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# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

**Deut.30:1-3**  
**Lesson #15**  
**The Promised Land**  
**04/14/2019**

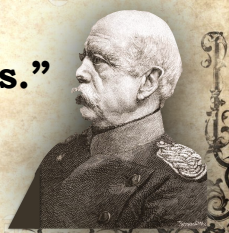
## *How to read the Old Testament*

### Is Palestine still the “promised land”?




There is a famous story in which the Kaiser asks Bismarck, “Can you prove the existence of God?” Bismarck replies, **“The Jews, your majesty. The Jews.”**

Otto Von Bismarck



### *Why does the USA support Israel?*

- The American **media** has been generally pro-Israel, but not for religious reasons.
- It is a friendly democratic and military **stronghold** in the middle east.
- The Jewish **lobby** in Washington is very active and powerful.

It is shocking that the most powerful lobby in America’s congress is in the service of a foreign nation - Israel.



### *Why does the USA support Israel?*

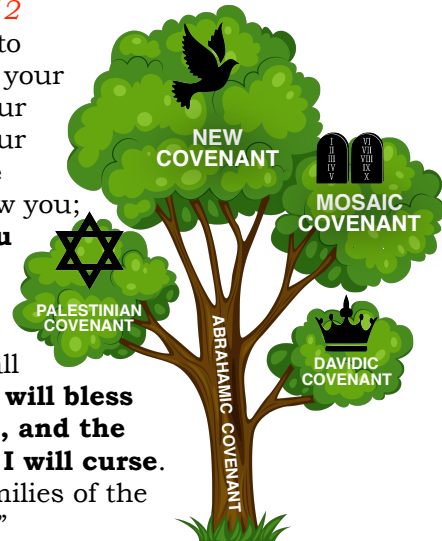
- The American **media** has been generally pro-Israel, but not for religious reasons.
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- Many evangelicals support Israel for **religious** reasons.

*Genesis 12*

“1 Now the Lord said to Abram, go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to **the land** which I will show you; 2 and **I will make you a great nation**, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; 3 and **I will bless those who bless you**, and **the one who curses you I will curse**. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”



“The Jews will continue to exist until the world comes to an end because God’s hand is on them for a key role in end times prophecy.”

Arnold Fruchtenbaum



## Evangelical Attitudes Toward the Creation of the State of Israel in 1948

Events were fulfillments of Bible prophecy that show we are getting closer to the return of Jesus Christ.

80%

20%

Events were important geopolitical events, but they were not the fulfillment of biblical prophecy.



Dec. 2017 LifeWay Research

## Christians in support of Zionism believe -

### 1. Prophecy is being fulfilled.

The Prophets spoke of Israel’s future regathering in the land of Palestine.

*Amos 9:14*

“I will also plant them on their land, and they will not again be rooted out from their land which I have given them,” Says the Lord your God.”  
(Deut.28,30, Ezek.36)

“What kick-starts the end times into motion is Israel’s political boundaries being reestablished to what God promised the Israelites according to the Bible.”

Pastor Nate Pyle  
(Newsweek Jan. 2018)



## Christians in support of Zionism believe -

### 2. A blessing is promised to all who support Israel.

*Genesis 12:3, 27:29*

“And I will **bless** them that bless you, and **curse** him that curse you:”

