

A satellite-style map of the Middle East region, showing the Mediterranean Sea to the west, the Red Sea to the south, and the Nile River valley in Egypt. The land is depicted in shades of tan and brown, with some green vegetation visible. The text is overlaid on the map.

**BIBLE
PROPHECY**

Insights

**The Middle East Crisis
in Biblical Perspective**



Observations by the Editor

Middle East Prophecies

Dr. David R. Reagan

End time Bible prophecies focus on the Middle East and the nation of Israel.

Those prophecies make it crystal clear that the Jewish people will be regathered to their homeland in unbelief in the end times, and their nation will be re-established. Puritan writers started pointing to and emphasizing these prophecies 400 years ago.

The Scoffers

Christian leaders who were caught up in Replacement Theology laughed and scoffed, declaring that the Church has replaced Israel and God has no purpose left for the Jewish people.

But the founders of Dispensational Theology picked up on the theme of Israel's rebirth in the end times, and they emphasized it throughout the 19th Century.

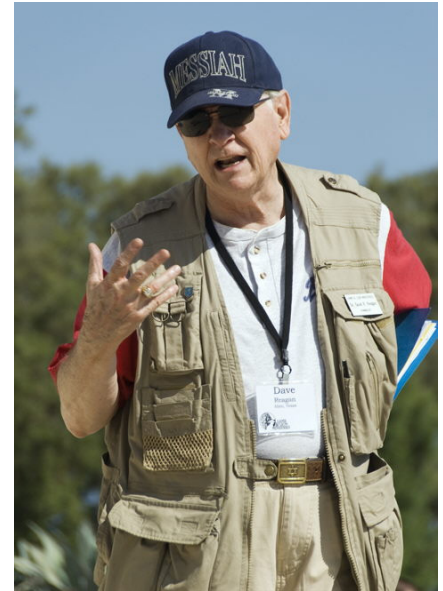
For example, William Blackstone, in his classic book, *Jesus is Coming* (1878), declared: "There is a glorious restoration in store for Israel." This seemingly impossible future had to happen, he argued, because "it is an incontrovertible fact of prophecy." The critics continued to laugh and scoff at such statements.

And many continued their scoffing right up to the very day the state of Israel was re-established on May 14, 1948. They dismissed it as an "accident of history" and argued that the new nation would be quickly abolished by the Arabs.

Continued Rejection of Fulfilled Prophecy

To this day, those caught up in the deception of Replacement Theology continue to proclaim that the re-establishment of the state of Israel is not a fulfillment of prophecy and that its days are numbered.

It is certainly easy to understand why they believe Israel will soon cease to exist. After all, it is a tiny island of only 6.5 million Jews located in an ocean of hostile Arab states numbering more than 400 million people.



Dr. Reagan teaching in Israel.

End Time Wars

But the Bible proclaims that Israel will survive. Psalm 83 pictures a war of annihilation against Israel by a coalition of nations that have a common border with the Jewish state. And although the Psalm does not tell the outcome of the war, other passages make it clear that Israel will be triumphant (Zephaniah 2:4-5 and Zechariah 12:9).

Ezekiel 38 and 39 tells how God Himself will defeat a huge Russian-led coalition of nations that will invade Israel in the end times.

The prophet Zechariah pictures end time Israel as being like David against Goliath and like a fire consuming everything around it (Zechariah 12:6 & 8).

Bible prophecy indicates that there will never be true peace in the Middle East until the Prince of Peace returns to rule over all the world from Mt. Zion in Jerusalem.

We are told in Psalm 122:6 to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." That is a prayer for the return of Jesus.

Maranatha! ✠

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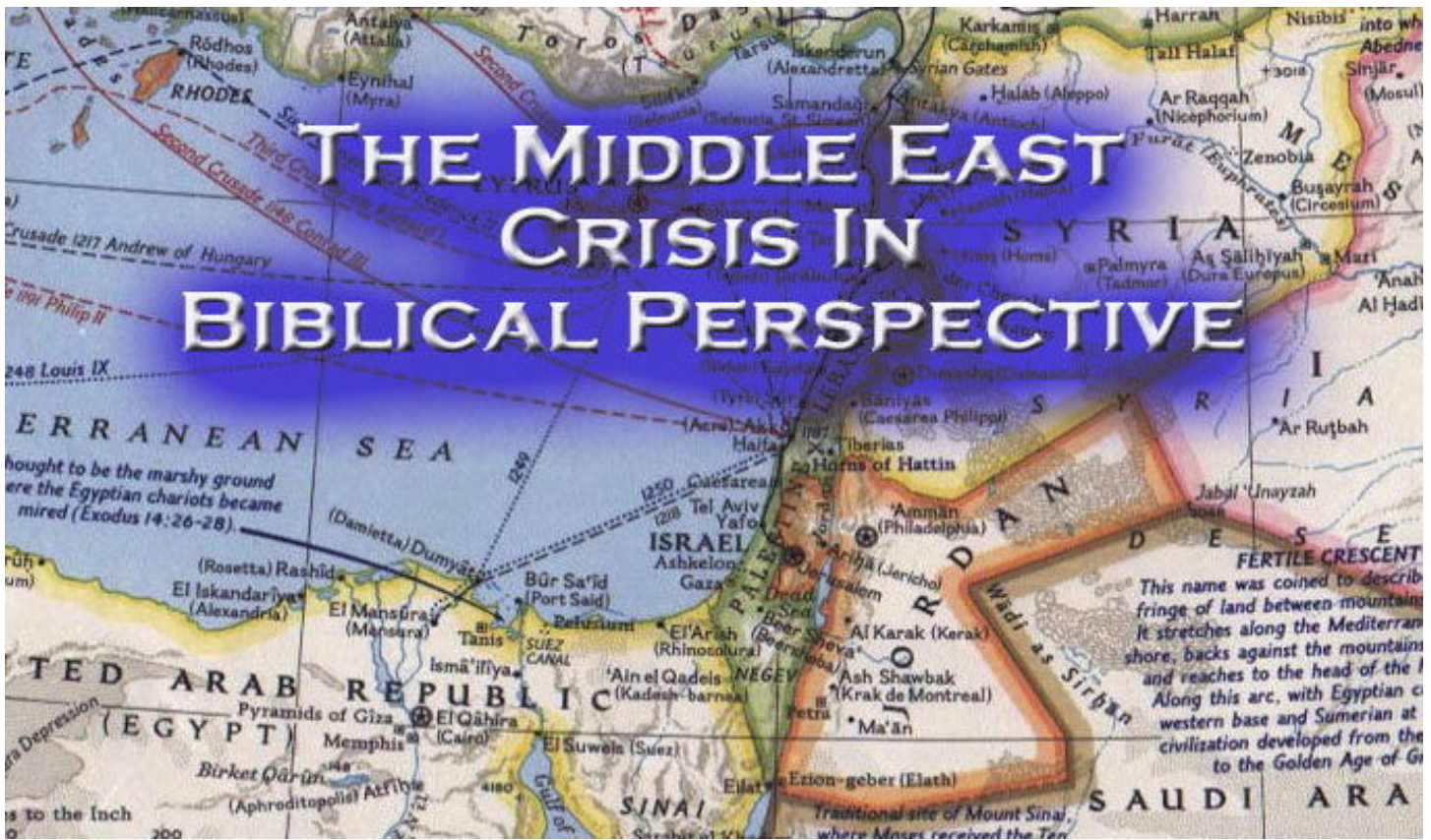
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Dr. David R. Reagan

