

2006 Summer Newsletter
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The Present Crisis in the Middle East

***"Yet they are thy people and thine inheritance, which thou
broughtest out by thy mighty power and by thy stretched out arm."***

Deuteronomy 9:29

Israel and Lebanon are once again in the news. In response to the recent kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers and the shelling of its northern towns, Israel has begun a systematic bombardment of Hezbollah positions in southern Lebanon to remove the threat. The Hezbollah, a militant force influenced by Iran but located in Lebanon, shares the goal of the radical Palestinian sect Hamas: wipe the Jewish nation off the map! To this end Hamas has

battered Israel over the years with repeated terrorist bombings resulting in the loss of hundreds of innocent lives. Now Hezbollah is raining rockets on Haifa and other Israeli towns and cities in the north.

Israel's response to this terrorism has been decried by many in the media as extreme. The loss of life in the Israeli rocket attacks on Beirut is deplored. Arab spokesmen claim innocence of any blame.

Israel's Rebirth Prophesied

Anti-Israeli factions point the finger at Israel and lament the Arab lives lost. The loss of any life is a tragedy, and war cannot be condoned as a solution to conflict. Peace is the desire of every right-hearted child of God. Peace is also important to Israel, and the government of Israel has tried to achieve peace through various Political and Military means, but none of these methods have achieved a lasting peace. Despite their efforts to appease their neighbors, hundreds of Israeli's have died from suicide bomber attacks.

The right of the Jewish state to exist is challenged. Since May 15, 1948, when the United Nations approved the partition of Palestine to form the State of Israel, war between the Jews and their Arab neighbors became a fact of life in Israel.

Palestinians claim that they were uprooted from ancestral homes. Israel, too, has an historical claim on the land which goes back 4,000 years to the time of Abraham. Since 1878, when they were first permitted to own land in Palestine, the Jews have purchased the land from its Arab inhabitants—swamp lands and deserts that they were happy to part with. Because the Jews drained the swamps and irrigated the deserts and created productive farmlands, the land now is desirable to its former inhabitants. (Ezekiel 36:33-36)

Lasting Peace will be Achieved

Will military actions achieve a lasting Peace? No. Will political negotiations or U.N. resolutions or even a U.N. peace-keeping force gain a lasting peace? No. The Bible tells us in Zechariah 14:1-1 (and also in Jeremiah 30) that a lasting peace in Israel will be achieved when the people of Israel turn to God, rely on God, and let God protect them as He did in the days of old.

The destiny of Israel is foretold in the Bible. God has appointed it a role in His divine arrangement.

The prophet Jeremiah proclaimed: "For I [God] will set mine eyes upon them [Israel] for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them and not pluck them up." (Jeremiah 24:6; Amos 9:14,15)

In our day, after two thousand years of national oblivion, Israel is again a nation. Never before in history has such a thing occurred. Though Israel has returned to the land, it has not as yet experienced the promised security. It is not yet quiet and at ease. It lives in fear that it will again be plucked up. There will, however, be a time when that fear will be erased by their turning to God for their deliverance. God has promised none shall make them afraid. (Jer. 30:10) The remainder of Jeremiah's prophecy that they would never again be pulled down will be fulfilled.

Are They Still God's People?

Christians ask, what of Israel's rejection of her Messiah? Does God still intend to bless them? The heavenly Father knew Israel, his chosen servant, was a rebellious people. Time after time, despite God's special care of them, they turned to idolatry. It was, therefore, clear that divine correction would come, but there would also be a subsequent deliverance. God warned them repeatedly that they would be scattered among the heathen if they kept to their errant course. It was Jesus on the eve of his death at the instigation of the chief priests of the nation, who pronounced God's sentence on them, "Your house is left unto you desolate." Matt. 23:38.

However, the Apostle Paul tells us that had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (1 Cor. 2:8) In Romans 11:2 he writes, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew..." In verse 11 of this same chapter he says, "I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles for to provoke them to jealousy." "As

concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Romans 11:28,29)

The Bible's Testimony

All who value the Bible's testimony must recognize the purpose God has for the nation of Israel. Isaiah tells us (Isa. 2:1-5, Micah 4: 1-5) "...out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." As marvelous as it has been to witness the return of Israel as a nation and the manifestations that God is certainly with them, it will be even more marvelous to watch the future development of their acceptance of Jesus as their Messiah. Their turn of belief will be an even greater event to behold, for it will become the foundation for Israel's accepting their unique role of leadership in the Kingdom of God.

Israel in the Future

The Apostle James, in his sermon to the Jerusalem conference recorded in Acts 15:13-17, said: "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After these things I will return, And I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; And I will build again the ruins thereof, And I will set it up; That the residue of men may seek after the Lord..." (See Amos 9:11)

Notice how Israel fits into the kingdom of God. First a Church is called for God's own name, then Israel, depicted as "the tabernacle of David" is to be restored, and lastly the remainder of humanity, "the residue of men" is to be brought to the Lord. How will God use Israel to accomplish this? Ezekiel 37:26-28 says: "Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also

shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore."

God Will Make Himself Known

Thus will God make himself known to the nations as the true God, the God of the Bible—the God of the Jews. as described in Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD." All who have followed other gods or no god at all will acknowledge the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the true and living God.

Though world opinion may turn against Israel; though the Arab nations around her may press her hard; though she be deserted by all her allies and stand alone; still Israel will not be alone. God has promised that she will never again be uprooted, and the promises of God are sure!

*"Behold, I will gather them
out of all countries,
whither I have driven them in mine anger...
and I will bring them again
unto this place,
and I will cause them to dwell safely:
And they shall be my people,
and I will be their God:
And I will make an everlasting covenant
with them,
that I will not turn away from them,
to do them good;
but I will put my fear in their hearts,
that they shall not depart from me."--
Jeremiah 32: 37, 38, 40;
(Ezekiel 20:33-35; 36:33-36)*

*Come visit our booth at the
Michigan State Fair
Michigan Mart Building
August 24 through September 4
We hope to meet you there!*