*Matthew 25:40*

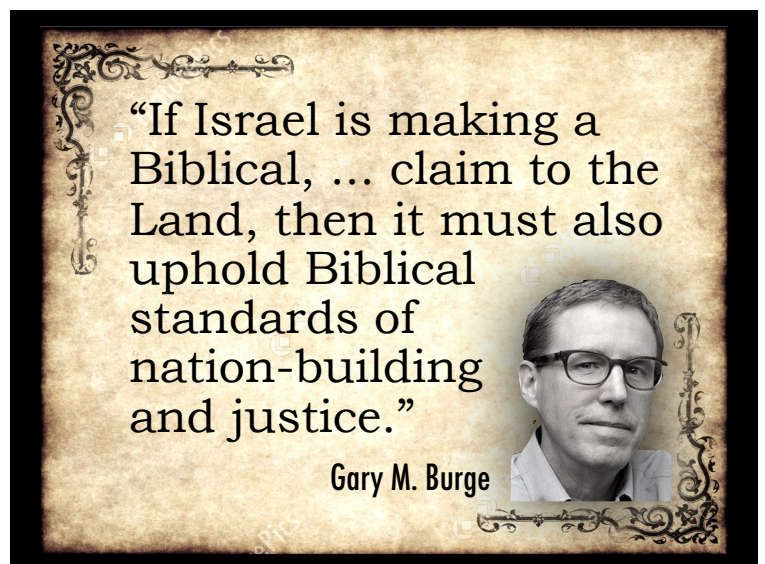
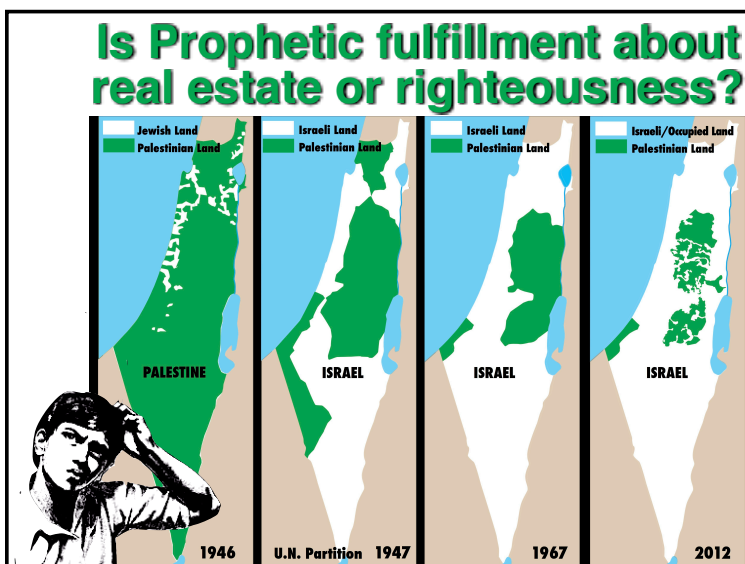
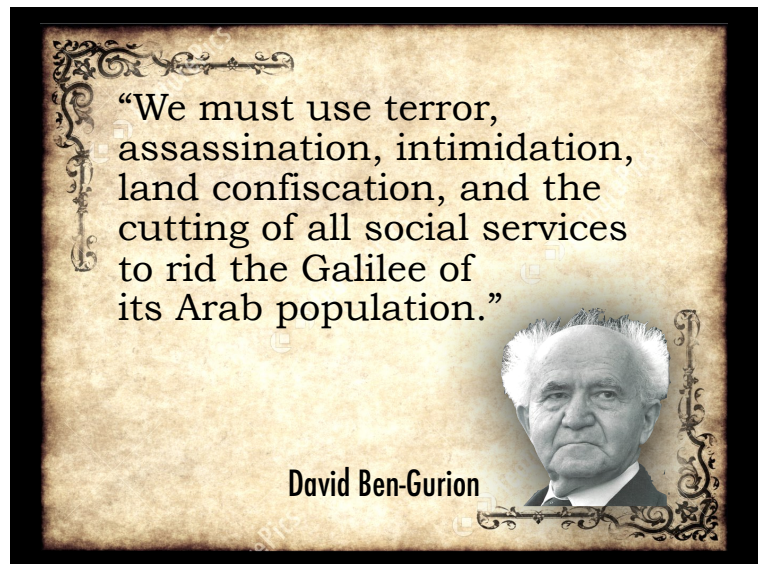
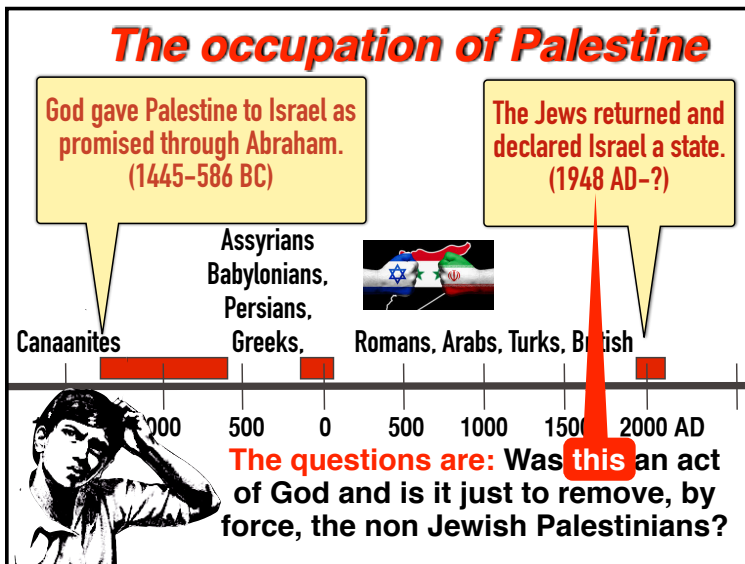
“Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these **my brethren**, you have done it unto me.”

