli planes had virtually wiped out combined Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian air forces.
- On the Egyptian front, without Egyptian air cover to protect their tanks.
 - Israeli army moved at will, destroyed Egyptian tanks across Sinai & re-opened the Aqaba Gulf.
 - they pushed Egyptian army all the way to East Bank of Suez Canal.

- On Syrian front, despite enormous strategic advantage of Syrian position on Golan Heights.
 - after 20 hours of up-hill battle (literally), Israeli forces captured Golan Heights (which they've kept to this day).
- On Jordanian front, within 2 days, Jordan (warned by Israel not to join the war) lost -
 - most of West Bank.
 - most crucially: captured Jerusalem (1st time under Jewish rule)
 - East Jerusalem (Old City).
 - holy sites (Temple Mount).
- Within 6 days Israel, against all odds, Israel defeated all 5 invading Arab states.
 - although overwhelming out-numbered & out-armed
- Hence, its called 1967 "6 Days War"
 - One of the shortest wars in modern history.

Significance of 1967 "6 Days War"

- As result of 1967 War, lead by General Moshe Dayan, Israel captured.
 - Gaza Strip & Sinai (from Egypt).
 - Golan Heights (from Syria)
 - East Jerusalem & Temple Mount (from Jordan).
- Israel's territory expanded 3 times its original size in 1947 (UN Partition Plan).
 - 8,500 sq. meter (1947) to 28,000 sq. meter (1967).

- But most significantly, captured 2 strategic areas.
 - Golan Heights (security strategic position)
 - East Jerusalem (Old City) & Temple Mount Re-uniting Jerusalem for 1st time in 2000 years.
- Under Camp David Accord (1976), Israel returned Sinai back to Egypt.
- In Nov. 1967, UN Security Council Resolution 242.
 - called for Israel to withdraw to its pre-1967 boundaries.
 - To give up Golan Heights, East Jerusalem & Temple Mount
- As far as Israel is concerned, Golan Heights not negotiable, (Militarily too strategic)
 - Israel has not complied with entire UN Resolution.

Israel has return

(4) The Yom Kippur War (1973)

- Israel vs 10 Arab States.
 - Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Tunisia, Sudan, Kuwait, Iraq
- On 6th Oct 1973, Yom Kippur day, the Day of Atonement” (most holy day on Jewish calendar) and during Islamic holy month of Ramandan.
 - the combined forces of 10 Arab states attacked Israel.
- Israel was caught completely off-guard.

- As usual, the War was led by Egypt by General Anwar Sadat (succeeded General Nasser, died),
 - to take revenge for 1967 defeat.
- Egypt sent 600,000 troops, 2,000 tanks & 550 warplanes against 500 Israeli soldiers & 3 tanks.
- Syria sent 1,400 Syrian tanks against 180 Israeli tanks.
- Iraq, Jordan, Algeria, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Sudan, Lebanon, Kuwait etc sent tens of 1,000s of troops, 1000s of tanks.
- It was disaster for Israel in the early days of the war.
 - because of its state of unpreparedness for war
 - mistake political decision not to make pre-emptive strike (General Moshe Dayan blamed but decision was PM Golda Meir)
 - didn't want to go against US's instruction (US supplied military weapons)
- Within 1 week, Israel acquired Golan Heights from Syria & made further advancement into Syria.
- Within 2 weeks, Israel had re-taken Suez, Egypt failed to recover Sinai (after one of the greatest tank battles in history)
- Israel withdrew from Sinai after President Sadat signed peace treaty with Israel in 1979.
- 3rd week, UN Security Council called for cease fire.
- Despite initial set-back, Israel won the Yom Kippur War.

Summary

- Since founding of Israel in 1948, it has won every war it has fought.
- Each time Israel won its war, its territory expanded.

Theme : The City & The Temple

The Battle for Jerusalem & Temple Mount



The Conflict over The Land, the City & the Temple

Introduction

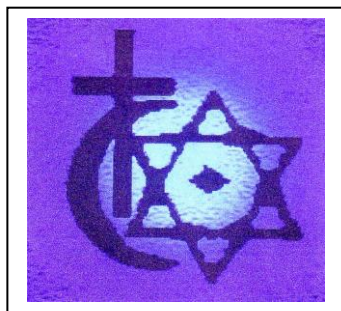
- So far, we have only discussed about the Land (Israel/Palestine).
- But the Land, the City (Jerusalem) the Temple (Holy sites) are so intricately & intrinsically linked together.
 - it's not possible to discuss about the Land without reference to the City or the Temple.
- Peter Walker describes the relationship between Land, the City and the Temple as “concentric circles”.
 - Jerusalem became the symbol of the Land.
 - the Temple became symbol of City of Jerusalem.
- Other commentators (eg Rosenberg) have rightly commented
 - Epicentre of Israel is Jerusalem
 - Epicentre of Jerusalem is the Temple.

