

**WHOSE LAND IS IT  
ANYWAY?**

## PREFACE

*Jerusalem does not cease being to the Jewish people, and why it was during King David's time and still is today the heart of the Jewish people and its joy. It has been designated [by the United Nations Special Commission on Palestine, 1947] the capital of the Jewish state, but it was and will always remain the capital of the Jewish people, the very core of the entire Jewish people." 1*

*--David Ben Gurion.*

## INTRODUCTION

Before we answer the question posed in this edition of Power Books, we must provide a historical foundation of Israel's journey to the land in the context of the political environment, and the challenges posed in the preceding years of 1948.

Because this topic is so voluminous, volumes of works have been published on this subject of title to the land of Israel. Here we provide only a brief overview, with some critical touchstones that formed Israel's path back to her land. Ultimately, we answer the question, *Whose Land Is It Anyway?*

Let us first note, numerous names are given in the Bible for Israel. There is the Land of the Hebrews (Genesis 40:15,) the Holy Land (Zechariah 2:12,) the land of Jehovah (Hosea 9:3, Psalm 85:1,) the Land of Promise (Hebrews 11:9.) For Bible students and teachers of prophecy, the birth of Israel in 1948 was one of

the most significant prophetic events of our modern time.

Take, for example, the combined passages of Leviticus 26 and Ezekiel 4:3-6, to produce a prophetic prediction of Israel becoming a nation in 1948, 2,484 years before it happened to the day. (See Appendices.)

Also, remarkable; Abraham was born in 1948 BCE (Rashi's calculation of 1,948 years after creation. No other nation as Israel though is so spiritually and Biblically bound to their land as the Jewish people. Rabbi Hayim Halevy Donin says, "It is a land possessed by not only right of conquest and settlement but also a fulfillment of history, faith, and law."

## **ISRAEL'S VISIONARY THEODOR HERZL**

The brainchild of the state of Israel was Theodor Herzl. A son of a wealthy banking family, Herzl moved to Vienna to work as a journalist. He never imagined that this move would spontaneously spark a prophetic fulfillment for the Jewish return to Zion. This event in Herzl's life, coupled with other experiences and

observations, Herzl became convinced that anti-Semitism could not be defeated or cured, at best, only avoided. He realized a Jewish state had to be established.

Then in 1896, Herzl published a book outlining this idea and titled the project, *Der Judenstat* (*The Jewish State*.) The next year under his leadership, the First Zionist Congress convened in Basel, Switzerland. However, even as early as 1894, few were willing to lend support to the idea.

## **OPPOSITIONISTS & ASSIMILATIONISTS**

As Herzl worked tirelessly in those early years for a Jewish State, he found that most people were in two categories; **Oppositionists**, and those that he termed **Assimilationists**. Many that opposed a Jewish state felt it would be better for Jewish people to assimilate into the nations. Their concern was more for the loss of Jewish wealth than the safety of the Jewish people.

With the rise of Nazi Germany, and the attempted extermination of all of European Jewry by Adolph Hitler, Herzl's worst fears

thirty-some years after his death were realized. On November 29, 1947, a coalition of nations finally agreed that the Jews needed a haven to call their own. The United Nations ultimately voted in support of a Jewish homeland.

However, consistently linked to it, was the idea to partition the Holy Land into two independent states. This was to bring about the internationalization of Jerusalem. But throughout this process, Arab opposition was well known; if Israel were granted her land, the Arab nations would ignite a war.

### **DAYS OF WAR BEGIN**

Finally, on May 14, 1948, Israel declared her independence. Immediately, the allied forces of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and Iraq, defied the U.N. agreement and attacked Israel the following day. But Israel was ill-equipped due to an international arm's embargo. Then God raised up Czechoslovakia, who chose to sell her arms and supplies, which turned the tide of the war in Israel's favor.

Israel has endured three major wars since 1948 and the War of Independence. There was the

Sinai Campaign in 1956 between Israel and Egypt, the Six-day War in 1967 with Nasser of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, and the Yom Kippur War in 1973 when Egyptian and Syrian forces attacked Israel on two fronts.

