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Jewish People

# The foundational reasons behind the conflict in the land of (Eretz) Israel.

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By Kelvin Crombie

(Revised and updated)



## Introduction

The current crisis in the land of Israel affects us all in different ways. Most of us in the West are shocked and even traumatised by the evil and brutality which occurred on 7 October 2023, which can only be described as a demonically inspired massacre. Sadly, others have seized upon this act of pure brutality and made it a convenient platform in which to expound anti-Jewish and anti-Israel sentiment. As Israel endeavours to destroy the perpetrators of this heinous act of brutality and cowardice, such anti-Semitic and anti-Israel sentiment is bound to escalate.

I have personally witnessed numerous times over the last forty-plus years just how quickly the world forgets the atrocity and murder of Israelis which precipitates an expected response and then focusses solely upon Israel's response. This dynamic is even more significant when many ordinary people, in the Church and out, seemingly pay little attention to terrible acts of violence throughout the Islamic and Arab-speaking world yet get very agitated and opinionated when it comes to perceived and actual Israeli violence against the 'Palestinians.' This is not negating the fact that many innocent Arabic-speaking people in Gaza, Judea and Samaria do suffer and are caught up in the conflict. However there is most definitely an imbalance in people's attitudes and responses, fed by the often-erroneous media reporting. Why is this so?

But more importantly why did this cowardly act of barbarism occur in the first place, and why has it so quickly escalated into an anti-Jewish and anti-Israel worldwide crusade? We must keep in mind that much of this anti-Jewish and anti-Israel sentiment was already evident before Israel began its military offensive against Gaza. The main purpose of this paper is not to analyse the events of 7 October and the subsequent response of the Israeli government, as there are numerous other avenues covering these aspects, but to hopefully provide some broader background and context to the current crisis.

The Middle East situation is neither simple nor straightforward. It is composed of many layers and is therefore quite complex and complicated and cannot be even remotely understood unless one looks at these different layers. Some of these layers stretch back thousands of years, while some are more recent in time. But all these layers are connected. The very foundational layer relates to the cosmic battle between Almighty God and the adversary, named Satan, Lucifer or the devil, between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness.

This brief analysis by no means covers all such layers, nor does it pretend to cover all aspects of those layers. Hopefully though it might provide some comprehension to this dynamic, a dynamic which affects every person in the entire world.

## **Explanations of terminology**

Several basic explanations for my terminology will be necessary. I will invariably use the term the land of Israel, the term used in the New Testament. (See Matthew 2: 22-23.) This is the translation for the biblical term *Eretz* Israel. The land of Israel encompasses the regions of the present-day State of Israel, Gaza (under the control of Hamas at the time of writing) and Judea and Samaria (much of which is governed by the Palestinian Authority – PA.) The term ‘West Bank’ is a relatively modern term for the region of biblical Judea and Samaria and is politically loaded. The term refers to the period when Jordan illegally annexed that region, and it originally referred to the west bank of the Jordan River, meaning the west side of the nation of Jordan.

Most Arabic-speaking people and especially Christians within the land of Israel most likely did not originate from Arabia when the Islamic armies from there invaded and ‘illegally’ occupied the land from 638 AD. Strictly speaking, they are not Arabs, although they speak Arabic. In most instances local Arabic-speaking people only began seeing themselves as Palestinians after 1948. During the period of the British Mandate, it was mostly the Jewish people who called themselves Palestinian. The Arabic-speaking peoples were mostly aligned to their family or clan (or Church) rather than to having a national identity.

## **Personal interest**

My personal perspective is shaped by having lived in Israel altogether for some twenty-five years stretching between 1979-2009. While there I was introduced to Jesus; I met and married my wife there and my four children were all born there. For some twenty years I worked at Christ Church in the Old City of Jerusalem, as guide, researcher, author, guest house manager and director of the Heritage Centre.

