

WHOSE LAND IS IT?

by T. R. Post

Let's suppose you lived in a foreign country and received news that you inherited property owned by your family for generations. As soon as you move back to your homeland and start building a house, neighbors suddenly show up claiming the land belongs to them. You refuse their demands to leave since you own the title deed to the property. In an effort to force your evacuation, your neighbors take you to court. Despite the judge's ruling in your favor, your neighbors continue harassing you because they won't give up wanting the land.

This scenario sounds ridiculous. Yet it resembles a conflict going on right now in the Middle East. The land under dispute is the nation of Israel (also known by historians as Palestine), an area no bigger than the state of New Jersey. Many people believe world peace can be a reality if the differences between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) are settled. To understand this situation more accurately, one should examine both Scripture and world history.

Psalm 24:1 says, *"The earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein."* God reserved a portion of this planet for a chosen group of people. In Genesis 12:1-3, the Lord told Abram, *"Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

In the next chapter, God told Abram (later renamed Abraham), *"for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever."* (Genesis 13:15) Notice that God didn't lease the land to Israel for a limited period of time. He gave it to them **forever!**

Abraham's descendants wouldn't physically possess the land until hundreds of years later when Joshua led the Israelites out of the wilderness and across the Jordan River. Joshua 1:4 details the borders of the property reserved for them; *"From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory."* This land includes parts of present-day Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. Bible prophecy writer Hal Lindsey points out, "I see Israel as the only nation on Earth with a title deed to any real estate."

As long as Israel followed God's instructions, they were successful in possessing the land. But because the Israelites were frequently disobedient, various world empires overtook them. After the Romans conquered Jerusalem in 70 A.D, most of the Jewish people were scattered throughout the world and lived in exile for the next 1800 years. But just before the 20th century began, Jews living abroad expressed a desire in returning to their homeland. At that time, the Ottoman Empire based in Turkey occupied the Promised Land.

During World War I, the British army led by General Edmund Allenby prepared to gain control of Palestine. Allenby was a believer who didn't want to destroy Jerusalem's historical sites. The general commanded airplanes to drop leaflets warning the Arabs of an upcoming invasion. Having never seen

an airplane before, the Arabs became so scared they fled the city, allowing the British forces to capture Jerusalem without firing a shot.

A short time later, the British government passed the Balfour Declaration. This mandate carved out nations among the newly occupied territories of the Middle East. Less than 1% of it was set-aside as a Jewish homeland called Transjordan. But when neighboring Arabs protested, the British sliced off a huge chunk of Palestine and created what is now the country of Jordan.

In the meantime, many Jews were reluctant to leave Europe because they were prosperous there. All of that changed when the Nazis slaughtered over six million of them during World War II. As a result, many Jewish survivors of the Holocaust traveled to the Middle East determined to have their own country. In an effort to avoid another war, the newly formed United Nations drew up a proposal dividing up Palestine even more. The Jews were willing to accept this proposal but the Arabs went to war over it and lost. Israel became a nation on May 14, 1948.

For the next nineteen years, half of Jerusalem remained under Arab occupation. Then in June 1967, the Six-Day War broke out. Israel routed the armies of her enemies and possessed the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula (later returned to Egypt), and an area known as the West Bank. For the first time in 2,000 years, the entire city of Jerusalem was in Jewish hands.

Six years later, Israel was attacked again by her neighbors but came out victorious in what became known as the Yom Kippur War.

THE PALESTINIAN HOMELAND MYTH

It has often been said that if you tell a lie loud enough and long enough, people will eventually believe it. This is exactly what the PLO and other Arabs have done with their claims to a "Palestinian homeland." Israel first became a nation two thousand years before the rise of Islam. Since then, the Jews have had a continuous presence in the land with Jerusalem as their capital. Jerusalem has never been the capital of any Arab or Muslim entity. Even when Jordan occupied Jerusalem, they never sought to make it their capital. Palestine was a barren wasteland until the Jews made it fruitful again. It was then the so-called Palestinians claimed the land as their own.

Since Arab nations have not been able to defeat Israel by military force, they are now using the deceptive tactic of "land for peace." But negotiating with terrorists never produces lasting peace because they will always make new demands. In 1938, Europe tried to appease Adolf Hitler by allowing him to annex Austria and part of Czechoslovakia in hopes of avoiding war. The German dictator went on to conquer other European nations before he was finally stopped.

