

ISRAEL, ISLAM, AND THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Psalm 24:1

The earth *is* the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

What the **BIBLE SAYS** concerning the events in the Middle East past, present, and future

Key points for this study

1. This study is **NOT** about our feelings toward Jews or Arabs. It is **NOT** about being pro-Israeli or pro-Arab or the anti of either.
2. It is **NOT** about our opinions, preferences, or desires concerning Jews, Arabs, or the land of Israel.
3. This study is all about submitting to God's **WILL**. His will is found in His Word. This study is about, "**What the Bible says**" concerning the events in the Middle East yesterday, today, and tomorrow. This study is all about what you will "**DO**" as a result of learning what the Bible says.
4. The Bible is our final authority in all matters. It is perfectly true, perfectly accurate, and perfectly preserved!

INTRODUCTION

The world which we live in today is very unstable, both geopolitically and economically. This **UNSTABLE** environment breeds hostility and turmoil among nations and their ethnic people groups. No other geographic location on earth is more volatile than the **MIDDLE EAST**. The center of this turmoil is Israel and its spiritual capital, Jerusalem. No other place in the world is as controversial as this small piece of real estate.

Many explanations are given by secular scholars and media as to **WHY** this area is so troublesome. On the surface these rationalizations seem reasonable. However, when you consider all the other larger more populous regions on the planet, one must wonder, why is so much attention continuously focused on this **SMALL**, minute place? There is trouble everywhere, but nowhere else receives the attention that **ISRAEL** receives. Israel and Jerusalem are of more concern to the people of the world than any other place... why? Throughout civilized history, no **HUMAN** politicking has ever been able to resolve the intricacies associated with this land and it's people ... why?

Our series Israel / Islam / The Middle East Crisis will attempt to **ANSWER** this and other like questions. Our standard reference guide will be the Holy Bible and the simple facts of documented history. As a local New Testament Church we will seek out what the Bible says concerning this intriguing and ongoing issue.

Remember our key points for this study (page 1)

During this study we will plumb the depths of the **WORD** of **GOD** and learn what our Lord's plans and purposes are for the area of property we call Israel and the Middle East.

Isaiah 45:18-19 -

Psalm 24:1 -

I. Israel

A. The People - (Generally known as "**JEWS**" or "**HEBREWS**")

1. Their ethnicity

- The word "Hebrew" - It means to "cross over". To pass over. From the other side. Likely the Canaanites called Abraham Hebrew because he "crossed over" the Euphrates river to get to Canaan or what we now call Israel. (Gen 14:13; Joshua 24:2)
- The term "Jew" - From the name "Judah", one of Jacob's 12 sons. Possibly from the Hebrew term which means "People of God".
- The word "Semite" - Comes from the name "Shem", one of the three sons of Noah. The term is applicable to all Asians, Arabs, and Jews though primarily refers to Jews. (Semitic or anti-Semitic)

- What is a Zionist - While it is negatively used by Arabs, a Zionist is a person who supports Zionism. Zionism is a movement that began in the late 1800's to establish a Jewish State in the Middle East which now seeks to help maintain and develop the State of Israel. (Palestinians say Zionist are settlers who have invaded their land)
- Jewish populations - Israel= 7 million. Worldwide= 15-16 million. US has second largest population at 6-7 million.
- What or who is a Jew ?

2. Their Religion

- What do Hebrews believe? (Conservative or Orthodox Hebrews)

NOTE: 30% are atheists; a larger percent are into New Age or Eastern religions; most do not care)

- God **EXISTS**
- God is one and unique
- God is incorporeal (spiritual; not seen)
- God is **ETERNAL**
- Prayer is to be directed to God alone and to **NO** other
- The words of the prophets are **TRUE**
- Moses' prophecies are true, and Moses was the **GREATEST** of the prophets
- The written Torah (the first FIVE books of the Bible) and Oral Torah (teachings now contained in the Talmud and other writings) were given to Moses
- There will be **NO** other Torah
- God knows the thoughts and deeds of men
- God will reward the good and punish the wicked
- The Messiah will **COME**
- The **DEAD** will be resurrected (except Sadducees which likely to not exist anymore)

3. Their History

- The Hebrew's trace their lineage back through the **OLD** Testament beginning with the Bible character, Abram (later named Abraham). Although Abram was originally a heathen idolater from the land of Ur, he is considered the "**FATHER**" of the Hebrew race - Lk. 1:68-73; John 8:51-56; Acts 7:2; Ro. 4:12
- God made certain "key" **PROMISES** to Abraham - Genesis 12:1-7; 13:14-17; 15:1-5, 7; 17:1-21

- A **PEOPLE** (a heritage) Note: They would ultimately bless the world's population
- A **LAND** (a kingdom) Note: THIS IS WHERE WE GET "THE PROMISED LAND"

KEY POINT: Abraham BELIEVED what God said - Genesis 15:6; Ro. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23

- This is what God wants from all of us! It is how we enter into a relationship with Him. It is how we live by faith after salvation.
- Abraham had a son to fulfill God's promise - Genesis 21:1-5
 - His name: **ISAAC**
- Abraham's son Isaac had a son - Genesis 25:19-26, 27-34
 - His name: **JACOB** (Isaac would have twins: Esau and Jacob)
 - Although God would have worked things out, Jacob (and his mother Rebekah) gained the birthright by means of deceit - Gen 27:15-29
 - His name "Jacob" was called "**ISRAEL**" - Genesis 32:28; 35:10
 - Jacob means "supplanter...one who takes over."
 - Israel means "God prevails (over)"
 - Jacob (Israel) had **TWELVE** sons - Genesis 35: 23-26
 - These twelve sons (more or less) became the twelve tribes of , what would become ... the **NATION** of Israel - Genesis 49:28

KEY POINT: This is the literal beginning of their Nation.

4. Their Messiah (God's choice. The Chosen One)

- It would be through Israel's (Jacob) son "**JUDAH**" and his lineage, that God would bring the King of Israel - Genesis 49:8-12; Lk. 3:23, 33-34; Mt. 1:1-2
- This King (the anointed one, from the seed of Abraham) will not only rule Israel, but also the entire earth - Is. 9:6-7; Jer. 23:5-6
- This King is **JESUS** - Mt. 1:1-17
 - He first PAID the price for all our **SINS** (crucified, dead, buried, arose on third day) ascended to heaven - 1 Co. 15:1-4; Acts 1:9

- He will come again in the future to establish His physical Kingdom by FORCE - Mt. 1:21-23; Lk. 1:31-33, 68-75; 2 Thess 1:7-10; Rev 19:11-16

Important Note: On that day, the Bible says, the Hebrews will be back in the land promised by God to their “father” Abraham (after being scattered throughout the earth for almost 2,000 years) - Is. 11:10-11; Lk. 21:24

God's original plan for the Jews, from the time He spoke to Abraham, was that they would be a **BLESSING** to all the nations and people of the world (Genesis 12:2; 18:18). They were to be a sort of “lighthouse” to shine forth the glory of the one true God. As of yet they have not fulfilled His plan ... they have NOT been faithful to fulfill this purpose.

However, God keeps His promises. After approximately 3900 years (from the time of Abram) there still **EXISTS** a people to fulfill God's original promise to Abraham... these people are obviously the Jews. Although the physical promise has not yet come to its full fruition, the stage is set because ... the people exist as a nation today! (2 Chron 36:23 – God's last words in a Jewish Bible!)

God does indeed keep His promises:

- God is not a man, that he should lie... Numbers 23:19
- And also the Strength of Israel will not lie ... 1 Samuel 15:29
- That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie... Hebrews 6:18
- In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; Tit 1:2