Although most of my/our interaction was with Israeli people, yet there was considerable interaction with Arabic-speaking people, both Christian and Muslim. For one year I worked with physically handicapped Arabic-speaking and Jewish young adults and did all that is required in such a capacity. For three years in the mid-1980s I/we lived in what was then a totally Muslim village, Silwan (the City of David); while many of my work colleagues and staff in several work

situations were Arabic-speaking people. Just as in any part of the world, there are pleasant and unpleasant Israelis and there are pleasant and unpleasant Arabic-speaking peoples.

In the years before the first *Intifada* (an uprising of violence against Israel inspired by the Arab leadership), which began in late 1987, I visited Gaza on numerous occasions, and even spent time walking through the refugee camps. Back then they were overcrowded and not at all pleasant places to visit, let alone to live in.

Then from 1988 I began conducting *In the Steps of the Light Horse* tours from Jerusalem down to the area near Gaza and then onto Beersheba. The Australian Light Horse and New Zealand Mounted Rifles were infantry on horseback, part of the Anzac Mounted Division, who played an important role in the British-led campaign to liberate the land of Israel from Muslim-Turkish occupation between 1916-1918.<sup>1</sup> The region near Gaza was particularly significant as this is where the Anzac Memorial is located. As a result of conducting dozens of such tours I became quite familiar with much of the territory which was to become well known on 7 October 2023.

### **The broader spiritual dynamics behind the conflict**

As a born-again follower of Jesus (John 3:1-17) I became somewhat aware of many of the spiritual dynamics associated with the Jewish people, Jerusalem, Islam and the land of Israel, and because I was in covenant union with Jesus, of the principles of covenant.

What unfolded on Saturday 7 October can never be understood at the physical level. It is a spiritual conflict at the highest level. Unless there is some comprehension of these spiritual dynamics then it is well-nigh impossible to comprehend the conflict on the ground. Paul, Moses and Jeremiah summarized the matters at hand:

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6: 12.)

Then the LORD God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6: 5.)

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; Who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9.)

There is a spiritual conflict of the highest order over the land of Israel. This battle is over the accomplishment of the purposes of Almighty God for worldwide redemption and the attempts by God's adversary to hinder and thwart the accomplishment of this grand plan of redemption. Central within this plan are the dual themes of covenant and the heart of humankind.

### **Why is man's heart prone to deceit and evil?**

The foundation of the conflict in the land of Israel and of the very essence of evil as it affected humankind began in the Garden of Eden. There Almighty God created Adam and then Hava (Eve) and enjoyed a personal relationship with them and there was total peace and harmony. Such a relationship was based upon trust and obedience. Almighty God gave them just one commandment to obey, but also gave them the gift of free will, to choose for themselves how they were to live. Disobedience, though, would result in the breaking of that relationship of trust – and the penalty for this disobedience would be separation from Almighty God and death. (Genesis 2:17.)

But there is an adversary, a fallen angel named Satan or Lucifer and often mentioned in the Scriptures as the devil, one who opposes God's plans and purposes for humankind. The characteristics of the adversary are perhaps best summarized by the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 14: 12-13) who described Lucifer as a usurper, desiring to exalt himself and 'unseat' Almighty God. Jesus said that the devil was a 'murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him.' (John 8: 44.)

Although the text in Genesis does not specifically say so, yet Satan operated through the serpent and craftily and deceitfully enticed Hava (Eve) and then Adam into disobeying Almighty God. That close relationship was now broken, and the penalty of death was legally and rightfully imposed. This separation and penalty of death thereupon came upon all the descendants of Adam and Hava (Eve), all of humanity, as we are ALL 'in Adam.' (Romans 5: 12-17.)

Almighty God though greatly desires for communion with humankind, so He set in motion a plan to restore this personal relationship. This plan of redemption revolved around a coming seed of the woman who would crush the head of the serpent – that is Satan. (Genesis 3: 15.) From the very outset Satan has endeavoured to thwart God's plan of redemption.

