

# ***WHY ISRAEL MUST OVERCOME THE PALESTINIAN MENACE***

By Paul Billington

Anyone who understands *the Gospel of the Kingdom* (outlined in both Old and New Testaments) will appreciate the Truth that the true Messiah will at some point in time restore again the kingdom to Israel+(Acts 1:6). Jesus of Nazareth said that this would also be the work of Elijah the prophet, who *truly shall first come, and restore all things* (Matthew 17:11).

Now there are some consequences that arise from this which must directly affect the current Israeli-Palestinian tangle of circumstances.

## ***Israel's Return***

For over a century, Jews have been migrating to the ancient homeland of their forefathers in fulfillment of the well known predictions of the Bible. The political developments which led to the formation of the modern State of Israel were not mere accidents of history. There is an unseen hand at work behind the scenes as it were· an underlying purpose being worked out; and that purpose will not fail. That is why, against all odds, Israel has survived all the attempts that have been made to drive her into the sea.

This nation has withstood many attacks· both politically as well as militarily. She has suffered many set-backs, has seen her people slain, hi-jacked and kidnapped· but she still lives; and she will continue to live until the purpose of God is fulfilled in her, and her kingdom restored.

Here then, is the first reason why the Palestinian objective cannot be realized.

Their ambitions are incompatible with the Good News or Gospel of the Kingdom.

According to this Gospel, Israel, the Jewish nation· the *house of Jacob*+ must not only be revived physically and spiritually, but the throne of David is to be re-established and given to him *whose right it is*+(Ezekiel 21:25-27); that is to the Messiah. This cannot be prevented, not by Palestinians, not by Arabs, Iranians, Europeans, Moslems or the combined forces of Christendom.

## ***Preparing a People***

Another reason why the Palestinians cannot gain the upper hand on any permanent basis, is because God has said of Israel through His prophet (Ezekiel 34:13, 14):

And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.+

So God has brought the children of Israel out from among the nations, and to their own land (including the mountains of Israel+) because He intends to feed them there. It is not that God has simply brought the Jewish people to these mountains of Israel so that they may be scattered yet again. He intends to do something with them. As He says through the prophet Jeremiah: Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding+(Chapter 3:14-15).



A Hamas Poster reads:  
**“ISRAEL WILL NO LONGER EXIST”**  
*...But that objective cannot be realized.*  
***It is incompatible with the Good News, or Gospel of the Kingdom***

It is difficult to see this spiritual education of the Jewish people proceeding effectively upon the mountains of Israel if a Palestinian state exists there! There is another circumstance that also suggests that there will not be a Palestinian state upon the mountains of Israel (the West Bank), and that is the fact that Ezekiel fails to notice one in his 38th chapter, which does describe a situation there in the latter days+(verses 8 and 16). In fact, Ezekiel says that the people that are gathered there will dwell safely.+The wording of verse 11 is very specific: the land of unwalled villages...them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates.+

This is a very different picture to what we see at present, with a Hamas terrorist leadership in control and Jewish settlers being abducted, shot at and expelled from their homes. Today it is a land of walls, bars, gates, check-points, unrest and lack of security. We can be sure that Ezekiel has not made a mistake however. if there are any Palestinians upon the mountains of Israel at the time he speaks of, they must have become very docile and tranquil. It suggests that by one means or another Israel will have overcome the

Palestinian menace and *none will make them afraid* (Ezek. 39:26). In fact, a situation will have come into existence which will be conducive to the spiritual education or feeding+ that is to take place upon the high mountains of Israel,+(Ezek. 34:14).

We must understand that Ezekiel 38 will not be fulfilled until *after* this pre-Armageddon phase of stability and preparation has been achieved, and teaching will have been proceeding with some developing a measure of faith, whilst others continue to trespass as we read in Ezekiel 39:26.