The PLO's Charter still calls for the destruction of the State of Israel. The PLO repeatedly attacks innocent civilians with suicide bombings while the Israeli army pursues military targets. Israel is the only nation that's criticized for defending herself and fighting back. A large percentage of the resolutions passed by the United Nations have been specifically directed against Israel. This is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Zechariah 14:2 says, *"For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem."*

As previously mentioned in Genesis 12, whoever blesses the seed of Abraham will be blessed and those who don't will be cursed. The effects of this spiritual law can be observed through events from the past hundred years. At the time the Balfour Declaration was passed in 1917, the British Empire covered approximately 1/4 of the world's landmass. That empire has largely vanished since Great Britain negated their promise to provide a Jewish homeland. The British also prevented Jews escaping Hitler's Nazi regime from entering into Palestine. The Germans themselves had their country cut in half and some of its citizens walled in by the Iron Curtain after their country held the Jews captive in the Nazi concentration camps.

The United States has been a long time ally of Israel but in recent years enacted unfavorable foreign policy resulting in negative consequences. After the Persian Gulf War of 1991, George Bush had the highest popularity rating of any President in U.S. history. Then on October 30th of that year, President Bush opened the Madrid Conference with an initiative involving Israel's land. On the same day, a rare storm pounded the New England Coast, causing heavy damage to President Bush's home in Kennebunkport, Maine.

In early 1992, the Bush Administration issued a statement saying the United States would not guarantee any more loans to Israel until they stopped building new settlements in the West Bank area. On August 23rd of that year, the Madrid Conference peace talks resumed in Washington DC. That same day, Hurricane Andrew hit America, producing an estimated \$30 billion in damage and left 180,000 homeless in Florida. Just over two months later, George Bush's popularity had diminished so much he lost his reelection bid to Bill Clinton.

Since then numerous disasters occurred whenever the U. S. Government took negative action against Israel. The 9/11 attacks of 2001 occurred within 24 hours after George W. Bush announced he would be the first President to give the Palestinians a homeland by dividing up the God-given land of Israel. He spoke those words again on January 31st, 2003. The next day, the Space Shuttle Columbia (which had an Israeli astronaut on board) disintegrated upon re-entry. Ironically, the center of the breakup area was in Palestine, Texas.

In September 2003, I stayed with friends outside Washington, DC, when Hurricane Isabel hit the area with high winds, torrential rains, and flooding. I questioned how a storm like that could come to the nation's capital until I saw President Bush on TV hosting King Abdullah of Jordan at Camp David to discuss his "road map to peace."

In August 2005, President Bush supported the decision of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to give up land for hopes of Mideast peace. Jews were forced to evacuate from their homes in the Gaza Strip and from four northern West Bank settlements. On the same day the withdrawal was completed, Hurricane Katrina started to form and became one of the costliest and deadliest hurricanes to ever hit the United States. A few weeks after that, Ariel Sharon suffered a stroke and remained in a permanent vegetative state until his death in January 2014.

The next U. S. administration continued this scary trend. President Barack Obama once said from the White House, "I have the utmost confidence in him [Mahmoud Abbas - President of the Palestinian National Authority] and his belief in a two-state solution in which the people of Israel and the

Palestinians are living side by side in peace and security.” Yet Abbas was quoted as saying, “A Jewish state, what is that supposed to mean? You can call yourselves as you like, but I don’t accept it and I say so publicly.” Once again, you cannot negotiate with terrorists!

In April 2010 while President Obama intensely pressured Israel to stop construction in Jerusalem, the largest oil well disaster in American history occurred in the Gulf of Mexico. On May 19, 2011, President Obama issued a statement calling for Israel to go back to its pre-1967 borders. Three days later, nearly 50 tornadoes touched down in the United States including Minneapolis and the one in Joplin, Missouri that killed scores of people.

It’s also worth noting that the Government of Japan issued a statement against Israel building on the West Bank moments before the massive earthquake struck there on March 11, 2011.

Skeptics may dismiss these so-called “acts of God” as coincidences. But the Lord said in Joel 3:2, *“...and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land.”* In this day and hour, it’s urgent for believers to pray that their political leaders enact foreign policy favorable to Israel. The Judgment of the Nations (Matthew 25:31–46) will be determined by how countries treated God’s people in these last days.

A PROMISED LAND FOR YOU

Hebrews 4:9 says, *“There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.”* God also has a “promised land” for you on earth as well as in heaven. But before you begin possessing the promises God has set aside for you, let’s make sure you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. He said in John 3:3, *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* You become “born again” by confessing with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believing in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9). So if you are not in right standing with the Lord, then I invite you to say a prayer like this one out loud...

“God in Heaven, I know I’m a sinner and I need Your help. I believe in my heart that Jesus Christ died on the cross for my sins and rose again from the dead. Jesus, come into my heart, make Yourself real to me, cleanse me and protect me with Your precious blood, fill me with the Holy Spirit, keep me away from sin, make me a soul winner, be my Lord and Savior. Amen.”

Congratulations! You have just reserved a place in heaven by making Jesus Christ your Lord and Savior. God has a plan and purpose for your life that will manifest if you take the time to build a relationship with Him. For more information on how to do that, please click the link to the “[seekers and new believers](#)” section in the Signs & Wonders website.