One can say unequivocally, war defines Jewish history. We can look back to ancient times to the capture of the Jerusalem temple in 165 BCE, or the invading Roman legions in 63 BCE, and the Jewish revolt in 66 and 67 AD. Rome's last conquest of Jerusalem in 70 AD, sent 1 million Jews to their deaths; 97,000 Jews were captured, thousands more were sold as slaves throughout the cities of the Roman Empire, and untold thousands perished from starvation.

The ancient Jewish historian Josephus writes in the "The War of the Jews," of the awful time of Jerusalem's destruction in 70 AD. He conveys with heart-wrenching detail the portrayal of the Jewish connection to the Temple; "hundreds of thousands lay dead in the streets of Jerusalem with their eyes fixed upon the temple." So relieved was Rome that the Jewish problem was solved commemorative coins were minted that said Judea Capta. Historically, Israel is a nation

that all countries struggle over. Therefore, the Jewish people have rested in a struggle for survival down through history.



## PART I

### THE LAND

We turn our attention now to the Covenant, where we read about what God intended when He covenanted with Abraham. The covenant is found in Genesis 17: 7-8; "I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you, and I will be their God."

But how did the land move from one to the other? Covenantal provisions never came through agreements or goodwill, or between man and man. Always, it happened between God and man. Predictably, it often involved a clash with other people.

In 1948 when the Jewish people returned to their land, Israel had to settle the whole business by force. Even during ancient times in the area of Canaan, the war was required to advance God's will. If you recall, Abraham and his clan moved between two dominant heathenish cultures, Babylonia, and Egypt.

In later years the patriarch Abraham was brought into the War of the Kings (Genesis 14.) It was a conflict that was comprised of an alliance of 5 kings that would ultimately sweep his nephew Lot and his household away.

]However, Abraham walked as a conqueror throughout because God gave him a promise of an everlasting possession for him, and all his generations. Similar circumstances befell Joshua when he had to take hold of the promise.

## **ISRAEL TODAY**

Today, Israel is approximately 11,000 square miles, a mere fraction of its original 60,000 square miles when it was ruled over by David, and later his son Solomon.

In 1947, a year before Israel's Independence, Arab states totaled 8,500,000 square miles. Compare this to what was considered Israel's administered areas of only 28, 500 square miles at the time of Jewish return to the Promised Land. As one can see, the land has become smaller throughout the war years that followed.

In 1978, the quantitative difference between Israel and her Arab neighbors in the territory, population, wealth, and arms, is overwhelming. The people of the Arab States were approximately 134,000,000 to Israel's small 3,500,000 people. The GNP (Gross National Product) of the Arab states, not factoring in inflation and increased oil production in 1967, was approximately \$150 billion to Israel's tiny \$13 billion.

Given such disparities, Israel has struggled for her tiny sliver of the Promised Land. So why is a small state both in area and population despised by so many? The answer lies not in the Geopolitical sphere of course, but within the Spiritual.

## **BORN TO STRUGGLE**

Thousands of years have transpired, and the Jew has repeatedly found herself against insurmountable odds. She is always facing enemies seeking to take more of her land and, regularly, labeling her as the scapegoat for tensions and terrorism.

From one Presidential administration to the other, dividing Israel appears to be an imaginary panacea and cure-all for the Middle East's turbulent woes. It appears that Israel is a nation born to suffer. Even in 1948, the Arab aversion to Israel has changed little from our modern day.

Taken from a "Life Magazine" article back in June of 1967, the Arab-Israeli struggle is highlighted at the time; "For Arabs, Israel is an illegal fiction created out of former Arab lands by an imperialistic West, an alien culture that poses a continual threat to a visionary brotherhood of the Arab nations that surround it."

Given all that has been stated, nothing captures such political dialogue and fuels world tensions as Israel. Repeatedly, attempts have been made to excise the Jew from the Land through war and anti-Semitism, or the land itself from the Jew.

Through political pressures to divide the land for the sake of peace in the Middle East, Israel is caught between two tensions: *"That which God*

*has established, and that which the world seeks to alter."* At the center of such a historical turmoil resides a people who can trace their history and occupation to a homeland that is three thousand years old.

