

# **“Understanding Israel’s War”**

**By Jim Garlow**



## Understanding Israel's War

By Dr. Jim Garlow

I wrote this in May 2021. But every word of it is still totally relevant today. It is imperative that you understand what the Bible says and what history teaches. If one does not know Scripture and does not properly understand and interpret history, then you will fall for the false, manufactured narratives spouted by:

- ❑ Hamas supporting Leftists,
- ❑ Iran and its proxies,
- ❑ Islamic Jihadists,
- ❑ Anarchists (such as Antifa and BLM)
- ❑ Atheists,
- ❑ Antisemites
- ❑ Marxists, (Communists, Socialist, Cultural Marxist)
- ❑ Liberal Protestants and Liberal Catholics,
- ❑ Replacement Theology advocates,
- ❑ So-called "Mainstream Media" in America and beyond,
- ❑ Left wing, radicalized and ill-informed Members of Congress or Parliaments,
- ❑ Dictators and other anti-Biblical despots,
- ❑ So-called Right-Wing isolationists,

And the list goes on.

What do they all have in common? They are wrong. Truth matters. Truth exists. Truth is important.

I urge you to take time – it won't require a lot of time – to read through this seven-part series. I try to take so-called complex things and make them simple. (Beware of people who take simple things and make them complex.) Contrary to popular opinion, this is not complicated. God's Word is clear. Truth is not subjective. History – as much as the distorters of reality want to bend it – has a loud and clear voice. When my book *Well Versed* was translated into Portuguese, they changed the title to "*Don't be Manipulated.*" That is good advice. Do not be manipulated. Do not be deceived. The next hour could be so valuable to you if you would read this seven-part series. It will answer so many of the questions you have today regarding the war going on in Israel.

Thank you for loving God's Word, for loving Israel, and for standing with her.

Dr. Jim Garlow

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CEO/Founder

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## Understanding Israel's War – Part 1 of 7

Israel is at war...again. Why? The Islamic jihadists want all the Jews dead. Israel and the Jewish people have only 1/6th of 1% of the land in the Middle East. The Arab Muslims have 99 5/6ths % of the land. But that is not enough. Most of them want 100% of the land. Most of them want the Jews dead. So, once again, it's partially about the land, but more importantly, it is about killing Jews. How did we get here? Allow me to take you on a whirlwind tour through time and space. (Note: A good friend of mine recently said, "Jim, your emails are too long." I laughed, but I knew he was right. So, this email is broken up into seven newsletters.) In Genesis 12, God initiates a plan to redeem mankind. He calls to an elderly man named Abram (later known as Abraham) and says to him: *"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."* This is where the nation of Israel enters the storyline through this incredibly profound covenant that God made with Abraham—a covenant He still keeps to this very day. (Psalm 105:8 assures us: *"He remembers the covenant He made—the promise He made—for a thousand generations."*)

### **Abraham, Isaac, and Ishmael**

Ishmael was Abraham's first child but was not the child of Abraham's wife, Sarah, but rather of Sarah's Egyptian maidservant, Hagar. Such animosity developed between Hagar and Sarah that the families needed to be separated. So despairing was Abraham over this family feud that he pled with God to bless Ishmael. At God's appointed time Isaac was born to Sarah, but Ishmael (his older half-brother) mocked them. This resulted in Ishmael and Hagar being banished from the tents of Abraham and sent out into the desert with meager supplies. Here is the key point related to history today: while God is merciful to Ishmael, His purposes came through Isaac, not Ishmael. (Isaac became the father of the Jews, and Ishmael, father of the Arabs.) Perpetual conflict seems to characterize the southern and eastern Mediterranean region, where twenty-two separate Arabic nations now exist. (Some dispute whether Iran is an Arabic nation, but for the purpose of this discussion, we will consider Iran as Arabic.)

### **Isaac**

Isaac grows and has children of his own, twin boys Esau and Jacob. The twelve tribes that eventually formed the nation of Israel came from Jacob—that is, from Israel, whose name they bear to this day. Jews are the physical descendants of Abraham, through Isaac, through Jacob. The twelve tribes formed from Jacob's twelve sons gave rise to all of the Jews born into the world (although certainly others have converted to Judaism over time).

## **Land is the Issue**

As we examine God's promises to Abraham, we see that they identify a very specific piece of land. The land promised is from the Nile River to the Euphrates River. This parcel includes parts of modern-day Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and all of Israel, including the Israeli lands of Gaza as well as what is now wrongly called the "West Bank." (It should be called Judea and Samaria.)

Interestingly, the specific place where God originally made and confirmed His land covenant, saying "this land," was in an area north of Jerusalem between the towns of Bethel and Ai, which is the heart of the so-called West Bank (which the Palestinians want as their land). Ironically, the "West Bank" (a term never used in the Scriptures) is the region referred to in the Bible as Judea and Samaria—two areas definitely in historic Israel and still part of Israel today. But modern critics claim that Israel is illegally "occupying" this land (because the Palestinians want it) and must give it up for the hope of an elusive peace.

Obviously, at the current time, Israel is nowhere near experiencing the fullness of the land promise that God Himself repeatedly gave and that they once enjoyed. Israel did have this land—for millennia, but it has steadily been taken away from them. (For instance, the nation of Saudi Arabia was formed in 1926 from land that was designated as Israeli land.) So the claim that Israel is an occupier is false. God gave that land to the Jews; they possessed it for thousands of years but are struggling to retain even a small portion of it today.

## **Persecution**

The Jews have been pursued, shoved around, relocated, discriminated against, persecuted, and slaughtered more than any other people group on the earth. The Nazi holocaust of World War II was only a recent example of what has been occurring to Jews for millennia. Some may not care for history, but you need to know at least a little about this part of the story.

## Understanding Israel's War – Part 2 of 7

Let's quickly survey the four-thousand-year-old story of the nation of Israel.

### From Nation to Being Ruled by Five Great Empires

During the Old Testament period, the descendants of Abraham went from being...