“Why don’t those stubborn Jews just give the Arabs the West Bank so that there can be peace in the Middle East?”

The question was directed to me by a grumpy man I was sitting next to on an airplane.

Suspecting that the man did not have the foggiest idea what he was talking about, I responded with a question: “Where is the West Bank?”

“You know,” he said.

“Yes, I know, but do you?”

“Well, of course I know!” he snapped.

“Okay then, where is it?” I asked again, insisting that he answer.

“Well . . . well . . .” he sputtered, “the West Bank is the west bank of the Nile!”

It was all I could do to refrain from laughing out loud. Yet, it really wasn’t a laughing matter. Here was a man demanding the Israelis surrender the West Bank when he had no idea where the West Bank was even located. He was embarrassed when I explained that the west bank of the Nile belongs to Egypt, not Israel. And he was astounded when I pointed out that if Israel were to surrender the real West Bank, the nation would be left in an indefensible position, being only nine miles wide at its narrowest point.

My conversation with this man was a typical one concerning the complexities of Middle East politics. Most people know

little, if anything, about the area except the anti-Israel propaganda they have heard through biased media sources. Yet, they are willing to sit in their comfortable homes halfway around the world and pontificate about how the Israelis need to stop being so stubborn and start surrendering land for peace.

Much has been written about the Middle East crisis from a political perspective, but it will never be understood apart from its spiritual roots, for it is, from start to finish, a spiritual conflict — which is why it will never be settled politically.



(The West Bank constitutes the heartland of Israel. In the Bible it is called Judea and Samaria. It is called the West Bank because it is on the west bank of the Jordan River.)

The Abrahamic Covenant

The controlling factor spiritually is a promise which God made to Abraham almost 4,000 years ago. That promise is contained in Genesis 12:1-3:

- 1) Now the Lord said to Abram,
“Go forth from your country,
And from your relatives
And from your father’s house
To the land which I will show you;
- 2) And I will make you a great nation,
And I will bless you,
And make your name great;
And so you shall be a blessing;
- 3) And I will bless those who bless you,
And the one who curses you I will curse.
And in you all the families of the earth shall
be blessed.”

Theologians refer to this passage as the Abrahamic Covenant. Note that it contains a series of unconditional promises. Never once does God say, “If you will do so-and-so . . .” or “If you will be faithful . . .” The promises are absolute and unconditional.

And what glorious promises they are! God promises Abraham a land, a nation, a great name, protection, and — most important of all — that through him all nations will be blessed. The latter promise referred, of course, to the fact that the Messiah, the Savior of the world, would come through Abraham’s lineage.

The Lord appeared to Abraham six additional times to reaffirm this covenant (Genesis 12:7; 13:14-16; 15:1-6; 15: 8-21; 17: 1-8; and 22:15-18). In these subsequent appearances, God declared that the covenant was an “everlasting” one (Genesis 17:7-8), and He spelled out the boundaries of the land in detail as encompassing most of what is referred to today as the Middle East (Genesis 15:18-21). The covenant was reaffirmed to Abraham’s son, Isaac (Genesis 26:1-5), and to Isaac’s son, Jacob (Genesis 28:3-4,13-14 and 35:10-12).

A thousand years later, King David affirmed the continuing validity of the Abrahamic Covenant in Psalm 105:

- 8) He [God] has remembered His covenant
forever,
The word which He commanded to a thousand
generations,
- 9) The covenant which He made with Abraham,
And His oath to Isaac.
- 10) Then He confirmed it to Jacob for a statute,
To Israel as an everlasting covenant,
- 11) Saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan
As the portion of your inheritance.”

The Abrahamic Covenant establishes title to the land in the Middle East. That title belongs to the Jewish people forever — with no ands, ifs or buts.

The Land Covenant

Their use and enjoyment of the land is, however, conditional

“God’s gift of the land was unconditional. The Jews were given an irrevokable, eternal title. But the use and enjoyment of the land was conditional upon their obedience.”

upon their obedience to God. This fact was established by a second covenant given through Moses right before the Children of Israel entered the land of Canaan. This covenant, often referred to as the Land Covenant, is recorded in Deuteronomy 28-30.