The consequences of Adam and Hava's act of disobedience to God's spoken word was that the spiritual nature of Satan took authority over them. The authority given to Adam (and Hava) to govern as God's regents was usurped and

they were now subject to another kingdom – the kingdom of darkness. Peace and harmony were now lost. The nature of this new authority was evidenced when Cain, the son of Adam and Hava (Eve), murdered his brother Abel. Matters thereafter spiralled out of control, as Moses stated: ‘Then the LORD God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.’ (Genesis 6: 5.)

### **The plan of redemption worked out through the institution of covenant**

Almighty God’s great plan of redemption would be worked out through the institution or avenue of covenant, which is a legal agreement between two parties, in this instance between God and representative men. There are some very important principles involved in the institution of covenant. One of these is that the destinies of the two parties entering into such an agreement are then united, they become as one. If one group or party is attacked or violated, then so too is the other group or party.

Additionally, they are committed to the welfare of each other (as in a marriage covenant). Invariably the stronger party or group has a responsibility of caring for the weaker party. The stronger party would also invariably give certain stipulations undergirding the relationship. If these conditions were obeyed there would be peace and harmony, but if they were disobeyed there would be dire consequences – as was evident in the Garden.

Covenants were then formally instituted with the killing of an animal and shedding of its blood, whereupon representatives of the two parties would walk between the two halves of the animal, upon the spilled blood. By so doing they were making a pledge, swearing an oath, to uphold the conditions of the said agreement. This in the Bible is termed ‘cutting of the covenant.’

Without a basic understanding of the principles of covenant it is very difficult to understand God’s plan of redemption as it entails the ensuring history of Israel and an individual’s status once they enter covenant union with Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

### **God’s covenants with Israel**

Almighty God called Abram (Abraham) to be a representative man and gave him a number of promises, especially:

- A land, the land of Canaan, which became the land of Israel.
- A people, the descendants of Abraham, his son Isaac and grandson Jacob, the people of Israel, known also as the Jewish people.

- That all people groups and nations would be blessed through Abraham, that is through the promised individual seed who would come from Abraham.
- That those who blessed (supported) Abraham (and his descendants who inherited the covenant promises) would be blessed; while those who cursed (opposed) Abraham and his descendants of promise, would be cursed. (Genesis 12: 1-3.)

These promises were conditional upon Abram obeying Almighty God and leaving his own land and going to the land of Canaan – which he did. Then while in Canaan he wanted confirmation from Almighty God that these promises would indeed be fulfilled. In Genesis 15 God says to him: “I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it.” (Genesis 15:7.) To this incredible promise and statement, Abraham retorted: “LORD God, how shall I know that I will inherit it?” (Genesis 15: 8.) This is an amazing response – Abraham is questioning the integrity and word of Almighty God!

Yet God did not rebuke Abraham. Instead, He gave him the most tangible proof known in the ancient world to reveal the integrity of His word – He cut a covenant. What is interesting to note here is that God in the form of a ‘smoking oven and a burning torch’ went between the pieces, while Abram did not. God was Himself swearing an oath to fulfil the conditions of this covenant! (See Genesis 15.)

What is equally interesting is that God cut the covenant to confirm His promise *concerning the land* – although we know from the broader context of Scripture that all those other wonderful promises, including that the Gentiles would be blessed, were included in the cutting and sealing of this covenant with Abraham.

The land of Israel therefore is important, not because it is holier than any other land, but because God’s redemptive plans are to be instituted and fulfilled in this land of covenant promise. Is it any wonder then that there is a cosmic conflict over this land. Incidentally no-one is to worship the land of Israel or be proud because the land is part of their inheritance. Such acts are a form of idolatry. God **covenanted** the land to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob so that His redemptive plans for the entire world can be consummated. Conversely no-one else is to **covet** possession and ownership of the land. (It should be noted that God has not covenanted any other portion of His world to any other people group.)