- a family,
- to a tribe,
- to a confederation of tribes with a succession of Judges – 12 of them, or perhaps as many as 15 – ruling over them,
- to a nation with kings – three of them, Saul, David, Solomon – until the nation split,
- to a nation split north and south with 39 kings ruling over the two separate halves of the divided kingdom.

### Then Israel was overrun and controlled by five major empires:

1. **ASSYRIAN: 722BC** – the Northern Kingdom, called Israel, was overrun by the Assyrians, and the Israelites were deported.
2. **BABYLONIAN: 587 BC**, Babylonian Nebuchadnezzar's army captured Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple, and exiled the Jews from the Southern Kingdom, called Judah, to Babylon (modern day Iraq).
3. **PERSIAN: 539BC** - the Persian king Cyrus the Great expanded his empire until finally, in 539 BC, he took Babylon in a bloodless coup and established Persia as the dominant force in the Near East. Note: in 538BC, it was the Persian King Cyrus whose decree permitted the return of the exiled Jews from Babylon and the construction of the second Temple (520-515 BC).
4. **GREEK: 333-63BC** – The Greek Conquest of Israel and the surrounding region by the army of Alexander the Great. The Greeks generally allowed the Jews to run their state. The Maccabean Revolt occurred from 167-160BC. During the rule of King Antiochus IV, the Temple was desecrated, bringing about the revolt of the Maccabees, who established an independent rule. The related events are celebrated during the Hanukkah holiday.
5. **ROMAN: 63BC-313AD** – The Roman army led by Titus conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the Second Temple at 70AD. Jewish people were then exiled and dispersed (scattered to many nations) in the Diaspora. In 132AD, Bar Kokhba organized a revolt against Roman rule, but was killed in a battle in Bethar in the Judean Hills. The final destruction of Jerusalem happened between 135-136AD. Subsequently, the Romans decimated the Jewish community, renamed Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina and Judea as Palaestina to obliterate Jewish identification with the Land of Israel. The few remaining Jewish community members moved to northern towns in the Galilee.

Now we pick up the story in New Testament times.

### **Israel Under Siege During Time of Jesus and New Testament Era**

At the time of the crucifixion of Christ in 33AD, Rome controlled Israel. In 70AD, the Romans destroyed the Jewish temple as noted above. When Emperor Hadrian later banned Jewish freedom and religious practices, the Jews revolted but Hadrian crushed the revolt and killed the Jewish leaders in 136AD, also noted above, which would be after the New Testament era which ends in approximately 100AD. He also destroyed and plowed under the Temple Mount (the traditional center of Jewish life) and Jews were banished from Jerusalem. Hadrian then drew up a plan to build a new city on the ruins of Jerusalem, making it a center of pagan worship.

### **The Name Change that Explains It All**

To further humiliate the Jews, he sought to rename their nation. After learning that the Philistines were the oldest and fiercest enemy of the Jews, he renamed the country Palestina. It is critical that you know this fact: the name Palestine was to honor the Philistines, the most-hated enemy of the Jews. For the next 500 years, Jews were allowed in Jerusalem only one day each year: the anniversary of the burning of the temple.

Let's be clear that Palestine has no relation to the current Palestinians; the Palestinians are not the descendants of the ancient Philistine inhabitants of the land of Judea. The Philistines of the Bible, who arrived in the land about the same time as the Israelites, were from Greece and were not Arabic, and they were gone from the Holy Land over a millennia ago. The current Arabic Palestinians have no relation to the Philistines, and no ancient claim to the land.

### **Constantine and After**

Early in the fourth century, Emperor Constantine claimed a conversion to Christianity (although his subsequent practices made any such conversion seem unlikely—it seemed to be a “conversion” in name only). Under Constantine, Jerusalem began to regain lost prestige.

In the fifth and sixth centuries, the Roman Empire began to weaken. In 614AD, the Persians took control of Jerusalem and destroyed many of its churches, but in 628AD the Romans (at that time calling themselves Christians) recaptured the city. And from then until the 1900s was a flurry of one conquering army after another.

So... Jews had Jerusalem as their capitol for about 1,500 years until about 70AD; then Rome controlled it until 600AD; then Muslims took control, holding it until 1100AD; from 1100-1250, the Crusades occurred with Christians attempting to regain control from the Muslims, and power shifting back and forth; in 1250, Muslim Turks gained control until 1917, when, in 1917, the British gained control.

This is where the story of Israel's rebirth begins.

### **Israel Belongs to the Muslims?**

By the way, claims that Jerusalem belongs to the Muslims are bogus, considering not only that Mohammed never visited Jerusalem but also that Islam arrived there:

- 2,600 years after the Jews were founded through Abraham.
  - 2,000 years after Joshua established the nation of Israel.
  - 1,600 years after David made Jerusalem the capital of Israel.
  - 600 years after Christianity was founded there.
  - And the Islamic Dome of the Rock was not built on the Temple Mount until 687AD.
- (These are important dates to remember when Muslims lay claim to the land and city.)

### **Interest from the West**

By the 1800s (the latter part of Turkish Muslim rule), Western interest and involvement in Palestine was growing. In the 1840s, an American naval expedition explored down the Jordan River from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea. Americans such as Mark Twain traveled the region, and President Abraham Lincoln expressed his desire to visit Palestine. Consular offices were established in Jerusalem, and visits occurred from celebrated American officials such as diplomat Lew Wallace (the author of *Ben Hur*).

British, French, and Germans became more plentiful in the region, and among several European nations the maneuvering for position in Palestine grew more intense. In fact, in England, the Palestine Exploration Fund was established which sponsored several surveys of Palestine in attempts to lay British claim to as much of the Middle East as possible and to counteract the efforts of the French to do the same.

### **The 1900s: The Beginning of Zionism (Jews coming back to Israel)**

By the middle of the century, Jews comprised half the population of Jerusalem, and there was open support growing for the restoration of Palestine to the Jews. In America, Founding Fathers such as John Adams and John Quincy Adams had long before expressed their support for the reestablishment of Palestine as an independent Jewish nation as had early American Jewish leader Mordecai Noah. From 1860 to 1870, the concept of Zionism began to take shape.