In one word, if another nation invaded Israel, and if it were possible to displace every Jew from the land, Israel would cease to be as God created her. The reason is: The land is tethered to the Jew as the Jew is tethered to the land. They are in fact self-defining of each other!

No other people group then possesses such a unique history, and no other land is accompanied with specific promises that foretell of an extraordinary prophetic future. Yet, Israel rarely has time to ponder the conflicts of the past before new ones begin.

## PART II

### WHOSLE LAND IS IT?

To begin to draw close to answering the question; **Whose Land Is It Anyway?** On the surface, the answer may seem obvious. Biblically, God gave the land of Israel to Abraham (Genesis 17:8) and his descendants through Isaac, (Genesis 26:2-5) then Jacob whose name was changed to Israel, and his descendants, (Genesis 28:1-4,13-14.)

In fact, while all other nations own their land, no one owns Israel. Yes! No one owns Israel. God owns Israel and no other! What I mean to say is, Israel was given to the Jewish people through the Abrahamic Covenant, to become the Chosen stewards of the Promised Land; always it will remain the land where the Jewish people are called to dwell.

Yet, additional light is cast on this topic by the famous 13th century Exegete and biblical scholar, Moses Nachmanides, who interprets the phrase, "*For the land is mine,*" in *Leviticus 25:23.*" He notes that God is speaking to Israel

through Moses with these words; "You are but strangers, residents with me."

Two other translations convey the same idea, "The land must not be sold permanently because the land is mine and you are but aliens, and my tenants." (TNIV) "And remember, the land is mine so you may not sell it permanently. You are merely my tenants and sharecroppers" (NLT).

In other words, the Jewish people were given the land of Israel for them to live in, but they do not own the land.

Consider, in the future kingdom, the millennium, Israel will be the center of power and government where the Messiah will establish His throne in Jerusalem. For this alone, no one can own the Holy Land other than God. He in fact, holds what is known as the *inalienable rights*, or what is considered the deed.

The Jewish people on the other hand hold the *unalienable rights*, or, the *tenant contract*. Again, God holds the *inalienable rights*,

while Israel holds the *unalienable* rights. This is explained further in the following.



**PART III**  
**THE LAND**  
**UNALIENABLE / INALIENABLE**

The difference between, **unalienable** and **inalienable** is important. According to its earliest definition some three hundred years ago, we can illustrate Jewish claim to the land. Also, where we receive a hint of their continual right to occupy the land.

When it comes to this historical term, *unalienable*, it was first made famous in the Declaration of Independence, but it is more ancient than that. Let's recall these words, "*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights.*"

The understanding of this word meant that an individual who possessed *unalienable* rights could only receive those rights from an authority greater than any human agency. The

early framers of the Declaration of Independence recognized that only God and God alone could give man his rights.

Also, in this word *unalienable* there is the word *lien*. A [lien] is a legal claim, or a charge upon real or personal property for the satisfaction of some debt or duty. For instance, one must first satisfy one's debt or service as it was in Bible times to gain personal property. This principle was seen between Laban and Jacob.

Since *Unalienable* holds no lien, or, no authority, one cannot sell, transfer, or sell those rights, [\[1\]](#) If we were to apply this to land ownership, only through inheritance from one generation to the next could land be granted to another. This certainly applies to the land of Israel.

Therefore, the Promised Land always moves from one Jewish generation to another, and it cannot be granted to another nation. Because of the unalienable rights that the Jewish people have, no legal right to sell the land is given to them. The Jewish people then remain the chosen stewards and tenants of the land.

## **INALIENABLE**

Let us now explore the meaning of the term, *inalienable*, where we once again notice the word *lien* again. But in this case it contains the prefix “in,” which signifies that power is vested in it. In other words, the *lien* is active, while in the word *unalienable* the *lien* is inactive.

If one were to research this further and look up the word *unalienable* you would be directed back to the word *inalienable*, because in our modern time the meaning is exactly the same. But three hundred years ago, these two words meant the exact opposite.

This is brought to light when Thomas Jefferson’s found himself at odds with the Declaration committee when he submitted his first draft of the *Declaration Independence*. Let’s see why!

