

# The Miracle of Israel



**I**T IS A HISTORICAL FACT THAT ISRAEL has never fully possessed all of the land which God promised. In AD 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, the Jewish nation was scattered to the four winds of the world.

*“They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Luke 21:24).*

For over 1900 years, the land of Israel was in the possession of Romans, Arabs, Crusaders, the Turks, and the British. However, there has always been a remnant in the land.

In 1867 Mark Twain wrote, “Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies... Palestine is desolate and unlovely... It is a hopeless, dreary, heart-broken land” (Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad* [American Publishing Company, 1869], Chapter 56). Was there a future for Israel? Had God forgotten or rescinded His promises under the Abrahamic Covenant?

## ISRAEL COMES HOME

Then a miracle happened! After nearly 2,000 years without a homeland, scattered and persecuted, the Jewish sovereign state came into being. In 1917, there was the Balfour Declaration by the British government. It declared: “His Majesty’s government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be

done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country” (Arthur James Balfour, *Balfour Declaration*, 2 November 1917).

And with great difficulty, Jews began to return to Israel. On May 14, 1948, Israel became the homeland of the Jewish nation. Leon Uris, the author of the historical novel *Exodus*, said of the founding of the State of Israel, “...an event unparalleled in the history of mankind: the rebirth of a nation that had been dispersed two thousand years before” (Leon Uris, *Exodus* [Bantam, 1958], Preface).

David Ben-Gurion, Israel’s first Prime Minister, declared: “By virtue of our national and intrinsic right, and on the strength of the resolution of the UN General Assembly, we hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, which shall be known as the State of Israel” (*Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel*, 14 May 1948). The nation was back in the land promised to them 4,000 years ago: promised under the Abrahamic Covenant. What an event! After centuries of saying “Next year in Jerusalem,” the Jewish people were back in the only piece of land God specifically promised to any people.

## PERSECUTION IN THE LAND

In May 1948, Israel was immediately attacked by Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. But God has been faithful to His ancient people in spite of the tremendous opposition and persecution of the past — and in spite of the continued persecution, hatred, and attacks on the Jewish nation by so many to this day. Thousands of years after God’s promises to Abraham, Israel today exists as a nation! Israel has a national identity. Israel is now the national home of the Jewish people.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the present Prime Minister of Israel, writes: “But when in a hundred different lands, century after century, Jews prayed, ‘Next year in Jerusalem’ they meant something entirely different: not merely an individual’s desire to return to a holy site for prayer, but the wish for an entire people to return and rebuild its life in its own national home, of which Jerusalem was the

heart.’ This powerful longing was so unique that it was sometimes dismissed as a pitiful gasp of a dying race. It was nothing of the kind. The persistent yearning to return was an expression of the very life source of the Jewish people, the idea that held together, as distilled defiance of its historical fate” (Benjamin Netanyahu, *A Place Among the Nations* [Bantam, 1993], 31).

## FUTURE PROMISED LAND

As promised in the Abrahamic Covenant, the Jewish nation is back in the land. It is true that Israel does not possess all of the promised land; the complete fulfillment of the land promise to Israel awaits that future Millennial Kingdom when the Christ, the Messiah, returns and reigns as King of kings.

*“Behold, I will gather them from all the countries to which I drove them in my anger and my wrath and in great indignation. I will bring them back to this place, and I will make them dwell in safety. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul” (Jeremiah 32:37–41).*

*“My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes. They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children’s children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore” (Ezekiel 37:24–28). ❀*