Recall that Zionism simply means the right of the Jews to return to their ancient Biblical homeland and re-establish Israel as an independent self-governing nation, with the right to defend itself. A Christian Zionist is a Christian who believes the same—that Jews have this right.

## Understanding Israel's War – Part 3 of 7

### The Moving Force: Theodore Herzl

In 1894, an event occurred in France that would forever change the shape of the Middle East. A Jewish officer in the French military, Lt. Col. Alfred Dreyfus, was accused and convicted of treason. The trial was covered by a Jewish journalist from Vienna named Theodore Herzl, who was shocked by the magnitude and fervor of the anti-Semitism he

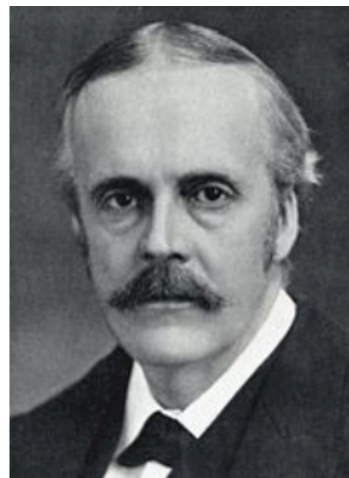


*Theodore Herzl*

observed against Dreyfus during those proceedings. Dreyfus was later exonerated, but Herzl became convinced that with the open anti-Semitism in Europe, trouble lay ahead for the Jews and they would be extinguished unless they had their own country.

In 1896, he published his classic work, *The Jewish State*, considered the testament of modern Zionism. In 1897, the first Congress of the World Zionist Organization was held, with a goal to gain the sponsorship and support of the European powers for an independent Jewish state. In 1903, the British obliged by offering Uganda (in Africa) as a state for the Jews but the Zionist Congress refused the generous offer, instead resolving that the Jewish national home should be the Holy Land, where it had already been for so many centuries.

### The British Protectorate; The Balfour Declaration



*Arthur Balfour*

In 1917, during World War I, British General George Allenby entered Jerusalem and reclaimed it from Muslim control, 400 years after the Turks had invaded it.

Meanwhile, a prominent Jewish leader, a chemist, Chaim Weitzmann (later first president of Israel) kept up the pressure in England for what he called a "British protectorate over a Jewish homeland." English Prime Minister Lloyd George saw this as helpful to his larger objective, so British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour asked the Zionist organizations to draft a declaration for a Jewish homeland. This statement became known as the Balfour Declaration—a British promise for the creation of a Jewish state from British-held land in Palestine.



## **League of Nations Creates New Nations; The British Mandate**

Following the end of World War I, the League of Nations (which had been formed in 1919 to help create greater international cooperation) approved the creation of several brand-new nations in the Middle East. For the Arabs, there would be the new countries of Syria, Lebanon, Iran, and Iraq. For the Jews, Israel (Palestine) would be set aside. The League of Nations gave England the authority, or the “Mandate,” to govern Palestine. This key meeting occurred in San Remo, Italy

### **San Remo Agreement**

The April 1920 San Remo Conference, an international meeting at the end of World War I attended by Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan, with the United States as a neutral observer, determined the precise boundaries for territories captured by the Allies. It was decided, among other things, to put Palestine (Israel) under British Mandatory rule. At San Remo, the Allies confirmed the pledge contained in the Balfour Declaration concerning the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine in spite of the fact that the French expressed many reservations about the inclusion of it in the peace treaty. British pressure gradually persuaded France to agree to the inclusion of the Balfour Declaration.

The article concerning Palestine was discussed on April 23-24 and the following day it was finally resolved to incorporate the Balfour Declaration in Britain’s mandate in Palestine. Britain was made responsible for the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people Please continue with Part 4, where you will discover that the new “Mandate” did not bode well for the Jewish people.



*Participants in the San Remo Agreement*

## Understanding Israel's War: Part 4 of 7

### **Arabs Riot, British Backtrack**

The League of Nations (the precursor to the United Nations) endorsed both the Balfour Declaration (mentioned in Part 3) and the Jewish homeland. The first high commissioner sent by England to govern Jerusalem was Sir Herbert Samuel. He subsequently appointed Haj Amin al-Husseini as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, the highest Muslim office in Palestine.

But the Muslim Husseini clan opposed British rule altogether and adamantly opposed sharing the land with the Jews. Arab nationalists, enraged by the Balfour Declaration and its call for a home for the Jewish people, set themselves to run both the Jews and the British out of the region and set up an Arab state encompassing all of Palestine.

In 1919, Haj Amin al-Husseini formed the "Palestinian Society" with a military arm to carry out actions against both the British and the Jews. He immediately began leading demonstrations and protests, demanding an end to the British Mandate and a repudiation of the Balfour Declaration.

In April 1920, when the religious holidays of Easter (Christian), Passover (Jewish), and Nebi Musa (Islamic) all fell in the same week, thousands of Muslims convened at the Al-Aksa Mosque as Jews were simultaneously worshiping at the Western Wall. The Muslims attacked the Jews in three hours of bloody rioting. When British troops finally arrived, they jailed the instigators, but upon their release the next morning, the rioting resumed and lasted for three more days, resulting in a number of deaths, with hundreds more injured.

During the ensuing investigations, the Jews proved that the British military government was clearly favoring the Arabs to the detriment of the Jews and in violation of the Balfour Declaration. Haj Amin al-Husseini, who had instigated the violence, fled to Transjordan (the region that was soon to become the country of Jordan). He was sentenced in absentia by the British military court to 10 years imprisonment, but in an attempt to calm the Arabs, Sir Herbert Samuel pardoned him.

### **The Muslim Strategy**

This incident began a new and successful strategy for the Arabs: riot and kill, blame it on the presence of Jews, and wait for the governing authority to agree to Arab demands in order to quell the violence. It worked time and again. In fact, following the violence, in order not to offend the aggressor Arabs, Samuel actually put restrictions on Jewish immigration and imposed other measures that impeded Zionist progress. Muslims initiated the violence, but the Jews were punished.