In the Land Covenant, God made it clear that the Jews’ enjoyment of the land would depend upon their faithfulness to Him. If they were faithful, they would be richly blessed (Deuteronomy 28:1-14). But if they were unfaithful, they would be cursed in many different ways (Deuteronomy 28:15-46).

The greatest curse which God promised to put upon them was their displacement from the land. Here’s the warning He gave them in Deuteronomy 28:

58) If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book, to fear this honored and awesome name, the LORD your God . . .

64) . . . the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known.

65) Among those nations you shall find no rest, and there will be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul.

66) So your life shall hang in doubt before you; and you will be in dread night and day, and shall have no assurance of your life.

The Critical Point

Now, the important point to keep in mind is that God’s gift of the land was unconditional. The Jews were given an irrevokable, eternal title. But the use and enjoyment of the land was conditional upon their obedience.

Let me illustrate the point to you with a modern day example. Let’s say you have a teenage son who has just turned 16 and has acquired his driver’s license. You decide to bless him by buying him a new car and putting the title in his name. The car belongs to him, but you make it clear to him that his use of the car will depend upon his obedience to the law. If he gets a speeding ticket, the car will be locked up in the garage for a week. It will still belong to him, but he will not be able to use it.

The Ejection of the Jews

The Children of Israel entered the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua, Moses' successor. They proceeded to occupy the land for the next 750 years (400 under the Judges and 350 under the Kings). But in violation of God's law, they intermarried with the Canaanites, and ended up worshipping their false gods.

God sent prophets like Elijah and Elisha to call them out of idolatry, but they persisted. Finally, God raised up foreign armies as His sword of discipline and allowed them to conquer the Jews and take them into captivity. The Assyrians dispersed the ten Jewish tribes living in the northern kingdom of Israel. When the remaining two tribes in the southern kingdom of Judah failed to get the message, God allowed the Babylonians to capture and exile them.

Seventy years later, in His grace and mercy, God allowed the Jews of Judah to return to their land and rebuild both Jerusalem and their sacred temple. But the Jewish people persisted in rebellion for the next 400 years, and when they rejected their Messiah, God allowed the Romans to conquer and disperse them worldwide, in fulfillment of prophecy.

But again, the crucial point to keep in mind is that the Jews did not lose their title to the land. They lost only their use and enjoyment of it, as a punishment for their disobedience. To this day, the Jews have remained under discipline. They may be back in a portion of their land, but their enjoyment of it is being deterred by constant Arab attacks.

The Promise of Regathering

The modern day return of the Jews to their land is one of the greatest miracles of history. It is also a fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

In the Land Covenant itself, God promised that if the Jews were ever dispersed from their land due to disobedience, they would one day be regathered (Ezekiel 37:21-22). This promise of restoration to the land is the most prolific prophecy in the Hebrew Scriptures, mentioned more times than any other prophecy.

When you study these regathering prophecies carefully, you will find that they fall into three categories. A few relate to the return from Babylonian captivity (Jeremiah 25:10-12 and 29:1-10). Most, however, are prophecies concerning two great end time regatherings from all over the world — one in unbelief **before** the Lord returns (Isaiah 11:10-12 and Ezekiel 36:22-28) and the other in belief **after** the Lord returns (Deuteronomy 30:1-10 and Ezekiel 37:19-28).

The Regathering in Unbelief

Regarding the end time regathering in unbelief, God set it in motion in the late 19th Century when He began to raise up prophetic voices among the Jews in Europe, calling them to return to their homeland. God knew the Holocaust was coming, so He called the Jewish people to return to their roots.

The key individual He used to spread this warning message was a Viennese journalist named Theodor Herzl. Like most European Jews, Herzl believed the Jews had been assimilated into European culture and would never again suffer from outbreaks of Anti-Semitism.

But in 1894, he went to Paris to cover the trial of a French Army officer named Alfred Dreyfus. This man had been falsely accused of treason, primarily because he was a Jew. When Herzl arrived at the courthouse, he was astonished to see tens of thousands of sophisticated Parisians standing in the streets shouting, "Death to the Jews!"



Theodor Herzl

His eyes were opened to the fact that Jews had not been assimilated and never would be. He responded by writing a pamphlet called "The Jewish State." In it, he called for Jews worldwide to return to their homeland, which at that time was called Palestine. In 1897 he convened the first international Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. At that conference, he proclaimed his belief that a Jewish state would come into existence within 50 years.

Herzl's vision motivated waves of immigrants to return to Palestine. These waves were dubbed "aliyas" — after the Hebrew word, *aliya*, which means "to go up." This word was used because the immigrants were viewed as "going up to Jerusalem."

By 1900 there were 40,000 Jews in Palestine. During the years immediately preceding World War II, and during the war itself, many barriers were placed in the way of Jewish immigration, but even so, by the end of the war, the Jewish population had swelled to over 600,000. Today there are over six million Jews in Israel who have come — as prophesied — from the four corners of the world (Isaiah 11:12).

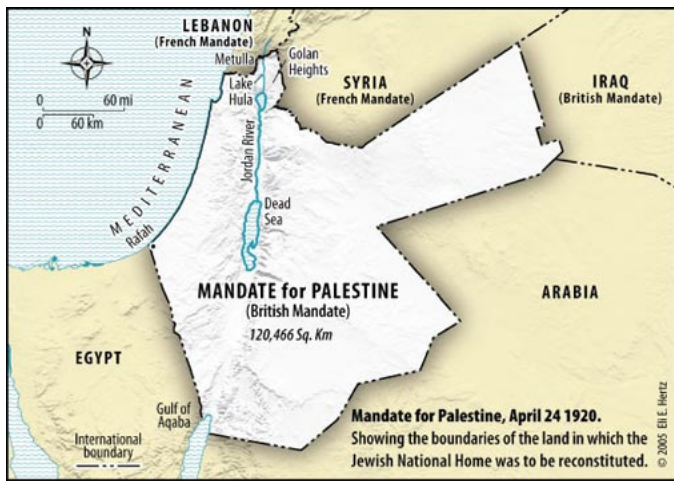
The two world wars were the key events that led to the return of the Jews to their homeland, proving once again that God can bring good out of any calamity. World War I prepared the land for the people; World War II prepared the people for the land.