When God’s redemptive plans are fully consummated, when God and humankind are again reconciled with each other, then Satan will be banished from

interfering in the affairs of humankind. Additionally, all those human emissaries who are empowered by Satan and who drive various ideologies and worldviews which are opposed to God's plan of redemption will be disempowered.

The covenant promises given to Abraham were transferred to Abraham's son of promise Isaac and not to his eldest son, Ishmael. They were then transferred to Isaac's son Jacob and not to Esau. These three patriarchs all lived in or near Beersheba and were all buried in the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron.

One could well understand if the older brothers, Ishmael and Esau, felt somewhat rejected and bypassed when Almighty God sovereignly chose the younger brothers, Isaac and Jacob, to be the custodians of these covenant promises. Family rivalry and jealousy was a real possibility and there was often enmity between the descendants of Isaac and Jacob on one side and the descendants of Ishmael and Esau on the other.

There was also family jealousy among Jacob's sons, with Joseph being sold by his brothers into slavery and being sent to Egypt. But then providence intervened and due to famine in the land of Israel, those very same brothers went to Egypt, where they had an amazing reconciliation with their estranged and rejected brother Joseph. Then Jacob (also named Israel) and his entire family moved to Egypt because of famine. The children of Israel lived there for four hundred years, where they were mostly in bondage to Pharaoh. In such a position how was God's plan of redemption ever to be fulfilled in the land of covenant promise?

Then at one point the people cried out from under their bondage. Moses, who God raised up to be a representative Israelite, wrote: 'So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob.' (Exodus 2: 24.) God redeemed or delivered the people of Israel from under slavery, a deliverance known as the Exodus. Redemption from slavery was due to the obedience of the people to remain in their homes, kill an innocent and unblemished lamb, and paint its blood on the doors and windows for protection. This national redemption is remembered each year at *Pesach* (Passover).

Through Moses a separate covenant was 'cut' and God's Kingdom Constitution (His law or *Torah*) was given to Israel, a time synonymous with the feast of *Shavuot* (Weeks). There would be blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience of the associated commandments in what is often referred to as the Sinai-Mosaic Covenant. A relationship of sorts was now possible with Almighty God, through:

- A repentant heart.
- The blood of an animal sacrifice.
- The mediation of an officiating priest from the family of Levi.

The purpose of Israel as a nation was that it would reveal the character and knowledge of Almighty God to the world and would be the conduit through which the seed of the woman, the redeemer, the second Adam, would come.

The only way that there could be a complete restoration of relationship between Almighty God and humankind, would be if the penalty of death imposed upon Adam and all those 'in Adam', was legally rescinded or overturned. This could only happen if a totally pure and unblemished human (not a lamb) would willingly take that penalty in place of us, as we are all 'in Adam.' As no human being can be pure and unblemished, then only God Himself could fulfil this legal requirement and become at the same time a representative human. Such an event would require a mighty miracle.

The forthcoming representative Israelite who would be the individual seed of Abraham would come through the family of David (from the tribe of Judah), with whom Almighty God also cut a covenant. (1 Samuel 16: Psalm 89: 3-4.) David, who was a representative Israelite, became the arch-type of the coming redeemer, known in Jewish terms as Messiah.<sup>3</sup> It was King David who made Jerusalem the national and spiritual capital of the nation of Israel, while his son Solomon later built a magnificent Temple there. Jerusalem was dedicated to the worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and was destined to be the physical location where the plan of redemption would be instituted – and consummated. The choice of Jerusalem was significant, being centrally located in the land of Israel.<sup>4</sup>

After the reign of King Solomon, however, David's kingdom split into two: the kingdom of Israel to the north and the kingdom of Judah to the south, centred upon Jerusalem. Many 'pious' ones from the north, both then and before, moved south, so Judah was representative of all Israel.