### **Annulling a Mandate: Creating Jordan out of Jewish Territory**

Still seeking to achieve peace amongst the Arabs, England created yet another new country for the Arabs out of land that the League of Nations had set aside for the Jewish homeland. With the stroke of Winston Churchill's pen (colonial secretary at the time), seventy-eight percent of the territory under the British Mandate was taken away from its Jewish designates in Palestine to create the Muslim Kingdom of Transjordan (now simply Jordan)—an exclusively Arab area.

### **The White Paper**

The new document that had changed the rules was known as the Churchill White Paper (1922). It said that the Jewish national home was now to be restricted to the area west of the Jordan River (the Balfour Declaration had included land east of the Jordan River).

Imagine this: after World War I, six nations were created for Arabs out of the Holy Land, but still none for Jews. And the document further stated that Jewish immigration should be limited to the economic capacity of the new smaller country (now less than one-fourth the size it had been under the Balfour Declaration).

The Zionist Organization signed this new agreement with great reluctance, primarily doing so to avoid losing all British support since Britain still ruled that region. But the Arabs flatly rejected the paper, establishing another pattern that would be repeated time and again: they wanted control of all of the Jewish land, not just part. But in the meantime they were glad to accept all new territory (such as the Transjordan)—as long as it came from land held by the Jews.

### **Finally – Land for the Jews**

On paper, Jews had a land officially designated for them, so from 1918 to 1924, the Jewish population of Palestine grew from 55,000 to 103,000 as Jewish people began returning to their ancestral homeland. And over the next four years it doubled again.

As can be imagined, this growth was unacceptable to the Arabs. They believed that something more severe needed to be done, so Hussein began consolidating his power base in Palestine. He removed all moderates from places of authority and eliminated every Arab opponent until he held unfettered control over the entire Muslim population of Palestine.

...But as we shall learn in Part 5 of "Understanding Israel's War," things became worse. Much worse.

## Understanding Israel's War: Part 5 of 7

The Jewish struggle to have a homeland was filled with pain. Just when they thought they saw a possibility of a homeland, problems erupted.

### **Bad News #1: Massacring the Jews**

In 1929 on Yom Kippur (the holiest day of the year for Jews) as they were peacefully praying at the Western Wall, Hussein sent his hordes against the defenseless Jewish worshippers. When it was over, 133 Jews were dead and 399 injured. When Hussein was brought to account, he claimed that Jews moving back into their designated homeland had "provoked" the anti-Jewish massacre. So Britain issued a new white paper even more severely restricting Jewish immigration and purchase of land by Jews. Once again, Arabs attacked and Jews were punished.

### **Bad News #2: Further Carving Up the Holy Land**

Despite Churchill's creation of Transjordan that dramatically shrank the land designated for the Jews, he was still very much pro-Zionist. He wanted to see an independent nation for the Jews. But during the last half of the 1930s, a labor government in England came to power, so Churchill retired from office, remaining out of the public eye for the next decade. The new labor government was much less sympathetic to Zionists and effectively negated the Balfour Declaration and its provisions.

Simultaneously, Hitler was on the rise in Europe, requiring more of England's time and attention. England hoped to enlist the help of Arabs, and one of the chief ways England could do so was by further restricting Jewish immigration into Palestine. But once again reaffirming the historic pattern, this appeasement only spurred the Arabs to yet more aggression.

### **Bad News #3: Britain Choses Arab Oil; Jews Slaughtered**

Finally recognizing the difficult situation it had created in Palestine, in July 1937 Lord Peel's Commission in England issued a report acknowledging that the commitments it had made to both the Jews and Arabs were irreconcilable. And since England was not willing either to turn the Jews over to Arab domination or to put the Arabs under Jewish rule, they proposed further dividing the remaining land that had been set aside for Israel into two separate portions: one Arab state (which would be joined to Transjordan), and one Jewish state. The historic cities of Jerusalem and Bethlehem would belong to neither but would be set aside as British enclaves (that is, as British holdings). But both the League of Nations and the Arabs rejected the idea, so the violence in Palestine continued.

### **They Chose Oil Over the Jews Having a Home**

On the one side, the Jewish community was trying to persuade the British to allow increased Jewish immigration; on the other, the Arabs were threatening to cut off access to

Middle Eastern oil if immigration were increased. The British chose oil, and in 1939 released another white paper stating that: (1) Jewish immigration would be slowed, then halted; (2) Jews would only be allowed to buy land in areas where they were already the majority population; and (3) after the war, Britain would support an independent Palestinian state controlled by the Arabs that would be made from designated Jewish holdings.

#### **Bad News #4: Hitler and WWII**

This new policy halting Jewish immigration to Israel, issued in the shadow of Hitler's vow to annihilate the Jews of Europe, effectively condemned millions of European Jews to death since they were no longer able to leave Europe. In fact, of Europe's eight million Jews, only 1.5 million survived the war, having no place to flee.

During the War, Arabs took an active part: some fought with the Allies, but many fought with Hitler. In fact, a sign commonly displayed in the shops of Syria declared "In heaven, God is your ruler, on earth, Hitler." Strikingly, *Mein Kampf* is a best-selling book in parts of the Islamic world.

In the wake of continuing Arab violence in Palestine in the early part of World War II, the British deposed the Mufti and abolished the Supreme Muslim Council. Husseini escaped Palestine before he could be arrested and spent World War II as the guest of Hitler in Germany and Mussolini in Italy. In 1942, he succeeded in getting both to agree to the abolition of the Jewish homeland in Palestine, pointing out that Jews were their common enemies.

#### **Bad News #5: Churchill Out of Office**

In October 1943, Churchill, having come out of retirement to serve as British Prime Minister, revisited a partition plan that would set aside area for the Jews, acknowledging, however, that it could not be implemented until after the war. But after the war, Churchill was forced from office before the plan could be implemented. The new labor government once again was not sympathetic to the plight of the Jews in Europe, and so immigration remained suppressed. Lord Bevin, the new British foreign minister, declared, "The Jews have waited two thousand years; they can wait a little while longer."