## **THE DECLARATION COMMITTEE**

When the first draft of the Declaration of Independence was submitted to the Declaration Committee, they perceived great danger over Jefferson’s choice of the word *inalienable*. Recalling what has been stated: *Inalienable*

meant that the one had the power to surrender or bargain their rights away. How could someone take away or give away what God our Creator gave thought the Declaration Committee. Thankfully, the wording was changed to unalienable, which guarded our freedoms forever.

### **ISRAEL'S UNALIENABLE RIGHTS**

All that has been stated, a fact is revealed that the Jewish people possess the unalienable rights to the land that God promised them. No other nation on earth has similar claim to any portion of Israel.

So, when the United States and other nations pressure Israel to divide the land, they violate God's *inalienable* rights, and Israel's inalienable rights as "the chosen stewards. This is a volatile mix for nations.

Recall the fact that no other nation other than Israel was told that their land would be the place that Yeshua would return to; only the Jewish people can trace their birth, history, and future, to their occupation of the Promised Land (Genesis 15: 18-21; 28:13; Exodus 23:31.)

## ISRAEL'S TENANT CONTRACT

For deeper understanding we touch upon the covenant. The land agreement or covenant is God's permanent "tenant contract" with the Jewish people, and it will always remain this way!

But the idea of a tenant contract in this context does not diminish the power of God's agreement with the Jew, because as mentioned, it is permanent, changeless, and irrevocable. It can be compared to someone providing you with a home to live in for your children, and your children's children, and extending to all their generations with one caveat; you do not own it, you cannot sell it, and you cannot give it to another, you must only take care of it.

The Jewish people then are a bonded community by a divine contract, which is not abstract or concocted as their enemies would assert. For this reason, nations that seek to place conditions and attachments to the Land that

God transferred to [His] first born will never turn out well.

To the weakening of our country and the ignorance of our administration, the U.S. has undertaken many actions to divide Israel for a Palestinian state. As noted earlier, this violates both Israel's unalienable rights as the tenant, and God's inalienable rights as the Landowner. Let me illustrate it this way in a parable:

A landowner was going on a long journey. He gave charge of his vineyard and his home to his servants for them to occupy, care and protect it. Since the landowner had the inalienable rights, he had the power and authority to confer upon them this exclusive right to be his tenants. In turn, the servant received the unalienable rights.

However, it did not take very long for hostility to arise between the legal tenant, and those wanting a portion of the landowner's vineyard. They did not realize that wanting claim to the land violated both the landowner's inalienable

rights and the chosen servant's unalienable rights. The only one that could settle this long and enduring struggle was the landowner, The Lord Himself upon his return.

## CONCLUSION

Whose Land Is It Anyway? The land of Israel was given to the Jewish people not as a reward, nor as a free-will gift. It was also not independent of Israel's choices. But simply stated, Israel belongs to the Jewish people. They alone are the chosen stewards. They will forever be its tenants.

Still, God owns the land, and the world has struggled over formulating a definition of Israel's right to the Promised Land in spite of the biblical narrative of Israel's right to exist and who has claim to it.

To repeat what has been stated: The Jewish people are the "chosen stewards." A steward is a person who manages another's property, or one who administers the affairs as the agent of another. In Israel's case, the Jew is the chosen agent and elected people that God chose to administer and manage the estate of God, Israel.

As an emerging Jewish-centric body is getting a heart for Zion, deep understanding of Gods



heart for Israel and the Jewish people is found today. A Heart for Zion can be defined as, a genuine love for Israel as a covenant land and people, coupled with a sense of duty to assist financially and prayerfully the Jewish calling. This not only pertains to the land of Israel but the Jewish calling throughout the Diaspora.

## APPENDICES I

### REVIEW OF THE COVENANT

There is surely no more important consequence upon the study of Israel's relationship to the Jew, and the Jew's relationship to God, than the Abrahamic covenant.

When God made a covenant with Abraham, it was the most solemn and ceremonious of pacts, because it was a blood covenant (the signing ceremony is recorded in Genesis 15.) Therefore, it does not provide some illusions of a relationship, it stamps its mark of authenticity on what God established with Abraham and his heirs.