(1) The Battle for Jerusalem (the Holy City)

Introduction

- We have seen the battle for the Holy Land, now the battle for the Holy City (Jerusalem).

- 4,000 years of history of Israel, we saw how Jerusalem came under so many super powers in Europe & Asia Minor.
- Jerusalem (the Holy City) is one of the most conquered cities in history. : 37 times
 - During Middle Ages (esp. during Crusades) (AD 634-1517)
 - we saw how Jerusalem came under Arabs rulers.
 - except for 80 over years after 1st Crusade (AD 1099), Jerusalem came under Arab rule for long period.
- It is from this period, the Muslims lay their claim on Jerusalem as their 3rd most Holy City.
- So Jerusalem today, is the Holy City to 3 world religions.
 - Christianity (birthplace of Jesus Christ).
 - Islam
 - Judaism



- So we have conflicting claims over the Holy City of Jerusalem.
- (1) What is the basis of Jews' claim to Jerusalem?
- Jerusalem revered by Jews for 3,000 years.

- King David made Jerusalem capital of Israel in 1000BC (after defeating Philistines etc).
- King David brought Ark of Covenant to Jerusalem & made Jerusalem the Holy City of Israel.
- So Jews claim to Jerusalem dates back 3000 years & has remained centre of Jewish life for centuries.
- The Bible is full of references to Jerusalem as God's Holy City.

(2) What is the basis of Muslims' claim to Jerusalem?

- Continuous residence in Jerusalem past 2000 years (since AD 634 & The Crusades) when Jerusalem came under Islamic rulers.
- More important basis - Muslims believed that Prophet Mohd. ascended to heaven from Jerusalem.
 - that made Jerusalem their 3rd most holy city
- This is based on "Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey" ("Isra").

Theme : The Temple

The Battle for Temple Mount

Chapter 2: The Battle for Temple Mount

Introduction

- Ultimately, this is the heart of Israeli-Palestinian Conflict - the holy sites at Temple Mount.
- This will be the “eye of the storm” in entire Conflict.
- It has the potential of escalating into a full scale Middle East War or even World War III!
- Camp David II Summit (between Israel & PLO refereed by Clinton) failed because both sides could not agree on Jerusalem & Temple Mount.
- Why is this site so potentially explosive?
- Because Temple Mount today house some of holiest sites to both Jews and Muslims
- The Dome of The Rock & the Al-Aqsa Mosque at Temple Mount (2 of holiest shrines to Muslims) sit on Temple Mount.
- Jews believe that the Solomon/Herod’s temple (“Jews’ holiest site”) that was destroyed in AD 70 same site as Dome of the Rock, on Temple Mount.
- So 3 of the world’s holiest shrines belonging to Jews & Muslims are sitting on same small plot of land.

The Holy Sites in the Conflict

(1) The Dome of The Rock (Muslims)

(a) Jews' claim

- Temple Mount believed by Jews to be Mount Moriah.
 - the mount where Abraham sacrificed his son Isaac (Muslim believe it was Ishmael, not Isaac).
- It was on the rock at Temple Mount that the sacrifice of Isaac took place.
- Jews believe, by Abraham's sacrificial act, Temple Mount is regarded as the most holy place on earth to worship God.
- They believe God made this rock to be the foundation of the earth. (ie foundation rock)
- Unfortunately, according to the Jews, this rock is sitting inside & beneath the Dome of the Rock belonging to Muslims.



Dome of the Rock

(b) Muslims' claim to Dome of the Rock.

- Built by Umayyad Calif Abdul Malik in AD 685 to commemorate Prophet Mohd's Night Journey.
- This is the rock where Prophet Mohd prayed before ascending to heaven.
- This Rock is the “creation rock” ie the world was created from this Rock.

(ii) The Al-Aqsa Mosque (Muslims)