#### **The Remarkable Jewish Resiliency**

But many Jews who survived the genocide efforts in Europe did not wait, attempting to sneak into the country on boats and by foot. But they were sent back to Europe, sometimes to the same concentration camps in which they had been tortured during the war. (Those camps were now being used as displaced persons camps.) To add insult to injury, if Jews could reach their beloved homeland of Israel, the British – as if surviving the German death camps was not enough – incarcerated them in places like the Atlit Detention Camp in Acre, Israel.

## **The Modern Rebirth of Israel**

The words “miracle” and “miraculous” are often overused, and many things which are called “miracles” are not. But the rebirth of Israel truly is a genuine miracle.

## **Chaos in the Holy Land**

As a result of so many bad decisions by the British, both the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine began to fight them. In 1946 when the Irgun, a radical Jewish resistance group (denounced by leading Jewish authorities), bombed the King David hotel (which housed the central office of the British authority in Palestine), the British made possessing a weapon by any Jew a capital offense. Obviously, this made it extremely difficult for the rest of the Jews to defend themselves against the well-armed Arabs, who were readily supplied by their neighboring Arab cousins.

By early 1947, the British wanted nothing more to do with Palestine, so they informed the United Nations they would be leaving the region. The Soviets called for revisiting the partition plan that set aside a region for Jews and another for Arabs, and the UN created a committee to study the question. (As usual, the Arabs refused to participate.) The committee ruled in favor of partition, but Jerusalem was to be withheld from both Jews and Arabs and would become an international zone administered by the UN.

## **November 29, 1947: The United Nations Vote**

When the plan came to a vote before the full United Nations, for all practical purposes the Jews were blackmailed by the Vatican into giving up Jerusalem and handing it over to the UN. (The Catholic nations of Latin America made plain that they would cast their votes in favor of partition only if the Jews let the city go.) On November 29, 1947, the UN voted (by a two-thirds majority) to approve the partition of Palestine and create two states, one Jewish and one Arab. The plan was scheduled to go into effect in May 1948, but the Arabs continued to adamantly oppose it since it acknowledged the right of the Jews to exist as a nation in the Middle East.

## **The Beginnings of War**

Even though the UN approved the internationalization of Jerusalem, Jerusalem’s citizens were well aware that no nation would be willing to back the UN policy with military force—and military force would definitely be required if peace was to be maintained and Muslim attacks prevented. In this the Arabs saw their greatest opportunity for victory: since only Jews and Arabs were willing to spill their own blood for Jerusalem, the rest of the world would stand by and watch, leaving Arabs free to take whatever steps they wished.

As May 1948 approached, the Jews were woefully unprepared for the war that lay ahead. They still were not allowed to possess weapons, and were unable even to defend their own humanitarian convoys attempting to restock food in Jerusalem. (Jews in Jerusalem were being starved; Arabs guarded the road to Jerusalem and attacked every Jewish truck en route.)

#### **May 14, 1948, Midnight Jerusalem time, 6PM US Eastern Time Zone**

The British Mandate (that is, British control over the region) was set to end at midnight Jerusalem time (or 6:00PM New York time) on May 14, 1948. By midday, Arab nations were mobilizing to pounce on the new Jewish state and eradicate it before it could begin. Egyptian forces were massed in the Negev (the southern region of Israel); Jordanian and Iraqi troops were positioned all along the Jordan River; and Syrian forces were marching from the north toward Palestine. In Tel Aviv, the founding fathers of the nation of Israel, led by David Ben-Gurion, voted six to four in favor of independence. At the United Nations, the Arab states were still trying to force a vote on a last-minute resolution to prevent the creation of a Jewish state.

#### **May 14, 1948, 6:11PM**

Israel's only hope for legitimacy was if the United States recognized the new nation. America did so, but the circumstances surrounding that declaration were remarkable. President Franklin Roosevelt, despite the UN vote, was firmly anti-Zionist, repeatedly declaring that he would not support Israeli statehood. He died in office only a week after he once again reaffirmed his opposition to a Jewish nation in Israel, and only four weeks before Israel's declaration of statehood.

On Roosevelt's death, Vice President Harry Truman became president. His view toward Israel was very different, and at 6:11PM (only eleven minutes after Israel's announcement of its independence, and over the strong objections of those in his own cabinet, including his Secretary of State, General of the Army George C. Marshall), Truman boldly declared official support for the new nation. Truman and the United States became the first in the world to officially recognize and express support for the reborn Israel.

Now, finally, they had a land. Surely life would get easier for the Jewish people. Find out in Part 6 that it did not...

## Understanding Israel's War: Part 6 of 7

Israel finally had a homeland when it declared its independency on May 14, 1948. Surely things would now be easier. They were not.

### **Israel's First Day: Attacked by Six Nations**

When the UN also recognized Israel's independence, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem (its Muslim leader) declared: *"The entire Jewish population in Palestine must be destroyed or driven into the sea. Allah has bestowed upon us the rare privilege of finishing what Hitler only began. Let the jihad begin! Murder the Jews. Murder them all!"* The Arab countries launched an all-out effort to do exactly that.

At midnight, Jordanian troops (trained and led by British General John Glubb) crossed the Allenby Bridge and headed for Jerusalem. The next morning, Egypt bombed Tel-Aviv. The war of independence was on.

Within hours of Israel's declaration of statehood, tens of thousands of soldiers from six Arab nations, armed with state-of-the-art British and French weapons, were arrayed against the men, women, and high-school students who made up the Israeli Army. The majority of those Israelis had never seen a day of real training, much less genuine battle. Forty-five million Arabs were intent on pushing 400,000 Jews—bunkered on a tiny strip of land that comprised only one-eighth of one percent of the 6.1 million square miles of the Arab lands— into the sea. Few gave the fledgling nation of Israel much hope for survival.

### **Jerusalem Divided**

After ten days, the Israelis still had not buckled. In fact, they held part of Jerusalem and a secure corridor leading west to the coast, as well as the northern, southern, and western areas of the small land mass of their partition within Palestine.