The prophet Isaiah foretold that the future redeemer would indeed come from the family of King David (Isaiah 9: 6-7) and who would be as a pure and unblemished lamb (Isaiah 52:13-53:12). The prophet Micah foretold that this person would be born in Bethlehem and whose origins had been from everlasting (Micah 5:2). The prophet Jeremiah wrote that this coming redeemer, or Messiah, would be called by the people 'HASHEM is our righteousness.' (Jeremiah 23: 5-6.)<sup>5</sup> HASHEM means 'The Name', referring to Almighty God.

Jeremiah also foretold that Almighty God would institute, literally cut, a new covenant with the people of Israel, which would not be like the covenant He cut with them when He took them out of Egypt. This new covenant would include a restored relationship, as indicated by the words ‘they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them.’ The term ‘know’ in Hebraic thinking refers also to relationship. This restoration of relationship could happen as Jeremiah stated there would be forgiveness of sin. (Jeremiah 31: 31-34.) This new covenant, Jeremiah continued, would not invalidate God’s ongoing covenant relationship with the nation of Israel. (Jeremiah 31: 35-37.) Such a new covenant would require:

- A representative Israelite.
- A sacrifice in order to be instituted.
- A sacrifice so that sins and iniquity can be forgiven.

### **The first exile and restoration**

The institution of these wonderful promises, however, was short-circuited when the nation of Israel went into exile – the northern kingdom of Israel to Assyria, and the southern kingdom of Judah (which was basically collective Israel) to Babylon.<sup>6</sup> This exile occurred because the nation was disobedient to God’s Kingdom Constitution (*Torah*) as revealed in the Sinai-Mosaic Covenant.

When the people of the northern kingdom of Israel were taken into exile the Assyrians transplanted people from other regions to take over the land. This strategy was obviously a system used in the ancient east and equates to what could be termed imperialism and colonialism in today’s terminology. Similarly, when the people of the southern kingdom of Judah were sent into exile, other peoples from surrounding regions moved into the land of Israel and usurped possession of the land vacated by the exiled Judeans.

But while in exile one person in particular, Daniel, interceded and reminded God of His word and covenant promises. (Daniel 9.) The Persians had defeated the Babylonians and the new Persian king, Cyrus, ultimately permitted the return of a remnant to the land. This restoration from exile meant that in the fullness of time God could send forth His promised seed, the redeemer, to Israel and to institute the new covenant.

This physical restoration from exile occurred within a broader geo-political framework. The land of Israel and Jerusalem were strategically located in the centre of the earth. (Ezekiel 5:5.) As such, they were sandwiched between the large empires of the north (namely the Hittites, Mittites, Assyrians and

Babylonians) and the south (always Egypt.) At that time it was Persia to the north and Egypt to the south. Invariably there were tensions between these superpowers and whoever held control over the land of Israel, the 'land between empires', held the strategic advantage,

It suited the Persians to have a suitable ally in the strategic land of Israel instead of a large garrison force. The people of collective Israel, now known as the Jewish people, suitably fitted this requirement. Additionally, due to its location at the centre of the known world, major trade routes either crossed through or were adjacent to the land. Control of this strategic 'land between empires' was often coveted by the empires. One such major trade route was the *Via Maris*, (The Way of the Sea), which went from Egypt up to Damascus. A major location on this route was Gaza, due to its plentiful water supply and proximity to the coast.

### **Greeks, Hellenism, Hasmoneans and Romans**

During their absence in Babylon other peoples had settled in the land of covenant promise and usurped possession. There were immense challenges, therefore, for the people of Israel to resettle and be secure and the land continued to be a region of conflict even after their return. Then in 332 BC the Greeks under Alexander the Great conquered the land, and in the process they introduced a new culture and religious system - Hellenism. This new worldview was a great cultural challenge for the Jewish people who were endeavouring to reform their religion so they would not succumb again to idolatry and syncretism – which was the main reason they went into exile to Babylon. Some Jewish people though were enticed to adopt this new tempting worldview, while most did not.