### ***A Developing Situation***

The situation that we describe may be rather different to what some have thought but we cannot dismiss the plain testimony of Scripture just because we have not considered it before. Ezekiel's prophecy is very clear on the matter there is to be a dwelling safely+ in the land *and upon the mountains of Israel* before the invasion of Gog. How will this come about? Further, it is to be a time of remarkable prosperity, when the people that have been gathered out of the nations will have gotten cattle and goods.+The context here (Ezekiel 38:12-13)

suggests that this involves the merchant or trading nations Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof.+Verse 13 adds silver and gold to the cattle and goods. We cannot just pass over this information. Gog comes to take a *great spoil*+ so there must be considerable wealth accumulated in Israel at the time. It is therefore reasonable to expect that the great latter-day trading nations the United States, Britain, various Commonwealth countries including India, will develop close trading links with Israel, and that these connections will produce the thriving and successful nation that is described by Ezekiel.

It is human that we want to see everything come together instantaneously we tend to await the dramatic breakthrough,+ wanting to see the sensational headline in the newspaper.

Well there are some spectacular happenings from time to time, but it is when we see these as part of a much bigger picture that the work of God is better understood. We must stand



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OR GATES... DWELLING SAFELY!  
THINGS MUST CHANGE!**

back as it were, and try to view the flow of events that are slowly developing the situation described in the Bible. We must not expect it to happen all at once, even though there will be clear milestones along the way from time to time. It is the gradual development of God's purpose that we must try to make ourselves aware of- and it is when we are conscious of this that it can impact upon our daily lives, developing within us a spirit of obedience so that we might be prepared for the moment of truth when the Lord gathers together those who know and believe the true Gospel. There are many different aspects of Bible prophecy that can be viewed in this way- but here we are focusing upon the Palestinian question, which must itself be seen against the broader issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

### ***The Middle East Reality***

The Arab-Israeli conflict had actually commenced before there was a Jewish State- it erupted during the days of the British Mandate. The Weizmann-Faisal agreement signed in London in 1919 spoke of the racial kinship and ancient bonds existing between the Arabs and the Jewish people+and went on to promise the closest possible collaboration in the development of the Arab State and Palestine.+It all sounded rather wonderful, but as Brian Luke has shown in the article on page 10, there were those forces at work which were quite determined to quash the idea of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine. We can leave the details for another time, but let us note the fact that the whole concept was an anathema to some- it was not in everyone's interest that the closest possible collaboration+between Jew and Arab should be realized.

And so it was that the year 1920 saw a rising tide of anti-Semitism, and it also brought the first violent attack by Arabs upon Jews in Palestine. Seven Jews were killed.

The first objective of the Arabs at that time was to prevent the implementation of the Balfour Declaration- but the point is that their purpose failed. The long anticipated fulfillment of Bible prophecy was realized and the national home became a reality in the Middle East. That reality was then given political substance with Ben Gurion's declaration of the State of Israel in May 1948. Again, many political and ecclesiastical forces were opposed to it, as was seen in the 1947 U.N. vote on partition. But it happened!

Many saw it as a miracle- especially when the combined Arab forces tried to strangle it at birth. The War of Independence, as it is called, saw the invading Arabs defeated in an incredibly close struggle, but Israel survived and the nation was established- and the word of God was vindicated. By 1956 Israel was an established military power in the Middle East.

During the 1960s as events moved towards an Arab-Israeli war, there were those who thought they saw in prophecy an Arab victory over Israel. That of course was the Arab walk-over of Israel scenario that never happened. It was the result of commentators being blind to the long-range picture, while focusing their attention too heavily upon the immediate and apparent circumstances of the day.

Israel's remarkable victory over the forces of the entire Arab world when they moved against Israel in 1967 was a shock from which many of them never recovered.

The exception was Egypt who, joined by Syria, launched another war in 1973. Despite initial losses, the war ended with Israel's victorious forces occupying a superior and dominant position. It was following that defeat that Egypt decided to break ranks with other Arab countries and sign a peace treaty with Israel. and although it has been a very cold peace, there has never been another serious military threat made by Egypt.

The Middle East reality had to be recognized, and Israel was part of that reality.