Egypt held a small strip of land called Gaza (the southern part of Israel that adjoins the Egyptian border). The Jordanians held Judea and Samaria (Israel's "West Bank") as well as the eastern half of Jerusalem, which included the old city, the holy sites, the Western Wall, and the abandoned Jewish Quarter. Jerusalem, for the first time in its long history, was now a divided city.

The war continued sporadically for the remainder of 1948, but Jerusalem ceased to be a focus of any serious fighting. Early in 1949, Israel and Jordan negotiated an armistice, agreeing to divide Jerusalem. The UN voted that the city be placed under control of a UN mediator, but he was promptly assassinated. The Jews moved their parliament from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, announcing that Jerusalem was the eternal capital of Israel.

Recognizing that Jerusalem could be kept under UN control only by armed force, the UN set aside its resolution. By 1950, a new arrangement was reached: the city of Jerusalem



would remain divided—one side belonging to Jordan, the other to Israel, just as Israel and Jordan had already agreed.

### **Boundaries and Borders**

Outside of Jerusalem, there were no internationally recognized borders, so the 1949 armistice lines became the de facto borders of Israel. By the way, when politicians refer to “the ‘67 borders” as the basis for a peace negotiation (as President Obama did in May 2011), they are referring to the original armistice lines—the places where the armies were when the bullets stopped flying in 1948 and that remained in place until 1967. But these lines reduce the nation of Israel to being only nine miles wide at its most strategic point—an untenable scenario for any nation to survive when surrounded by hostile enemies on every side, as Israel is.

Following the armistice of 1949, King Abdullah of Transjordan annexed the Jordanian half of Jerusalem and the West Bank to his kingdom. It is significant that he (or Egypt or Syria) could easily have given some of their newly acquired land to the Palestinian Arabs among them, but they did not. The Palestinian Arabs did not want land from other Muslim Arabs; they wanted whatever land Israel was still holding.

Significantly, the West Bank and the other areas acquired by Jordan suffered greatly throughout the tenure of Jordanian occupation, for they were little more than a trophy for Abdullah. The Jewish quarter of East Jerusalem, which was in his control, lay in ruins. Nearly all of its synagogues, schools, and buildings had been destroyed in 1948, and remained that way. But Jewish West Jerusalem (unlike the Arab-controlled areas of Jerusalem) as well as the remainder of Israel flourished.

Significantly, both Arab and Jewish refugees were offered citizenship by Israel. And Jewish refugees from across the world, now having a relatively safe destination, streamed into Israel in such numbers that its population doubled within three years.

### **After the War of Independence**

The Soviets had been initial supporters of Israel’s statehood, but when they began courting Arab interests in the Middle East, they withdrew their support. In 1955, they signed an arms deal with the Egyptians, and Egyptian President Nasser, emboldened by Soviet assistance, insisted that many of the British troops guarding the Suez Canal be pulled out. In 1956, he seized control of the under-protected canal, closed it to all international shipping to or from Israel, and blockaded the Straits of Tiran, effectively cutting off Israel from most of the world. He openly called for the destruction of Israel.

Britain and France mobilized against Egypt in a brief Sinai campaign, reopening the canal. The UN guaranteed it would keep the canal open, and for the next ten years there was an absence of war in Israel.

## Gaza

This did not mean, however, that all was quiet and safe inside Israel. Far from it, for there were frequent terrorist incursions into Israel by the newly created Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), led by Yasser Arafat. (Significantly, the 1964 charter document of the PLO openly calls for the destruction of Israel.)

These terrorist attacks, coming from Egyptian-held Gaza (the southern part of Israel that borders Egypt) and the Jordanian-held West Bank (Judea and Samaria), were calculated to provoke Israeli retaliation. If Israel responded, it would serve as justification for Arab powers to launch an all-out war with Israel.



## The Miraculous Six Day War

The birth of Israel in 1948 was miraculous: it was a nation coming back to life after being absent from the world scene for 2,000 years. The Six Day War of 1967 was equally miraculous.

### On the Northeast

By the spring of 1967, the situation had markedly deteriorated. There were significant Syrian military buildups occurring in the Golan Heights (the Israeli controlled region along the border with Syria).

### From the South

On May 22, Nasser of Egypt once again blockaded the Straits of Tiran, closing off the Israeli port of Eilat, thus shutting down Israel's supply of oil from the Persian Gulf. Israel considered this an act of war and notified the UN that if it was not prepared to uphold the peace treaty negotiated in 1956, that Israel would take matters into its own hands.

### From the East

A week later on May 30, Jordan's King Hussein signed a mutual defense pact with Egypt. Arab inflammatory rhetoric was increasing, including radio broadcasts calling for an all-out jihad to avenge 1948. Nasser of Egypt vowed to completely destroy the nation of Israel and push the Jews into the sea once and for all. War was inevitable.

## **The Unexplainable War**

On June 5, the Six Day War began, with Israel launching a pre-emptive strike on Egypt's air force, effectively wiping it out. Simultaneously, Israeli ground forces attacked the Egyptian army amassed in the Sinai, virtually destroying Egypt's capacity to fight. By the end of the second day of battle, Israel was in command of Gaza as well as the Sinai region of Egypt.

Jordan attacked Jerusalem, thereby opening the door not only for Israel to reclaim not only the other part of Jerusalem but also Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank"). After destroying the Jordanian air force, Israel pressed its ground attack, and by sundown on June 7, Judea, Samaria, and the Old City of Jerusalem were back in Israeli hands. Jews could once again pray at the Western Wall.

By June 8, Israel had captured the Suez Canal, thus ending Egypt's blockade against them. After another day, the Israelis controlled the entire Golan Heights in the north (the part of Israel from which Syria had launched its attacks). On June 10, after only six days of fighting, the Arabs called for a cease fire and the war was over.