The Impact of World War I

During World War I the Turks sided with the Germans. Their realm, called the Ottoman Empire, included most of the lands of the Middle East, including Palestine. When the Germans lost the war, the Turks did also, and their empire was divided up among the Allied victors. In a secret pact signed in 1916 (called the Sykes-Picot Agreement), the British and French agreed to divide the Middle East between themselves when the war ended. Britain received Palestine while the French were given Syria.

In November 1917, the British announced that they intended to create a homeland for the Jews within the territory of Palestine that had been allotted to them. At that time Palestine consisted of all of modern day Israel and Jordan — an area of 45,000 square miles.

Jews worldwide were elated over the Balfour Declaration. But the ink was hardly dry before the British government changed its mind. To placate Arab animosity and to guarantee access to Arab oil, they decided in 1922 to give two-thirds of Palestine to the Arabs, creating a Palestinian state called Trans-Jordan.



Palestine as it existed in 1917 when the Balfour Declaration was issued by the British government. It consisted of all of modern day Jordan and Israel.

Jewish leaders were terribly disappointed by this decision, and many felt betrayed by the British. But they still looked forward to establishing a Jewish state within the part of Palestine that was left — a sliver of land only 10,000 square miles in size, smaller than Lake Michigan or the state of New Jersey.

The Impact of World War II

Even after God had miraculously produced a homeland for the Jews out of the horrors of World War I, the Jewish people did not return in great numbers. Most felt comfortable in Europe and simply could not believe the rising chorus of prophetic voices who warned of an approaching time of widespread persecution.

World War II produced the Holocaust which, in turn, provided the motivation for the Jews to return home. They came out of the war saying, “Never again! Never again! Never again will we live under a Hitler. We are going to have our own land, our own government, our own state.” This feeling produced a flood of refugees.

The United Nations Partition Plan of 1947

In November of 1947 (50 years after Herzl’s proclamation), Jews worldwide were elated when the United Nations voted to allow the establishment of a Jewish state. But they were severely disappointed when the United Nations decided at the same time to divide the remaining portion of Palestine once again. Half was apportioned to the Jews for the creation of a Jewish state. The other half was assigned to the Arabs for the establishment of a second Palestinian state.

Despite their disappointment, the Jews accepted the UN resolution and proceeded to declare the existence of their new state on May 14, 1948. The Arabs rejected the UN vote and declared war on Israel.



The UN Partition Plan of 1947. The light tan areas were assigned to the Jews; the green areas, to the Arabs.

The Choice of War

Please note carefully that the Arabs could have peacefully and legally established a second Palestinian state in 1948. They chose war instead, because they were unwilling to tolerate a Jewish state in the Middle East — even a minuscule one of only 5,000 square miles. This action on the part of the Arabs — and many like it since that time — is what prompted one of Israel’s most eloquent spokesmen, Abba Eban, to say, “The Palestinians have never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity.”

Since 1948 there has been war after war in the Middle East as the Arabs have tried repeatedly to destroy Israel — the Suez War of 1956, the Six Day War of 1967, the War of Attrition (1967-1970), the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the Lebanese War of 1982, the First Intifada (1987-1993), the Second Intifada (2000-2005), the Second Lebanese War (2006), the First Gaza War (2008-2009), The Second Gaza War (2012) and the Third Gaza War (2014).

For those who support the return of the Jews to their homeland, it is comforting to know that all efforts to destroy the Jewish state are doomed to failure. The reason this can be asserted with certainty is because of prophecies that Israel will be able to sustain itself against all its enemies in the end times. For example, in Zechariah 12:6-8 we are told that Israel “will be like a firepot among pieces of wood,” consuming all their enemies. This passage also says that Israel will be as strong as David and that the Lord will “destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”

The Arab Position

Let’s switch our attention for a moment to the Arabs. Just as God made a covenant with Abraham’s heirs through Isaac, He also made promises to Abraham’s descendants through Ishmael, the father of the Arab nations (Genesis 16:10-12 and 17:20). Here is a list of the remarkable promises God made to the Arab peoples:

- 1) The descendants of Ishmael will be multiplied “exceedingly” (Genesis 16:10 and 17:20).
- 2) They will become a great nation (Genesis 17:20).
- 3) They will be given all the land east of Canaan (Genesis 16:12).
- 4) They will be given a personality like a “wild donkey,” and because of this, “their hand will be against everyone” (Genesis 16:12).

God has faithfully fulfilled all these promises:

- There are 400 million Arabs today.
- They constitute a great nation composed of 22 states.
- They occupy 5.3 million square miles of oil rich land.
- They are characterized by an inability to get along with anyone, including themselves.

In contrast, there is only one Jewish state with a population of six million squeezed into an area of only 8,000 square miles.



The Modern Middle East

Note how tiny Israel is surrounded by hostile Muslim states. Yet, despite its small size, the Arabs cannot tolerate its existence.

That's a population ratio of 60 to 1 and a land ratio of 662 to 1! And yet, the Arabs greedily demand the creation of another Arab state at the expense of the one Jewish state.

The Palestinian Myth

Regarding the Palestinians, during the nearly 1,900 years that the Jews were dispossessed of their land:

- There was never a Palestinian state.
- Jerusalem was never the capital of any Arab state.
- The Arabs who lived in the area considered themselves to be Syrians.
- There was no Palestinian identity, culture, or language.