- They believe (my brethren) refers to Israel.

## Bereans need to check it out.

- Is Palestine still **Israel’s promised land**?
- Does Israel have a **Divine right to occupy the land of Palestine** today?
- Does following Christ include an **obligation to stand with Israel** in the present Palestinian conflict?
- Are those who support Israel, in its struggle to occupy Palestine, under a **divine blessing (or curse)**?





## This raises questions about the Palestinian promises?

- Do they apply to **physical Israel with Palestine** as its “promised land”?
- Or do they apply to **people of faith** (remnant of Israel) and Gentiles from all nations with a “promised land of rest” that is not material?
- Why do the Epistles say nothing about:



- ✓ Material blessings as an **inheritance**
- ✓ Mosaic Law as a “**binding covenant**”
- ✓ Body of Christ as **ethnic Judaism**
- ✓ Palestine as the “**promised land**”

## Bereans must consider:

1. Does Jesus claim to be the **fulfillment** of the New Covenant prophecies?

*1 Corinthians 11:25*

“This cup is the new covenant in **My blood**; do this, as often as you drink it, in **remembrance of Me.**”

2. Are the promises to Abraham’s descendants based on **faith** or law?

*Romans 4:13*

“For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but **through the righteousness of faith.**”

Promised blessing to Abraham Genesis 12:1-3

**through the Law**



**To Jews only**

God’s Glorious Kingdom  
**Law - Land - Leader**  
**Justice and Peace**  
World dominion



Christ (Messiah)  
has only an  
instrumental role in the  
restoration to national  
Israel her kingdom.

Promised blessing to Abraham  
Galatians 3-4

**through Christ**



**To all who are of faith**



**To all who are of faith**

Christ is **the central issue**. He is not just a herald for restoration to the Law and Land.

### 3. Is **Jesus** the new and true Israel of God?

*Exodus 4:22*

“Then you shall say to Pharaoh, Thus says the Lord, “**Israel is My son, My firstborn.**” ”

*Hosea 11:1*

“When **Israel** was a youth I loved him, and out of Egypt I called **My son.**”

*Colossians 1:15*

“And **He (Jesus)** is the image of the invisible God, the **first-born of all creation.** ”

*Matthew 2:15*

“This was to **fulfill . . .**  
“*Out of Egypt I called **My Son.**”*”

*Ephesians 2*

“<sup>13</sup> But now **in Christ Jesus** you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.  
<sup>14</sup> For **he himself is our peace,**”



**Israel**  
Law, Land, Leader

**Jesus**  
Spirit, Heaven, Lord

?



The object of the  
Abrahamic Promises

4. Is the Body of Christ one new and distinct entity **displacing** national Israel?

*Romans 9*

“6 . . . **they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel**; 7 neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants,”

*Ephesians 2:15*

“that in Himself He might make the two into **one new man**, thus establishing peace,”

*Galatians 3*

“28 **There is neither Jew nor Greek**, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.”

5. Has the New Covenant **displaced** the old cov.?

*Hebrews 8*

“7 For if that first covenant had been **faultless**, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. 8 For finding fault with them, He says, “Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, When I will effect a **new covenant** With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; 9 **not like the covenant which I made with their fathers** on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt;”

6. Is the New Covenant a distinct & **better covenant**?

*Hebrews 7:22*

“so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a **better covenant**.”