What makes the Six Day War so stunning is – like the War for Independence in 1948, little Israel was once again having to withstand the military from several other nations – all at once. Although Egypt, Jordan and Syria were the major combatants, the nations of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Algeria, and others also contributed troops and arms to the Arab forces. The timeline of the Six Day War is stunning:

- June 5, Day 1 - Israel destroys most of Egyptian air force. Jordan, Syria and Iraq attack Israel. Egypt, Jordan, and Syria.
- June 6, Day 2 - Fighting continues on all fronts, with Israel taking on all her enemies.
- June 7, Day 3 - Jerusalem taken, a truly remarkable development. Blockade of Straits of Tiran in the far southern part of the war is finally broken.
- June 8, Day 4 - Israel consolidates hold on "West Bank" (Judea – south of Jerusalem and Samaria – north of Jerusalem).
- June 9, Day 5 - Israel and Syria in heavy fighting on the Golan Heights in the far northeast, bordering Syria.
- June 10, Day 6 - Israel gains control of the Golan Heights, an enormous and strategic accomplishment.

The miraculous nature of the war is even more obvious when the military inequities are taken into account. Stated succinctly, Israel was outmanned, outgunned and had considerably less planes. Yet the Jews inexplicably – inexplicable, that is, if one rules out Divine intervention – protected their homeland, against all odds.

For Israel, she increased her land size four-fold (but she was still only a small part of what had been set aside for her in the Balfour Declaration, and of what she historically had been). For the Arabs, it was a crushing and humiliating defeat.

In a gesture of good will, Israel generously handed the sacred Temple Mount in the unified Jerusalem back over to Muslim Arab supervision – a tragic decision! – in hopes that this would engender peace. It did not.



*Iconic photo of IDF soldiers raising the Israeli flag over the Temple Mount on June 7, 1967, the first time the Jews had fully controlled the Temple Mount since (with the exception of the Maccabean period) Babylon's capture of Jerusalem in 586BC, some 2,550 years earlier, a flag which was unfortunately promptly taken down, as the Israeli's returned the Temple Mount to Jordan.*

#### **After the 1967 War**

In the aftermath of the Six-Day War, the Muslim Arab countries, still stinging from their defeat at the hands of a much smaller enemy, held a summit in Khartoum, Sudan. They signed a declaration that specified “the main principles by which the Arab states abide”: (1) no peace with Israel; (2) no recognition of Israel; (3) no negotiation with Israel; and (4) the Palestinian people must have their “own” country, but it must be made from land belonging to Israel.

In November 1967, the UN Security council adopted a resolution (written by the British and American delegates) calling for Israeli withdrawal “from the territories occupied in the recent conflict.” Since the wording was somewhat ambiguous concerning withdrawal, and because it called for “acknowledgment of the sovereignty...of every state in the area” (which would include Israel), the Israelis viewed it favorably. But predictably, since it acknowledged Israel's right to exist, none of the Arab nations would approve it. They remained technically at war with Israel.

It would be another ten years and take another war before just one Arab leader — Anwar Sadat of Egypt—finally made peace with Israel.

Continue this story in Part 7, the final portion, of “Understanding Israel's War.”

## Understanding Israel's War: Part 7 of 7

### Summary of the Attempts to Destroy Modern Israel

This is only a partial list of what the Jewish nation has been through since the 1947 vote to create the modern state of Israel:

- Israeli War of Independence (November 1947–July 1949)
- Suez Crisis (October 1956)
- Six-Day War (June 1967)—Israel is attacked by Arab neighbors on the south, west, and north: Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. In addition, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Algeria sent troops and assistance to attack Israel. In only six days, vastly outnumbered Israel miraculously regained East Jerusalem from Jordan, the Golan Heights from Syria, and Sinai and Gaza from Egypt.
- Yom Kippur War (October 1973)—Egypt and Syria intentionally launch a surprise attack on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur in an attempt to regain the territories lost to the Israelis during the Six-Day War. Once again, Israel won.
- Palestinian aggression in South Lebanon (1971–1982)
- 1982 Lebanon War (1982)
- First Intifada (1987–1993)—A large Palestinian uprising in the West Bank (Samaria and Judea) and the Gaza Strip.
- Second Intifada (2000–2005)—Second Palestinian uprising, a period of intensified violence, which began in late September 2000.
- 2006 Lebanon War (summer 2006)
- Gaza War (December 2008–January 2009)
- Hamas rocket attacks on Israel (2014)—An IDF offensive after the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli teenagers, with continual attacks on Israel by Hamas militants, and discoveries of several dozen tunnels into Israel for the purposes of terrorizing and killing civilians. (Note: I was there during the rocket attacks in 2014 and had the opportunity to see the Iron Dome in operation, operated by 18 and 19 year old female Israeli Defense Force soldiers.)
- Hamas rocket attacks on Israel (2021) – ongoing. Whereas in 2014, 2,500 rockets were fired on Israel over 50 days, Hamas has already fired 3,100 rockets at Jewish communities in the first six days of this war. In addition, civil unrest has developed in many communities with Muslim Arabs rioting.

In between these wars and uprisings against Israel is a much longer list of continual skirmishes, resulting in the deaths of thousands of innocent Israeli civilians.

The Iron Dome is a highly sophisticated missile defense system, in which young female IDF soldiers have a few seconds to make a decision to fire the interceptor, based on computer readouts of whether the Hamas rocket is going to fall into a nonpopulated area or not. This advanced defense system was jointly developed by the US and Israel working together.

## The Complexity of the Enemies of Israel

On one of our trips to Israel several years ago, we received a most sobering report. We were taken to the Israel-Syria border where we were met with members of the Israeli Defense Forces. Pointing to some villages in the distance, our guide said (at that time), *“That village is now controlled by Hezbollah, that one by al Nusra (a branch of al- Qaeda), the next one by al Nursa, the next one by the Syrian Army, the next one by al Nursa, then the next group of villages are controlled by some fifty different Jihad groups, and then down there, is ISIS.”* One half million Syrians have been killed, with millions more displaced.

## Why Not Just Split the Land?

Many have advocated that they just chop up the land and split it between the Palestinians – mainly Muslim – and the Jews. Some claim that if Israel just gave land to the Palestinians, referred to as the “two-state solution,” then peace would prevail. The fact is that Israel has given up land and offered land repeatedly, but the Muslim Arabs continue to attack Israelis.