The concept of a Palestinian claim on the land is a propaganda gimmick developed after the Six Day War in 1967 when Jordan lost the West Bank to Israel.

The same is true of the Arab claim on Jerusalem. The Arabs contend that Jerusalem is the third most holy place behind Mecca and Medina. But again, all this emphasis on the significance of Jerusalem has developed in recent years.

There is no mention of Jerusalem in the Qu'ran, whereas it is mentioned 667 times by name in the Hebrew Scriptures. Although the Arabs claim that Mohammed went to Jerusalem and from there ascended into heaven, there is no historical evidence whatsoever that Mohammed ever even came close to Jerusalem. The real geographical focus of Islam is the city of Mecca. Muslims pray toward this city, and it is to this city that they are required to make a pilgrimage once in their lifetime.

The real claim of the Arabs is based upon a portion of the

Qu'ran that states that once a land has been conquered for Allah, it must remain an Islamic land. The Arabs conquered the land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem in 637 AD. They now feel compelled by the Qu'ran to reconquer it.

There are two other motivations behind the Arab desire to retake both Israel and Jerusalem. The first is rooted in the fact that the re-establishment of the state of Israel is viewed by Muslim clerics as a judgment of God upon the Arab peoples for their lack of faithfulness to Islam. They must redeem themselves from this judgment by returning to the fundamentals of Islam and then, having been spiritually revived, Allah will empower them to regain both the land and the city.

The second factor is that the Arabs believe that their control of Jerusalem and its Temple Mount will certify their superiority over both Judaism and Christianity. The Temple Mount was the focal point of the Jewish faith for centuries because it was where the Temple was located. And it is believed that the Temple Mount is where the first Gospel sermon was preached by Peter on Pentecost, and thus was the site of the birthplace of the Church.

The Arab Aim

The goal of the Arabs is not the establishment of another state within Palestine. Rather, the goal is the incorporation of all the remainder of Palestine into a second Arab state. In other words, the goal is the annihilation of Israel. They have made this intention very clear in several ways:

1) The Phased Plan of 1974 — This plan, issued while the PLO was headquartered in Libya, is Arafat's "Mein Kampf." It was issued after Arafat realized he would never be able to destroy Israel militarily. So, he proposed as an alternative, that Israel be taken slowly, piece by piece, by using diplomatic pressure from the Vatican, Western Europe, the United Nations and the United

States. Territory would be traded for a false promise of peace. And when enough territory had been gained, Israel would be attacked from within and destroyed. In other words, it was a Trojan horse strategy. Feisal Hussein, who served as Arafat's foreign minister until his death in 2001, admitted this strategy in the last newspaper interview that he gave. He said, "The Oslo Accords were a Trojan horse. The strategic goal is the liberation of Palestine from the [Jordan] river to the [Mediterranean] sea."



Yasser Arafat

2) Arafat's Speeches — In May of 1994, just eight months after signing the Oslo Accords at the White House, Arafat gave a speech in Johannesburg, South Africa in which he called for a "holy jihad" to liberate Jerusalem. He also mocked the Oslo agreement as nothing but a strategic ploy to gain time. He likened it to Mohammed's treaty with the Arab tribe of Quraysh. That was a treaty in which Mohammed agreed to live in peace with this tribe if they would allow

him to pray in Mecca. Within two years, when Mohammed felt he had grown strong enough militarily, he abrogated the agreement, slaughtered the tribe of Quraysh, and conquered Mecca for Allah. The Johannesburg speech was only one of many similar ones that Arafat gave all over the Arab world to assure the Arab masses that the Oslo Accords were meaningless.

3) Continued Terrorism — Even though the land-for-peace process initiated by the Oslo Accords resulted in 97% of Palestinians being placed under the control of the Palestinian Authority, the violence against Israel continued to escalate. In the year following the signing of the Oslo Accords (September 1993 to September 1994), there were over twice as many Israeli terror fatalities than during the preceding year. Overall, Israel suffered 73% more terror fatalities in the two years after the 1993 deal than in the two years before it. And more Israelis were killed by Palestinian terrorists in the first five years after Oslo than in the 15 preceding years! From the outbreak of the Second Intifada in September 2000 until July 1, 2002, there were 13,494 terrorist attacks against Israelis, resulting in 4,213 casualties, including 561 killed.

4) Palestinian Maps — The website of the Palestinian State Information Service contains a map of the projected state of Palestine that includes all of modern day Israel. This same map hung on the wall of Arafat's office and is used on shoulder patches of Palestinian uniforms.



5) Rejection of the Barak Offer — In July of 2000 the Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, decided to put Arafat to the test by offering him everything he had been publicly demanding. In short, he called Arafat's bluff. To summarize the offer, he proposed giving the Palestinian Authority 96% of the West Bank and Gaza, 4% of Israel adjacent to Gaza, three-fourths of the Old City of Jerusalem and sovereignty over the Temple Mount, five neighborhoods

in east Jerusalem, and the right of return for 50,000 Palestinians. Arafat got up, walked out of the room, and never returned. He did not even make a counter offer. Instead, he went back home and launched a new Intifada.

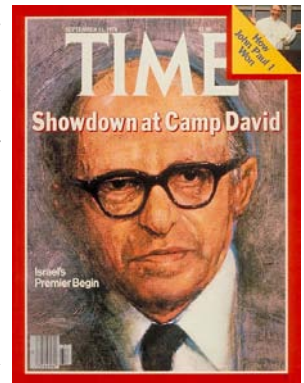
6) The militarization of Gaza — In 2005, Israel was pressured by the United States to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, resulting in the uprooting of 8,000 Jewish settlers from 21 settlements. The Palestinians responded to this peace gesture by converting the area into a launching pad for missiles. Since that time, up to 2016, more than 15,000 rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip, imperiling one million Israeli citizens. The attacks continue to this day, with the missiles becoming increasingly sophisticated.