Since the covenants were either signed in blood or decreed by God's Word, (the Noach and Davidic covenants were decreed,) they all shared an *unconditional* and *perpetual quality* that went from one generation to the next; this speaks even for our modern day. Of course, to receive the blessings of the covenants always required obedience. Therefore, from one

generation to the next, the covenant was always waiting for a righteous generation to turn on its blessings.

*Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you. (Deuteronomy 6:3.)*

Covenant comes from the Hebrew word *berith*, which we have discussed in previous chapters. This word is used throughout the Hebrew Scriptures well over two hundred times.

Covenants in the Bible were a formal agreement, Jacob and Laban made a covenant with each other with specific terms to be honored in their relationship (Genesis 31:44). David and Jonathan struck a *berith* in their friendship (1 Samuel 18:3; 20:8, 16; 22:8; 23:18). Abner struck a *berith* with David over his loyalty to him as king (2 Samuel 3:12-13.)

In Psalm 55:20, a *berith* is referred to between friends: "My companion attacks his friends; he violates his covenant." Proverbs 2:17 says, "...who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the covenant she made before God." Combined, these covenants formed a bond between two people; between nations; between God and a single man; and between God and a specific nation such as Israel.

## COVENANT TRANSMITTED

As the covenant was transmitted to Isaac then to Jacob, it provided a striking assurance of restoration to the land with God's assurance that His promises will be fulfilled: "*I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.*" Then in Genesis; *The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go; walk*

*through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.”Genesis 13:14-17*

This is reiterated again in the Davidic covenant where God says; *And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also subdue all your enemies. I declare to you that the LORD will build a house for you: I Chronicles 17:9-10.*

## **LAND COVENANT**

The second part of the land aspect of the covenant, is wrongly referred to as the Palestinian Covenant, because it is a term coined by the Romans after the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, which means *Philistine*. Its purpose was to scorn the Jewish people with a title of their archenemies.

Therefore, one will not find the word *Palestine* in the Bible. But the land covenant is located in Deuteronomy 30:1-10. Below is an overview:

1. Israel be scattered due to their disobedience.[2]
2. Israel will also repent while in their wandering.[3]
3. The Lord promises to return to the remnant. [4]
4. The Lord promises to restore the remnant. [5]
5. The Lord promises Israel national regeneration. [6]
6. The Lord promises Israel's enemies will be judged. [7]
7. The Lord promises Israel will again prosper. [8]
8. The Lord guarantees Israel's fulfillment.[9]

*In Genesis 17:1-8 (KJV) God says; And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, as for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be*

*Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.*

Here God reveals specifically that the land of Israel was not given as a short-term possession, but for the Jew's personal occupation forever: *"All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever"* (emphasis mine).

The word *forever*, which we discussed earlier, comes from the Hebrew word *olam*. It is the same word used in many places such as Psalm 89:35-36, which says, *"His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me"* (emphasis mine).

This is significant, because nations have long downgraded this legal instrument to something

no longer relevant and part of a past age and dispensation. Meditate on these words,

*Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them or abhor them so as to destroy them completely, breaking my covenant with them. I am the LORD their God. But for their sake I will remember the covenant with their ancestors whom I brought out of Egypt in the sight of the nations to be their God. I am the LORD.*

*Leviticus 26:44-45*

**Signing Ceremony:  
Genesis 15:9-21**

*So the LORD said to him, "Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon." Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away. As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. Then the LORD said to him, "Know for certain that your*



*descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. You, however, will go to your fathers in peace and be buried at a good old age. In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure." When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river."*

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[1] (Black's Law Dictionary, Sixth Edition, page  
1523).

- [\[2\]](#) Deuteronomy 31:1
- [\[3\]](#) Deuteronomy 30:2
- [\[4\]](#) Deuteronomy 30:3
- [\[5\]](#) Deuteronomy 30:4-5
- [\[6\]](#) Deuteronomy 3:6
- [\[7\]](#) Deuteronomy 30:7
- [\[8\]](#) Deuteronomy 30:9
- [\[9\]](#) Deuteronomy 30:8-10