At one time the evil Syro-Greek emperor, Antiochus Epiphanes IV, endeavoured to destroy the national identity of the Jewish people. His evil plans were thwarted by a revolt orchestrated by the Hasmoneans (Maccabees) and other conservatives, who ultimately captured Jerusalem and dedicated the Temple which had been desecrated. This victory over the Greeks and their attempt to nullify worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was thereafter remembered each year at *Hanukkah* (John 10: 22-39) and became etched into the minds of all Jewish people.

From circa 165 BC a degree of Jewish autonomy was established in the land of Israel, but then significant rifts began showing up in Jewish society. The people were mostly aligned into two major blocks, one being those more prone to the Greek or western culture and worldview and were mostly associated with the Sadducee Party. The other group was much more conservative and endeavoured

to maintain true worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. These were mostly associated with the Pharisee Party. In time other smaller parties also began to emerge. The differences between the two main groups became so pronounced that it often spilled out into conflict. It was not a peaceful time, and those words of Jeremiah concerning the condition of the human heart were often revealed during this period. The superpowers of the time, Rome and Parthia, were always hovering on the periphery, with Rome ultimately occupying the land in 63 BC.

### **The coming of Jesus and institution of the new covenant**

The constant conflict in the land of Israel did, however, create a deep desire and expectancy among many for the redeemer, the Messiah, to come. It was at this time, about 6 BC during the reign of King Herod, that a baby named *Yeshua ben Yosef* (Jesus the son of Joseph) was born in Bethlehem. The baby was a total miracle, as His mother, Miriam, was a virgin (*betulah*)<sup>7</sup>, as foretold by Isaiah and the Archangel Gabriel. (Isaiah 7: 14; Matthew 1: 18-25; Luke 1: 26-36.) When his parents presented baby *Yeshua* before the LORD at the Temple in Jerusalem, an aged man named Simeon took the baby in his arms and proclaimed:

“For my eyes have seen your salvation,  
Which you have prepared before the face of all peoples,  
A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.”  
(Luke 2: 30-32.)

When of age Jesus became an itinerant rabbi teaching about the Kingdom of Heaven (God). But the main purpose for Jesus coming to earth as the God-incarnate Messiah was to live in perfect obedience to the ‘Constitution’ of the Kingdom of Heaven (God). If He did then He could legally take the penalty of death which had been imposed upon Adam and his descendants – upon humankind.

About the year 27 AD Jesus and His followers visited Jerusalem for the Passover (Pesach). While on the way He told His followers that He would be condemned to die, and that His life would be a ransom for many. (Mark 10:33-34; 45.) Then while eating the Passover meal Jesus took a cup of wine and declared: “This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for you.” (Luke 22:20.) Jesus was alluding to Jeremiah 31.

Then, according to His own words, Jesus was arrested and condemned by many of the Jewish religious leaders of the trumped-up charge of blasphemy. He was then charged by the Roman civil leader, Pontius Pilate, of the trumped-up

charge of treason. Although totally innocent, Jesus was sentenced to die and was subsequently brutally (but willingly) executed on a cross outside the walls of Jerusalem. Above His head were written the words “The King of the Jews’ in Hebrew, Greek and Latin.<sup>8</sup>

While on the cross Jesus said of His persecutors: “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do.” (Luke 23: 34.) Then Jesus also said, “It is finished.” (John 19: 30.) In other words, God’s plan of redemption was completed – a pure and innocent man (akin to a lamb) was dying in place of all of humankind to restore true peace.

In total vindication of His innocence and that He was completely obedient to Almighty God, Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. The death and resurrection of Jesus was the greatest act of love ever witnessed in human history as it revealed the depths that Almighty God was willing to go to restore relationship with humankind and to bring them into personal covenant union with Himself.