The Jewish Position

With Arab intentions so clear, why has Israel staked its future on a hope that it can secure peace by trading land? There are at least three key reasons.

1) Humanistic Leadership

— Menachem Begin is the only Prime Minister of Israel who has been an observant Jew. All others have been marginal believers, if not atheists or agnostics. Accordingly, the prevailing philosophy among Israeli leaders has been Humanism, with its faith in the goodness of Man. This philosophy has entrapped the leaders in self-deception, convincing them that if they will only be kind and gracious toward their enemy, then their enemy will reciprocate. It was this type of muddle-headed thinking that prompted Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres to believe they could charm and placate the Arabs through a policy of appeasement.



Menachem Begin

2) Desire for Acceptance — Throughout their long history, the Jewish people have had a desire for acceptance. When they demanded that Samuel provide them with a king, he warned them that a king would abuse and exploit them. But they refused to listen to Samuel's warnings because, as they put it, "we want to be like all the other nations" (1 Samuel 8:20). God set the Jewish people apart to be a witness of Him (Isaiah 43:10-12), and they have never liked that role. Again, the Jewish leadership has deceived itself into believing that if it will only give in to world pressure regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state, then the world will accept Israel. The truth is that no matter what Israel does, the world will continue to hate the Jews and their state.

3) American Pressure — Because the United States is Israel's only ally in the world, they are particularly responsive to pressure from us. We may be their only ally, but we have been unwilling to come down decisively on their side because of our interest in procuring Arab oil and our desire to build an Arab coalition against terrorism. We are the ones, in fact, who forced them to the negotiating table to trade land for peace. It all occurred in 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed and a flood of Jewish refugees began to return to Israel. For over a year, 2,000 to 3,000 refugees arrived each day! The Israeli government was swamped by the demands for food and housing and jobs. They appealed to the world bank for a \$5 billion loan. The bank

responded by saying they would provide the loan only if it were guaranteed by the United States. The Bush Administration dug in its heels and demanded that the Israelis start trading land for peace in order to get the loan guarantee. That is how the Israelis got started down the self-destructive road of appeasement.

The Folly of Appeasement

History makes it clear that a policy of appeasement always leads to war because it merely whets the appetite of the aggressor. But from 1991 to 2000, the Israeli leadership ignored the lessons of history and fervently pursued its policy of trading land for peace.



Ehud Barak

The turning point came in the summer of 2000 when Ehud Barak caved in to Palestinian terror and offered Arafat everything except the keys to the Knesset. When Arafat refused even to consider the offer, the eyes of the Israeli people were opened to the truth that Arafat was not interested in peace. They finally realized that he was determined to take all of Israel.

That realization produced an earthquake in Israeli public opinion. The voters decided to wash their hands of Barak and his party of equivocators. They turned to Ariel Sharon, a strong leader who had never been deceived by Arab intentions. Sharon was elected Prime Minister in February of 2001, and his determination to draw the line on what Israel was willing to surrender for peace resulted in all the world coming together against Israel over the issue of Jerusalem, just as prophesied in Zechariah 12: 1-3.

President Donald Trump's courageous decision in December of 2017 to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel served to intensify the world's hatred of the Jewish state — again, in fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy. But Trump continues to be deceived in believing, like previous Presidents, that he can solve the Middle East crisis with a political settlement.

Crucial Questions

Why has God regathered the Jews to their homeland? What is the likely future of Israel? What does it all mean to the Church?

The Regathering

God has regathered the Jews from the four corners of the earth because He has a plan of redemption for a great remnant of them. His plan is to gather them to their homeland and bring all the nations of the world together against them over the issue of the control of Jerusalem.

This will ultimately lead to another holocaust that will be worse than the one perpetrated by the Nazis. Zechariah says that two-thirds of the Jews will die (Zechariah 13:8).

But out of that horrible experience, the Jews will be brought to the end of themselves, with no one to turn to for help except God. That's when the remnant will repent of their rejection of the Messiah and will accept Him as their Savior (Zechariah 12:10 and 13:1).

The apostle Paul taught this concept in the New Testament in Romans 9-11. He argued that a great remnant of the Jews (Romans 9:27) will turn to the Lord and be saved (Romans 11:25-26).

The Likely Future



There are some tough days ahead for the Jews of Israel. I believe the most likely scenario is a major war that will result in Arab missile attacks on Tel Aviv and Haifa. To survive, the Israelis will have to respond with nuclear weapons. This is probably the reason the Bible teaches that Damascus will cease to exist in the end times (Isaiah 17:1-14 and Jeremiah 49:23-27).

This is most likely the “war of annihilation” that is described in Psalm 83, which pictures the Jewish state fighting against an alliance of Arab states that consists of all the nations that have a common border with Israel (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Gaza).

With the destruction of Damascus and the defeat of its allies, the Arab world will be thrown into a panic. That's when they will call for help from their natural ally, the Russians. The Russians will then send a great army to destroy Israel. The Russians will be motivated not only by their ingrained anti-Semitism, but also by their desire to seize all the Arab oil fields in the Middle East.

The Bible says the Russian army will be destroyed supernaturally on the hills of Israel in such a way that even the Israelis will know that they were not responsible for it (Ezekiel 38:17-23 and 39:1-6). At that point the whole world will be thrown into a panic, and that atmosphere of hysteria will provide the perfect opportunity for the Antichrist to step forward with the “perfect” plan for peace in the Middle East.

The Meaning for the Church

Why should Gentiles in the Church of the 21st Century be concerned about what is happening among the Jewish people in the Middle East today? Why should we be following the events in that part of the world with bated breath? Why should we be concerned about the survival of Israel? Why should we be searching the Scriptures daily concerning prophecies about the Middle East? Why should we be praying daily for the peace of Jerusalem?

