



Old Testament Reading: Ezekiel 37:21-28

New Testament Reading: Acts 1:1-9

Israel: The Burdensome Stone

“The Council of Man Versus the Promise of God”

Psalm 2:1-12

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Since 1967, the members of the United Nations, including the United States, have demanded the sovereign nation of Israel give up specific areas of Judea, Samaria, and the Golan Heights, so a Palestinian state could be established in the Holy Land.

- In every news story regarding the status of the war in Israel, rather than blame Hamas for their attack upon Israel, in which 1,200 people were killed and 253 were taken hostage, and rather than demand Hamas release all hostages immediately, the Biden Administration continues to demand the nation of Israel provide Hamas a pathway to Palestinian Statehood.
- In Joel 3:2, God said, a day will come when He will gather the nations of the world in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, to judge them, because of their mistreatment of His people, His heritage, Israel, **“Whom they scattered among the nations and then divided up My land.”**
- Today, the ungodly leaders of the United Nations may take their stand against the nation of Israel. However, when Jesus returns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, He will destroy the enemies of Israel with the breath of His mouth and the glory of His face, and those who dared to **“touch God’s anointed”** will hang their faces in shame and disgrace, **and that now includes America.**

Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His anointed, saying, “Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us.” He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure.”

1. **Israel's Divine Origination – Genesis 12:1-3 – “The Lord said unto Abraham, [go] to a land I will show thee.”**

After man's rebellion against God at the Tower of Babel, in His sovereignty, God chose to raise up a new race of people through Abraham. In exchange for Abram's willingness to step out on faith, God promised Abram:

- A section of land as a **permanent possession** for him and his offspring.
- That all the nations of the earth would be blessed through His seed – the first step in God's promise to send His Son as our Savior.
- That He would bless those who blessed Abram and curse those who cursed Abram and/or his descendants.
- Sarah tried to accomplish God's promise through the works of the flesh, and Abram fathered a son named Ishmael – **the progenitor of the Arab race – the archenemy of Israel.**
- In His time, God blessed Abram and Sarah with **Isaac, who became the progenitor of the Jewish people.**
- The Jews were chosen by God to accomplish four things:
 - To be His witnesses to the world – Isaiah 43:10
 - To show forth His blessings – Isaiah 49:3
 - To be the repository of His Word – Isaiah 42:9
 - To be the channel of the Messiah – Genesis 12:3

2. **Israel's Divine Preservation – Isaiah 43:1-7 – “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire you shall not be burned.”**

Though they have been persecuted, mistreated, oppressed and harassed more than any other race of people, their very existence today demonstrates God's providence, and God's faithfulness to keep His promises.

- In Deuteronomy 30, Moses assured the people of Israel that even if God scattered them to the ends of the earth, at the right time He would retrieve them and bring them back to their land, and we are seeing the fulfillment of that promise today.

God allowed the people of Israel to be removed from their land three times:

- By the Assyrians in 721 BC –
- By the Babylonians in 586 BC –
- Note: In 63 BC – The Romans conquered Israel but they allowed the Jews to live in the land under their rule.
- By the Romans in 70 AD – the 2nd temple was destroyed.

The land laid desolate until 650 AD when Muslim invaders moved into the land.

- In 1517, the Ottoman Empire seized the land –
- In 1917, Great Britain assumed control of the land –

- On November 2, 1917, Arthur James Balfour, Prime Minister of the U.K., wrote a letter to Lord Walter Rothschild, leader of the Zionists Federation, affirming the nation of Israel as a “national home for the Jewish people of Palestine”, and over the years, Jews began to return to their homeland; reclaiming the land and rebuilding their homes.
- On May 14, 1948, Israel became a sovereign nation.
- In 1967, they regained control of the City of Jerusalem in the “Six-Day War”, and since then, Jerusalem has been the “burdensome stone” for the world.

3. **Israel’s Divine Destination – Jeremiah 30:2-3 – “*The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will bring my people, Israel and Judah, back from captivity and restore them to the land I gave their forefathers to possess.*”**

Since 1948, the Israel has given up 78% of the original land given to Abraham, and if the United Nations resolution is passed, they will only possess 18% of the original land.

- Israel has offered to give the Palestinians land equivalent in size and value, but their leaders have refused Israel’s offer.
- The Palestinians have turned down offers for their own state seven times since 1937.
- The reason they have turned down every offer is because they are opposed to a Jewish State of any size, because they don’t think the nation of Israel should exist.
- The Bible contains 150 promises regarding the land of Israel belonging to the offspring of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
 - The land of Israel is the only land God refers to as “**His Land**”, which is why it is called the “**Holy Land.**”
 - The city of Jerusalem is the only city God refers to as “**His City**”, which is why Jerusalem is called the “**Holy City**”.
 - The Jews are the only people God refers to as “**His People**” – those who follow Christ are called “**Christians**”.
 - The only place God referred to as “**holy**” is Mount Zion, for that is where Jesus shall reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
 - The Jews must be in the land when Christ returns, and on May 14, 1948, Israel became a sovereign nation.
 - According to Matthew 24, that was the “**budding of the fig tree**”, and Jesus said the generation that saw that would not pass until all the biblical prophecies are fulfilled.

In Ezekiel 37:21-27, God promised:

- He would restore the people to their own land –
- He would bring about a revival of the nation –
- He will establish one King over all the nations –
- His people will never be divided into kingdoms again –

History is moving toward the fulfillment of that promise.