Jordan, after much hesitation, signed a peace agreement with Israel in 1994. Syria has never taken that path, but is not strong enough to act against Israel alone. Iraq has been eliminated as a potential aggressor as a result of the U.S. led invasion and the fall of Saddam Hussein. So the Middle East reality is that the Arab nations have been virtually neutralized as a military danger to the existence of the Jewish State.

Iran is not an Arab country of course, and for all its hostile noises, it is unlikely to launch a strike against Israel without being challenged by the U.S. Iran will play its part when the time comes. but she is not going to do that on her own. It is far too dangerous.

So while hostile sentiments towards Israel are certainly harboured in the Arab world, there is little or no scope for their expression in a military sense. The only way that violence can be continued against Israel today is via the Palestinian terrorist, or one of the other terror organisations. It is the only card left. This is where 60 years or more of the Arab-Israeli Conflict has arrived. The Arab cause is like a ship struck on the rocks; it has run aground and has no means to refloat.

Israel however has become firmly established as a reality in the Middle East. It has to be seen that this is the point at which the purpose of God has arrived.

### ***Where is it Leading?***

The circumstances that we have seen developing over many years are moving in a particular direction. The last obstacle to the peaceful situation seen by Ezekiel is the

Palestinian issue. This problem must be solved· and when it is solved, we shall see something like the time described in 2 Chronicles 20:29-30.

And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they had heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel. So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about.+

The Arabs will have been brought into subjection. As we have seen, there will be a time of rest (Ezek. 38:11), one that may be likened to the pastoral scene described in Ezekiel 34:13-15, and also in Jeremiah 23:3-4.

But what we have to realize is that when this is achieved, the LORD (Jesus) will be in the earth preparing his people as the nucleus of the kingdom that is to be restored to Israel (Acts 3:20, 21; Psalm 102:16).

These are the circumstances that must now be formed· a stable situation during which many in the Land will be fed with knowledge and with understanding. But before that teaching commences Christ (the Messiah) will come and gather together his saints. It is not intended to suggest by this that we can identify every step in the Divine programme· we cannot do that of course. But as we look at what is required by the prophetic Scripture, and as we note the trend in which events are leading, we can only conclude that the scene is set for Israel to solve the Palestinian issue so that a period of tranquility may come into being. As to *how* it might be solved, we must simply watch events. But looking past that, and on to the next stage of development in Israel, there are signs that the ground is being prepared for the spiritual education · the ~~feeding~~+· to commence very shortly.

In a tape-recorded address given in July 1967 this preparation for instruction was seen as a necessary preliminary to the coming of the King. Basing his remarks on a consideration of several prophecies, the late Graham Pearce said that there must be a preparation of those in the Land:

They will need to have been brought along the road of increasing faith for quite a time, from the present position that they are in. I am speaking now only of those who are in the Land, therefore before Armageddon there will be a developing of Israel's faith, and a degree of obedience· not completely so· in the things of God. Just to direct your attention to Ezekiel 36 which deals with the softening of Israel's heart, (it) comes *before* (chapter) 38· as though that is something going on under the work of the good shepherds already...+

Those words were spoken almost 40 years ago! And today we are seeing signs of it happening *on the mountains of Israel*. Several past issues of *The Bible Magazine* have drawn attention to this, as have recent prophecy days and talks in Australia and New Zealand where we spoke of *Israel's* New Zionists. Recent visits to Israel, and especially to Judea and Samaria (the West Bank), have equipped us with some awareness of the situation there- a situation that is not reported in the main-stream media, or if it is mentioned it is heavily prejudiced against the Bible (Old Testament) culture that is now emerging there. The picture of Israel that many have, is that of an atheistic, humanistic and unbelieving society that has no interest in the things of God. That certainly has been the case, but today things are changing- and especially among the rising generation. In a section of the population there is something akin to a reformation taking place, and that has great meaning for us- it tells us where we are in the Divine programme.

### ***Seeking the LORD***

In Hosea chapter 3 there is a prophecy about Israel's long period of captivity and isolation: *For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim:* (Verse 4).

