

GNITN - Special Edition

Israel At War – Day 86

Whose Land Is It - Part One

Fighting Over Territory

When one listens to the Palestinian arguments about having a state where Israel is now a nation, inevitably the logic is put forth that they lived there longer. Jews have only lived in the land for 75 years and Palestinians have lived there for thousands of years. If true, they would have a good point, but is that the truth? What does history tell us? What does archaeology tell us? What does the Koran tell us? And what does the Bible tell us? As we will see, the land of Israel is much bigger than it is now and has been in Jewish hands a lot longer than 75 years. And we will also see that even the name Palestine wasn't used until after Jews lived there first and referred to a region and not a people. In fact Palestinians didn't refer to a people group until Yassar Arafat used it that way back in 1969. So there are many factors that go into the current arguments for Palestine that we need to lay them out for you piece by piece. Hopefully, it will bring clarity more than anything else.

A Long History

The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you ...Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants." And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the Lord, who had appeared to him. (Gen 12:1,7, NLT)

Abram, who would later be called Abraham, was promised the land for the great nation that would come out of him. The more God told him about this promised land, the more details He gave him:

So the Lord made a covenant with Abram that day and said, "I have given this land to your descendants, all the way from the border of Egypt to the great Euphrates River— 19 the land now occupied by the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, 20 Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, 21 Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites." (Gen 15:18-21, NLT)

We read in an article from curtlandry.com how these verses define the boundaries:

Within Genesis 15.18 we find the Lord had defined the northern and southern borders of Israel through a covenant promise—long before a Jewish nation ever existed. The area from the Nile River in the south, to the great river, Euphrates in the north, includes all of modern-day Lebanon and three-fourths of modern-day Syria.

The Lord goes on in Genesis 15.19-21 to ensure that we completely understand the exact boundaries by knowing them as being occupied by "...the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." These people lived in portions of what are now modern-day Egypt, Sudan, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Turkey, and all of modern-day Israel (including Gaza, the West Bank, and all of Jerusalem).

Not Called Israel At First

Your name will no longer be Jacob,” the man told him. “From now on you will be called Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have won.” (Gen 32:28, NLT)

It was known as the promised land from Abraham, to Isaac, and then to Jacob. It was only after Jacob wrestled with the God that his name was changed. From that point on, the promised land would be called the land of Israel. The next place we see boundaries described is in **Exodus 34** and explained this way by the same article from *curtislandry.com*:

We find reference in Numbers 34.1-15, that the Lord had spoken to Moses specifically defining the north, south, east and west boundaries of the Eretz Yisrael. In this passage, the promised borders of Israel run from the wilderness on the east side of the Jordan River to the Red Sea on the west side of the Sinai; and from the Euphrates River in the north, to the Nile River in the South.

The descendants of Ishmael were promised no land and God specially said that the land promised to Isaac was for his descendants alone. Ishmael’s progeny would become a great nation, though the land they dwelt on was not described as was Isaacs and eventually Israels.

An Eternal Possession

Lands change hands over time and nations come and go, but according to the Bible, Israel’s land is an inheritance and an eternal possession as read in the same *curtislandry.com* article:

In fact, the Lord promised that He would give the Land of Israel to the Jewish people as an inheritance and eternal possession 170 times in the Bible? He confirms His promise at least 55 times with an oath, and mentions the land as an everlasting covenant with the Jewish people at least 12 times!

These facts add unfathomable dimensions to the land promised by God to Abram’s descendants—a land currently occupied by other nations!

Further, in Ezekiel 47.13-20 we read that the Lord defines the exact borders of the inherited land given to each of the Twelve Tribes within the boundaries of the Land of Israel. During the final redemption, at the end of days, each tribe will reside inside these predefined borders.

The boundaries of the land promised to Abram’s descendants are clearly marked in the Bible—yet the Jewish people have never occupied the full extent of her boundaries.

The ends with this statement:

God is not a man that He should lie. His promises are yes and amen—even though sometimes it takes thousands of years to fulfill them. Many of His promises have been fulfilled so far; and in the end, all of His promises will be fulfilled—including extending the boundaries of the Jewish people to encompass Eretz Yisrael as promised to Abram’s descendants.

Does Archaeology Prove Israel Is Very Old?

When claims that Israel as a nation only existed for 75 years, we ask if there is proof that Israel existed earlier? The answer is a resounding yes, and evidence continues to increase to back that statement up. Using the evidence for the Exodus is a good starting point, although evidence for the Flood is greater. In archaeological circles the question isn’t did it happen, but when it happened. That’s huge because that puts the nation of Israel forming around the 13th and 11th centuries B.C. That’s a lot longer than 75 years ago. We read in part from an [article](#) found from the web site *biblicalarchaeology.org* this:

The article examines Egyptian texts, artifacts and archaeological sites, which demonstrate that the Bible recounts accurate memories from the 13th century B.C.E. For instance, the names of three places that appear in the biblical account of Israel's Exodus from Egypt correspond to Egyptian place names from the Ramesside Period (13th–11th centuries B.C.E.). The Bible recounts that, as slaves, the Israelites were forced to build the store-cities of Pithom and Ramses. After the ten plagues, the Israelites left Egypt and famously crossed the Yam Suph (translated Red Sea or Reed Sea), whose waters were miraculously parted for them. The biblical names Pithom, Ramses and Yam Suph (Red Sea or Reed Sea) correspond to the Egyptian place names Pi-Ramesse, Pi-Atum and (Pa-)Tjuf. These three place names appear together in Egyptian texts only from the Ramesside Period. The name Pi-Ramesse went out of use by the beginning of Egypt's Third Intermediate Period, which began around 1085 B.C.E., and does not reappear until much later.

While a little technical, it makes the point, and we now have evidence of King David, King Solomon, and a whole host of nations mentioned in the Bible that make a strong case that when the Bible does mention nations or names, it is accurate. Israel is at least 3,000 years old and maybe longer. Have Arabs lived in the area during this time? Of course, but Israel predates any Arabs living there. And artifacts continue to keep showing an Israeli presence in the area over and over again, evidence that shows that they lived there throughout those years. No such evidence exists of a Palestinian nation. So did a Palestinian nation begin and did it predate the nation of Israel? The answer is no.