There are three reasons.

1 *The events in the Middle East are proof that God is faithful to His promises.*



God is fulfilling in detail promises that He made to the Jewish people as long ago as 3,500 years. And as we see each of these promises fulfilled, we can likewise be assured that God is going to fulfill every promise He has made to the Church.

God has promised that one day soon, Jesus will appear in the heavens, the dead in Christ will be resurrected, the living believers will be caught up to meet the Lord in the sky, and both the living and dead will be given new, glorified bodies. We will return to heaven with Jesus where we will be judged of our works to determine our degrees of reward. We will also celebrate our union with Jesus in a great feast that will symbolize the union of the Bride (the Church) with her Bridegroom (Jesus).

We will then return to earth with Jesus to see Him crowned as King of kings and Lord of lords. He will reign over all the world from Jerusalem. We will be scattered all over the world to assist Him in His reign, serving as mayors, governors, presidents, judges, and teachers. We will see the earth flooded with peace, righteousness and justice — as the waters cover the sea.



At the end of His reign, we will be transferred to the new Jerusalem He is preparing now. From that vantage point, we will watch as the earth is superheated with fire, and the pollution of Satan's last revolt is burned away. Out of that fiery inferno will come a new earth. We will then be lowered down to that new earth inside the new Jerusalem, and God Himself will descend to the new earth to live in our presence forever.

Those are the marvelous promises that have been made to what the Bible calls "overcomers" (Revelation 21: 1-7) — that is, to those who have placed their faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior (1 John 5:1-5).

As I witness God fulfilling His promises to the Jews, my hope soars concerning the promises God has made to the Church. I know He will fulfill every one of them.

2 *The events in the Middle East are a testimony to God's unfathomable grace.*



Think about it for a moment — any false god created by the mind of Man would have annihilated the Jews a long time ago. Only a God of grace would have put up with the Jews and continued to love them.

Their own prophets refer to them as "stiff-necked," "stubborn" and "rebellious." Yet, despite their rejection of God as king of their nation, and their rejection of His Son as king of their hearts, God continues to love them and pursue them with the intention of bringing a great remnant to salvation. That's grace.

When I first started preaching about the Jews, my wife came to me and said, "When you emphasize how much God loves the Jews, you make me want to be a Jew." I made two points in response.

First, I told her that she really didn't want to be a Jew because if she were one, the overwhelming odds are that she would have a spiritual veil over her eyes that would keep her from recognizing Jesus as her Messiah.

Then I made an even more important point. I stated that God is not doing one thing for the Jews that He is not willing to do for everyone.

The Jews continue to this day to be witnesses of God. Their history shows what it means to have a relationship with God. When they are faithful, He blesses. When they are rebellious, He disciplines. When they repent, He forgives and forgets and starts blessing again. And so it is with any person or nation.

The Jews are currently under discipline. They have not yet repented, and they therefore do not deserve to be regathered to their homeland. They do not merit God's love and care. But neither do you or I. The only thing any of us deserve is death. We have hope only because our God is a God of grace.

Replacement Theology denies the grace of God to the Jewish people. Its proponents argue that because the Jews were guilty of deicide (the killing of God), they were set aside, replaced by the Church, and have no future hope.

But in Acts 4:27 we are told that Jesus was murdered by Herod, Pontius Pilate, the peoples of Israel and the Gentiles. And, of course, you and I should be added to the list because Jesus died for the sins of all Mankind.

God has not "washed His Hands of the Jews." He loves them and is determined to bring a great remnant to salvation (Isaiah 10:20-22, Zechariah 12:10 and Matthew 23:39).

3 *The events in the Middle East are evidence that Jesus is returning soon.*



The Bible says that Jesus will return when the Jews are back in their homeland and their capital city. It also says that it will be a time when all the world has come together against Israel over the issue of the control of Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:1-3).

The Jewish state was re-established on May 14, 1948. The Jews re-occupied the city of Jerusalem on June 7, 1967. Since 1991, all the world has been pressuring the Israeli government to surrender all or part of Jerusalem.

The fulfillment of these prophecies makes it clear that we are on the threshold of the Tribulation. That means the Rapture of the Church is more imminent than ever before. Jesus is at the very gates of Heaven, waiting for His Father's command to return. We are living on borrowed time.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6), and remember, that when you do so, you are really praying for the return of Jesus, for Jerusalem will not enjoy true peace until the Prince of Peace returns. ☆

Comments About the Middle East Crisis

Benjamin Netanyahu to the United Nations in 2013:

Israel continues to seek an historic compromise with our Palestinian neighbors, one that ends our conflict once and for all. We want peace based on security and mutual recognition, in which a demilitarized Palestinian state recognizes the Jewish state of Israel. I remain committed to achieving an historic reconciliation and building a better future for Israelis and Palestinians alike . . . For peace to be achieved, the Palestinians must finally recognize the Jewish state, and Israel's security needs must be met.

In our time the biblical prophecies are being realized. As the prophet Amos said, "they shall rebuild ruined cities and inhabit them. They shall plant vineyards and drink their wine. They shall till gardens and eat their fruit. And I will plant them upon their soil never to be uprooted again" (Amos 9:13-15).

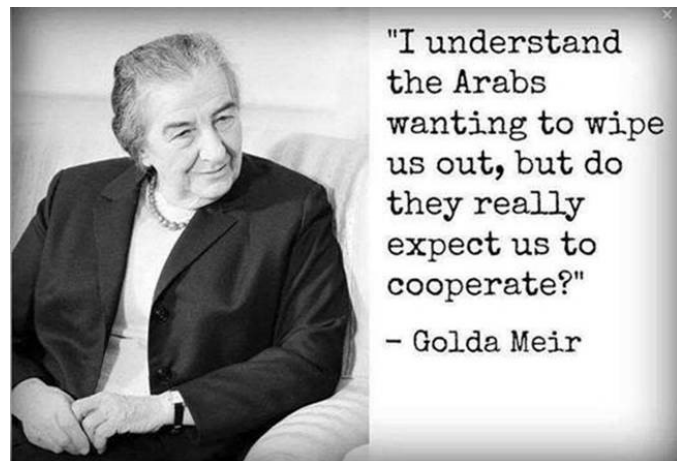
Ladies and gentlemen, the people of Israel have come home never to be uprooted again.