That has been the situation for some 2,000 years. But the next verse goes on to say: *Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days* (Verse 5).

Here are three distinct steps: *first* the return, *secondly* a seeking phase, and *thirdly* they shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days. The seeking phase is what we are beginning to witness now. There are prayer rallies, sometimes attended by thousands.

There is a belief in the Tanakh (Old Testament) and a genuine attempt on the part of some individuals to try and understand its meaning, quite independently. Some prominent beliefs found among these Jewish people include recognition of many prophecies relating to the Return. There are groups who would like to see the Torah (Law of Moses) as the basis of Israeli law and action. *Manhigut Yehudit* for example. Many- especially young people- look for the coming of Moshiach ben David, for the building of the third temple *with the throne of David in the midst*. There is an expectation that Eliyahu (Elijah) will come prior to Messiah himself. Ideas are often hazy, but we can clearly see the picture that is forming. It is a picture into which the idea of a Palestinian State just does not fit. So there has to be a solution to it. Israel must somehow overcome the Palestinian menace- and all the signs are that it must happen soon.

This does not mean that the deep hostility of the Arab world· and of the world at large· will be eliminated. By no means. That will continue and will increase as events move to the Armageddon show-down and to the settling of the %controversy of Zion.+What we might expect is a circumstance in which the nations have no choice but to tolerate and accept *for the time being* the developing Zionist State together with its new religious inclinations.

Strategic considerations, trade and other international circumstances could mean that there will be no alternative. While Gog and company are turned back (Ezekiel 38:4), we can anticipate that religious Zionism in the Land will flourish. It is this development of true Zionism that will antagonize the world· and especially the Catholic world. As this happens the youth of Israel will go forth singing: %This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory?... +

Who is he indeed? %Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke...?+(Song 3:6).

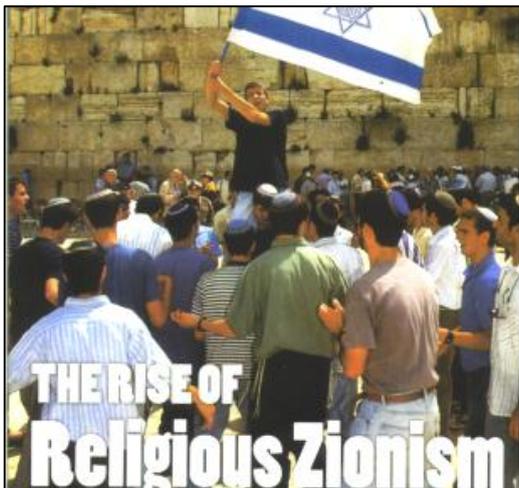
%Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?...+(Song 8:5).

%Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel...?+(Isa. 63:1).

%Who is this that forgiveth sins also?+(Luke 7:49).

%Who is this Son of man?+(John 12:34).

When these questions are asked in the near future the Palestinian question will be history. Hamas will be about as relevant as Hitler, and the great King of glory shall come in.



***“Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king...”***  
***(Hosea chapter 3:5).***

***Young Jewish men and women during a gathering of young people. Rising generations of Israeli youth are turning to the God of their forefathers.***

## ISRAEL-ARAB BREAKTHROUGH 1979

Egypt's President Sadat breaks ranks with other Arab nations, signing a peace treaty with Israel in 1979. This was a recognition of the new reality in the Middle East- Israel's existence! Events have continued in the same direction ever since. The break-through amazed the world, but it took until 1994 for Jordan to follow Egypt's lead.



While it seems a long time in human terms, the trend of events is clear. Arab nations now have to tolerate the new reality whether they like it or not. This is the pattern that we must expect, a reluctant acceptance of Israel's existence as the purpose of God is brought slowly to fulfillment.

The swelling safely+ that we read about in Ezekiel chapter 38 will be of this type. Nations will work with Israel just as the Vatican does now. Not out of choice, but because it serves their purpose for the time being.



**“We can only conclude that the scene is set for Israel to solve the Palestinian issue so that a period of tranquility may come into being”**

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