

How God has communicated with mankind: Who invented Zionism?

The recent warfare in Gaza which has dominated news reports day after day, is only the latest in the continual coverage of events affecting Israel. So why do we hear such a disproportionate volume of reports about the little state of Israel? The reason is found in another of the works of God, the Bible. Biblical archaeology confirms the setting and timing of God's promise to Abraham, about 4,000 years ago - *"To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates"* - **Genesis 15:18**. The descendants of Abraham through Jacob grew into a nation in Egypt, and God rescued them from slavery through Moses. They afterwards settled in transjordan and the West Bank, including the hills of Samaria and Judah. This was the nation of which God declared to Moses, *"the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth"* - **Deuteronomy 7:6**. This was a great privilege for such a tiny nation, but also gave them great responsibility - *"You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities"* - **Amos 3:2**.

Israel turned away from God, and so their enemies overthrew their kingdom and removed the people from their land. During this sad time God declared, *"I will make a full end of all the nations among whom I scattered you, but of you I will not make a full end"* - **Jeremiah 30:1**. After the nation rejected Jesus, he declared that *"Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled [completed]"* - **Luke 21:24**. After AD 70 the less than four million surviving Jews were scattered throughout various countries. How could such a people preserve their identity for any length of time? The natural course would have been assimilation and to disappear as a nation. But why didn't it happen? Regarding Jesus, he was delivered to Pilate *"out of envy"* - **Matthew 27:18**. That same human trait to bully people who are different, and to be jealous of high achievers, brought unremitting persecution on the Jews. Goaded into action by the notorious scape-goating of Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French army, Theodore Herzl, an Austrian journalist, wrote a pamphlet, *The Jewish State* (1896). Not a religious man, Herzl regarded assimilation as the best way for Jews to find peace and quiet. But because of ever-recurring antisemitism this could never happen. Against their own wishes, he believed, the Jews must form their own secular state. So Zionism received its latter-day impulse. Herzl envisaged the Jews settling with the Palestinian Arabs to live among them in cooperation and as loving brothers. By 1914 there were 90,000 Jews living with the Arabs under the Turkish administration. Three years later the British and allied forces drove out the Turks and marched into what Jesus had called *"the city of the Great King"* - **Matthew 5:35**.

With Turks gone, the Arabs rejoiced in the prospect of having their own direct rule over all Palestine. But the Zionist leaders in London, Weizmann and Socolow were able to persuade the British government to declare that they viewed *"with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people..."* Actually the Zionists had asked for **all** Palestine, while His Majesty's government had a two-state view. But from the start the Arabs bitterly resisted Zionism, which has resulted in increasingly violent collision between Jew and Arab over control of the land.

The huge ongoing international effort which has been expended to bring the two sides together has miserably failed, and never will be solved by human intervention. God has kept His word to make Jerusalem *"a heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves"* -

Zechariah 12:3. Here is only one feature, when the Bible is put under the magnifying glass, to show that it is the inspired word of God. Only the return of Jesus will bring the desired peace to Jerusalem - *“The LORD has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his dwelling place: ‘This is my resting place forever’.” - Psalm 132:13.*