Remember, Israel is tiny, only one-sixth of 1 percent of the Middle East. The remaining twenty- two Arab nations have 99.8 percent of the land. Israel is only nine million people surrounded by three hundred million Arabs, many of whom want them dead.

In the Middle East, it is not uncommon to see maps that show Israel wiped off the map – literally. Here is an example of a map of the Middle East with no Israel.



### Even so, Israel has repeatedly offered land for peace:

**Offer Number One—1937.** The Peel Partition Plan. The British offered to divide Palestine into a Jewish State (20 percent) and an Arab State (70 percent) with 10 percent or so to be retained by Britain. The Zionists approved partition but asked for a larger percentage. The Arabs of Palestine and beyond completely rejected the idea of partition.

**Offer Number Two—1947.** The United Nations Partition Plan. The UN offered to divide Palestine 50/50 into a Jewish State and an Arab State. The Jews said yes. The Arabs rejected partition and launched a war to destroy the Jewish state.

**Offer Number Three—1967.** Israel won the Six-Day War and conquered the “West Bank” (Judea and Samaria). Shortly

thereafter, the Israeli cabinet split between those who wanted to return the “West Bank” to Jordan and those who wanted to give it to the Palestinians. In September, the Arab League issued its three no’s: “No peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with it.” That ended the debate over the West Bank.

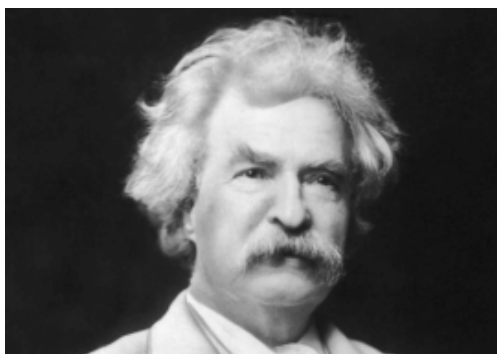
**Offer Number Four—2000.** At Camp David, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered Yasser Arafat all of Gaza, Arab East Jerusalem and approximately 94 percent of the West Bank with some land swaps from Israel. Arafat said no. Shortly thereafter, the bloody second intifada was launched and over a thousand Israelis were killed in terror attacks.

**Offer Number Five—2008.** Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert offered Mahmoud Abbas all of Arab East Jerusalem and approximately 96 percent of the West Bank with land swaps from Israel proper equal to the remaining 4 percent. Gaza had already been given to the Palestinians in 2005. Abbas asked for time to think about the offer. He never got back to Olmert.

The Palestinian Authority does not want some land. They want *all the land*. *With the Jews gone*. You cannot negotiate with people who want you dead. For those who call for a two-state solution, understand that we already have a two-state solution. In the forming of present-day Israel, Britain lopped off a stunning 77 percent of Israel's land mass to form the State of Jordan in 1948. The Jews accepted the remaining 23 percent of the land for themselves. Arabs who do not desire to be with Jews can live in Jordan.

Furthermore, all the land that the Jews owned then was purchased. They paid for it. For decades they bought swamps and deserts. They rehabilitated the land. The same Arabs that sold it to them then wanted it back once they saw that it could be developed. (Land changes hands two ways: by purchase or through war. The Jews have gained land by buying it, except during the wars in 1948, 1967 and 1973.)

The Arabs who choose to live under Israeli authority have many rights and privileges. They can be elected to office. Arab Muslims serve in the Knesset, the Israeli Parliament. Some even serve on the Supreme Court. In fact, many Arabs living in the "West Bank" (Samaria and Judea) prefer Israeli control over the Palestinians. Yet the demand for Israel's land never ends. If Israel were to give up total control of the West Bank, Israel would only be nine miles across at one point and unable to defend itself. Israel is here to stay, something the enemies of Israel need to learn.



*Mark Twain*

*People forget that before the Jews returned to Israel (then labeled "Palestine" by the Romans) it was desolate, mainly just swamps and deserts. Well known American literary figure Mark Twain visited Palestine in 1867 and wrote that the country was "a hopeless, dreary, heartbroken land." Why is his famous quote important? Two millennia of abuse of the land, with water and wind erosion, had resulted in the land being non-productive. As the Jews returned to Israel, they purchased much of the swamp and desert land. They lovingly restored the land – literally – and thus it is now one of the most productive places on earth.*

One of my favorite T-shirts is a list of the nations that have opposed Israel. What do they all have in common? These empires are gone. Why? If you bless Israel, you will be blessed. If you curse Israel, you will be cursed. If you don't like it, take it up with God.

The good news is that Israel has peace treaties with Egypt to the south and Jordan to the East. And the much-touted Abraham Accords were joined by United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Monaco. Time will tell what the accords actually mean, in terms of support for Israel. But that is where the good news ends.

The bad news is that Iran has proxy terrorists placed all around Israel, a type of a "ring of fire."

**Southwest:** Hamas has many rockets – 15,000 or perhaps more – that they are now firing upon Israel from Gaza. Hamas has a charter that states its goal is to destroy Israel.

**North:** Israel faces Hezbollah's estimated two hundred thousand sophisticated missiles from the north, in Lebanon.

**Northeast:** Syria and the Assad regime have Iran and Hezbollah provided ballistic missiles.

**East:** Iraq has Shia militia from Iran poised to harm Israel.

**East:** The master of the evil in the Middle East is Iran, which has ballistic missiles that can cover all of Israel.

**South:** In Yemen, the Houthi rebels have a growing arsenal of missiles and attack drones.

How would you like to live in such a community? No wonder Israel has to defend herself.

When you hear liberal secularists or so-called leftist "Christians" (an oxymoron) falsely accusing Israel of attacking innocent Muslims around them, know that they are either deceived or are trying to deceive. Be prepared to refute their false statements with the truth. ...And above all, pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

*(Note: Portions of this newsletter were taken from Well Versed by James Garlow, or from This Precarious Moment by James Garlow and David Barton)*