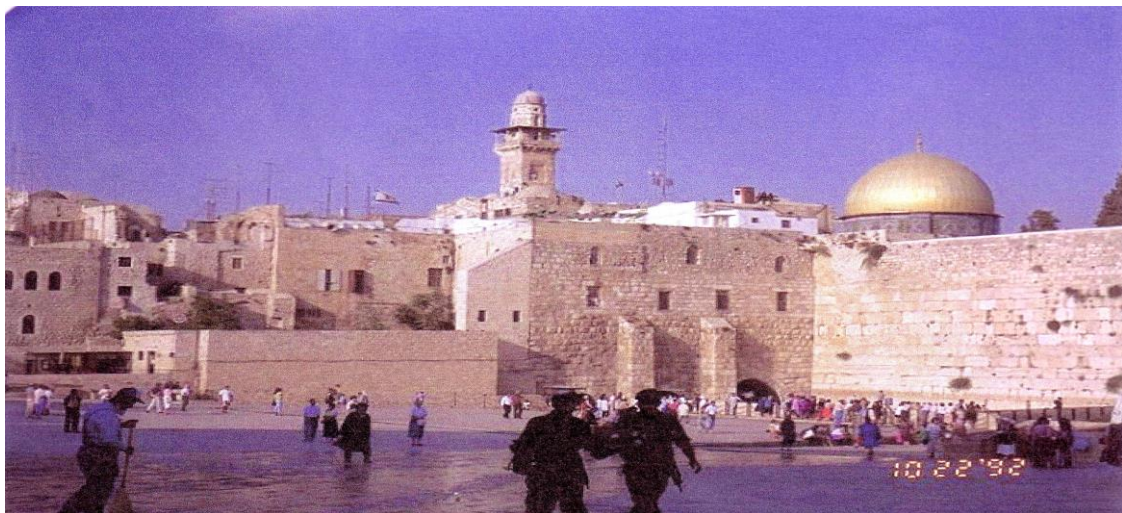


Al-Aqsa Mosque (2nd most holy shrine)

- According to Muslims Prophet Mohd. ascended from Al-Aqsa Mosque to heaven.
- Thus regarded as 2nd most holy shrine to Muslims.
- This Mosque next to Dome of The Rock on Temple Mount.

(iii) The Wailing Wall (Jews)

- This is the remaining wall of Herod's Temple (2nd Temple) after it was destroyed in AD 70.
- Jews not allowed to go up to Temple Mount, so this is the only remaining piece of the "Temple" they can to worship (at bottom of Temple Mount).



The Wailing Wall

- Wailing Wall - holy site to Jews
- It is also holy site to Muslim
 - because Prophet Mohd's horse (Buraq) was tied there before flying him to heaven.
 - Muslims call this wall "Buraq Wall".

(i) History of Temple of God

- 1st Temple was built by King Solomon in 960 BC.
- It was destroyed by Babylonians in 586 BC

- It was rebuilt by Zerubbabel in 515 BC, it was smallish & not as grand as Solomon's Temple.
- To appease Jewish expectation, in 20 BC King Herod enlarged the rebuilt Solomon Temple, only part of the walls remain today ("The Wailing Wall").
- This is known as "Herod's Temple" (2nd Temple).
- Herod's Temple was destroyed in AD 70
 - 37 years after Jesus predicted it would be destroyed.
- Now some Jews ("the Temple Faithfuls") are preparing to rebuild the 3rd Temple.

(ii) What does the Bible have to say?

- The Bible has something definite to say about "The Temple of God" in the days to come in 2 Thess. 2.

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ "Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the Man of Lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. (v.3) ■ He will oppose and exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshipped, <u>so that he sets himself up in God's temple</u> (other version "<u>Temple of God</u>"), proclaiming himself to be God". (v.4) |
|---|

- For the Man of Lawlessness (Anti-Christ) to sit on the Temple of God, there must be a Temple of God.
- So the Temple Faithfuls are getting ready to build the Temple.

(iii) Re-building 3rd Temple

- Critical question: Where should 3rd Temple be built?
- Answer: Jews believe 3rd Temple must be built where the Ark of Covenant is located & where foundation stone of Solomon Temple was 1st built.
- Where is the Ark of Covenant?
- Answer: Jews believe that the Ark of Covenant is now lying beneath the Dome of the Rock

Searching for the Ark of Covenant

- During brief period when Israel, for 1st time, took over Jerusalem including the Temple Mount area during 1967, 6 Days War.
 - 2 Jewish Rabbis dugged beneath the Dome of Rock
 - What did they find?
- For the Jews who believe this theory, they must knock down the Dome of The Rock to rebuild the 3rd Temple.
 - This would be most unpopular in the eyes of world leaders & extremely provocative
 - That means the whole of Islamic world against Israel!
 - even Israel's ally (USA) may abandon Israel over this extremely unpopular political move.
 - Will Israel go for it alone? Can it go alone?

2nd Coming of Christ

- Where's the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict leading to?
- If Jewish people destroy the Dome of The Rock to rebuild the 3rd Temple.
 - this Conflict will lead to a much larger Conflict
 - the **Battle of Armageddon**, the mother of all battles.
- Listen to what the Bible says –

- “The 6th angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the Kings from the East. (v.12)
- “Then I saw 3 evil spirits that looked like frogs;(v.13)
- “They are the spirits of demons, performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the Kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty. (v.14)
- “Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon” (v.16)

(Revelations 16:12-16)

- Armageddon has been identified as the plain near city of Megiddo (southeast port of Haifa, in North Israel).

“When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near”.

(Luke 21:24)

“It shall on that day that I shall seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem”.

(Zech 12:9)

“And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written The Deliverer will come to Zion”.

(Romans 11:26)

Conclusion

- So where is this Conflict ultimately leading to?
- It is ultimately leading to the Return of Jesus Christ (no longer as a lamb but as a Warrior-Messiah King)
- Are you ready to face Jesus Christ who is coming to judge the world?