Yasser Arafat:

We plan to eliminate the state of Israel and establish a purely Palestinian state. We will make life unbearable for Jews by psychological warfare and population explosion. We Palestinians will take over everything, including all of Jerusalem.

Benjamin Netanyahu:

If the Arab states were to disarm, we could have peace. If Israel were to disarm, Israel would cease to exist.



Benjamin Netanyahu:

I often hear them accuse Israel of "Judaizing Jerusalem." That's like accusing America of Americanizing Washington, or the British of Anglicizing London. You know why we're called "Jews"? Because we come from Judea.

Golda Meir:

We can forgive the Arabs for killing our children. We cannot forgive them for forcing us to kill their children . . . We will only have peace with the Arabs when they love their children more than they hate us. ☆

Dr. Reagan's Comprehensive Book About Israel in Prophecy

The incredible story of Israel in Bible prophecy is proof positive of the existence of God and that the Bible is His inerrant Word. It further demonstrates beyond a doubt that God is on His throne and that He has the wisdom and power to see to it that His will in history is accomplished.

The book is divided into three parts as follows:

Part 1: The Past

- Chapter 1 — The Worldwide Dispersion of the Jews
- Chapter 2 — The Relentless Persecution of the Jews
- Chapter 3 — The Miraculous Preservation of the Jews
- Chapter 4 — The Desolation of the Land of Israel

Part 2: The Present

- Chapter 5 — The Regathering of the Jewish People
- Chapter 6 — The Re-establishment of the State of Israel
- Chapter 7 — The Revival of the Hebrew Language
- Chapter 8 — The Reclamation of the Land of Israel
- Chapter 9 — The Resurgence of the Israeli Military
- Chapter 10 — The Re-occupation of the City of Jerusalem
- Chapter 11 — The Re-focusing of World Politics on the Nation of Israel

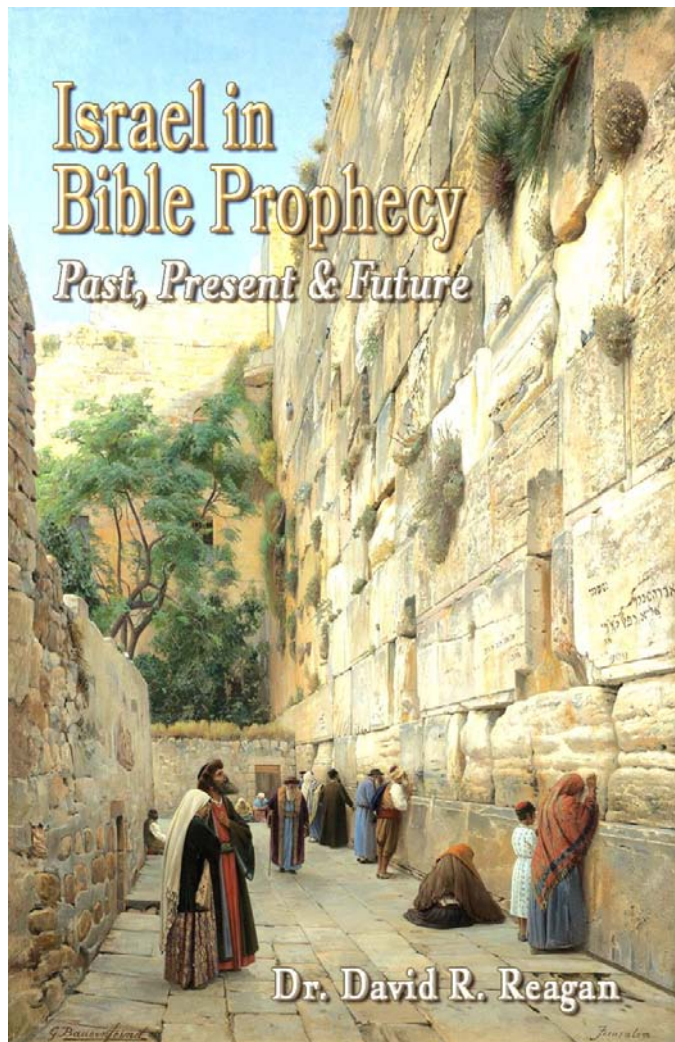
Part 3: The Future

- Chapter 12 — The Redemption of Israel
- Epilogue — The Relevance to Believers Today

In each chapter, Dr. Reagan presents the specific, relevant prophecies and then shows how those in Part 1 were fulfilled before the beginning of the 20th Century and how



Dr. Reagan stands in Independence Hall in Tel Aviv in the exact spot where David Ben Gurion stood when he read the Israeli Declaration of Independence on May 14, 1948.



those in Part 2 were fulfilled in whole or in part during the 20th Century.

In the Epilogue, Dr. Reagan presents the relevance of all the fulfilled prophecies among the Jewish people to Christians today. He emphasizes that because God has fulfilled in detail all these prophetic promises He has made to the Jewish people, we can be confident that He will fulfill all His promises to the Church, including the promise of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture.

Further, Dr. Reagan points out that what God is doing among the Jewish people today is conclusive evidence that we are living in the season of the Messiah's return.

The book runs 256 pages in length and sells for \$20, including the cost of shipping.

You can order it via our website at www.lambliion.com. Or, you can call us at 972-736-3567 Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm Central Time. ✚