7. Has the New Covenant brought a change in law with **better promises**?

*Hebrews 8*

“6 . . . He is also the mediator of a **better covenant**, which has been enacted on **better promises**. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.”

8. Is the land of rest (Palestine) a **type of the true rest** that comes with faith in Christ?

*Hebrews 4*

“4:3 For we who have **believed enter that rest**, 8 For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken **of another day** after that. 9 So there **remains a Sabbath rest** for the people of God.”

9. Do **faith and justice** precede fulfillment of restoration to the promised land.

*Deuteronomy 30:1-3*

“So it shall be **when** you return to the Lord your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, **then** the Lord your God will restore you captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you.”

Has Israel returned to her God yet?

10. By supporting Israel (unconditionally) are we possibly **resisting the work of God**?



• Jesus pronounced a **curse** on disbelieving Israel -

*Luke 14:35*

“Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you will not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!*’”

• Jesus moved the emphasis from the Law, Israel and Palestine to **himself, the World, and the Kingdom**.

• The present return of the Jews **was not in response to Israel's reception of Christ** but has led to the persecution of Jesus' followers.

• The Kingdom has to do with values - faith, justice, peace, and grace **more than zionism**.

11. Was the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost on national Israel or the **community of faith (both Jew and Gentile)**?

*Ezekiel 36*

“<sup>24</sup>For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. . . . <sup>26</sup>Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup>**I will put My Spirit within you** and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.”

**NOTE:** This passage is NOT cited, as one might expect, in Luke’s explanation of Pentecost.

**Why do so many evangelicals seem to ignore these observations?**

- They **read the O.T. promises literally** rather than literarily, theologically, spiritually, etc.

“Dispensationalism holds that God is faithful to keep His promises to the Jewish people... Dispensationalism takes the Bible literally unless the text indicates otherwise.”

Arnold Fruchtenbaum



**Why do so many evangelicals seem to ignore these observations?**

- They **read the O.T. promises literally** rather than literarily, theologically, spiritually, etc.
- There is no doubt that the O.T. description of the promises and their fulfillment are about the **Law, the Land, and the material / temporal blessings**. (Ezek.36)

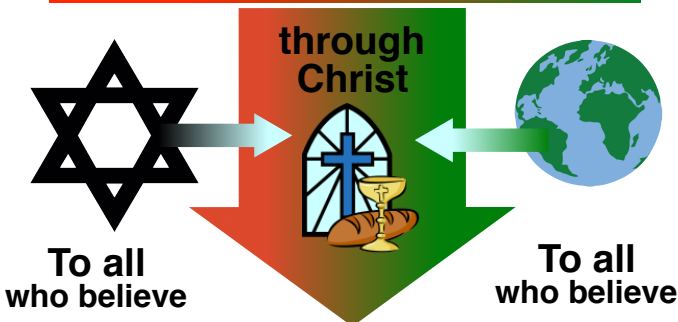
**This brings with it some unique challenges (in addition to the N.T. commentary on the O.T.).**

- It is also clear that in the O.T. promises about “millennial” kingdom there will be a **restoration of animal sacrifices as the Law is restored** (Isa.56:6-8, Zech.14:16, Jer.33:15-18).

**So how should Christians respond to present day Israel?**

- Be a Berean - **take a careful look at the way the Apostles interpreted the O.T. prophecies of Israel**.
- Promote **Kingdom values** (peace, justice, grace, etc.) and a universal Gospel with no national or ethnic favoritism.
- Recognize that prophetic restoration **starts with spiritual renewal** not military / political power.
- Consider if indeed we are resisting God in His continued discipline of the nation Israel **when we blindly support present Israeli policy in the Mideast**.
- Acknowledge and **repent of joining the world in discriminating against Jewish people** in past history.

Promised blessing to Abraham  
Galatians 3-4



Is Israel’s promised land awaiting them at the foot of the Cross?

Is the way we treat Israel a sign of the way we treat God?

**Yes, but only if we see Jesus as the new Israel.**