Thereafter many Jewish people believed that Jesus was in fact the sacrificial lamb of God (Isaiah 53) and the representative Israelite of the new covenant. They repented, that is, changed their allegiance, from being ‘in Adam’ to entering a covenant union with Jesus. (Jeremiah 31: 31-34; Luke 22: 20.) Not only was the penalty of death over them legally rescinded, but they also received the infilling of the Holy Spirit and the promise of eternal life. (Romans 5: 12-19; Hebrews 9:13-15.)

The coming of the Holy Spirit in power was foretold by Jesus at the time of His ascension. On that occasion His followers asked Him: “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” Jesus responded: “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1: 6-8.)

Jesus did not say that God’s kingdom purposes for Israel had now been negated by His coming, He merely said that God the Father alone knew the ‘times and seasons.’ The task of His followers was now to take the message of what He had accomplished by His death and resurrection out to all nations.

At that point Jesus ascended into heaven in a cloud and His followers gazed steadfastly at His departure. Then, as written in the book of Acts ‘two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you

stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.” (Acts 1: 10-11.)

These Jewish followers of Jesus were immersed in the Scriptures (which at that point was only the *Tanach* or ‘Old Testament’) and knew that Zechariah the prophet had declared of the coming Messiah: ‘And in that day His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives which faces Jerusalem on the east.’ (Zechariah 14: 4.) The hope of the followers of Jesus thereafter was that He would return in like fashion, to the Mount of Olives to the east of Jerusalem.

### **Birth of the ‘Messianic Israel’ movement – ‘ecclesia’ (Church)**

Ten days later during the Jewish feast of Weeks or *Shavuot*, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon Jesus’ followers, and thereafter thousands more were added to the movement of ‘Messianic Israel’. Later Gentiles also willingly accepted this pardon from the death penalty and were also born-again of the Spirit. Many of these Gentiles were introduced to Jesus through Saul, also known as Paul. It was Paul who later wrote to the congregation of Jewish and Gentile followers of Jesus in Rome of the relationship between Gentile Christians and Jewish people who did not yet ‘know’ Jesus as Messiah. Paul’s clear instruction for the Gentile Church was that they were to provoke Israel to jealousy – for their Messiah (Romans 11: 11). He also wrote that ultimately ‘all Israel will be saved.’ (Romans 11: 26.)

But all the nation of Israel did not repent and accept Jesus as their Messiah and sin-bearer (Isaiah 53); they did not personally ‘know’ Him (Jeremiah 31). In fact, most of the leaders openly rejected Him. So, does this mean that God’s word spoken through Jeremiah and Paul is wrong? Does this mean that God has rejected the people with whom He entered covenant? Does this mean that Simeon’s prophecy that Jesus would be the glory of God’s people Israel, was wrong?

Jesus never rejected His own people according to the flesh, but stated of those who persecuted Him: “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do.” (Luke 23:34.) He also had to practice what He preached concerning loving one’s enemies. Jesus knew that His people according to the flesh would ultimately accept Him as their King Messiah when He said, ‘you shall see me no more till you say ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord’. (Matthew 23: 39; Psalm 118: 26.) That time is most likely synonymous to what the prophet Zechariah prophesied: “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on me whom

they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for him as one grieves for his only son, and grieve for him as one grieves for a firstborn.” (Zechariah 12: 10.)

The timing of this incredible reconciliation in Jerusalem (akin to when Joseph was reconciled to his brothers in Egypt), would be somewhat delayed. In 66 AD a revolt broke out against the Romans. By the year 70 AD the Romans had defeated the Jewish people, destroyed both Jerusalem and their Temple and exiled many of the survivors from the land of covenant promise. One survivor, Rabbi ben Zakkai then redeveloped Judaism, so it could survive without a Temple, a priesthood and a sacrificial system. This movement became known as Orthodox or Rabbinic Judaism.

One major building in Jerusalem was not destroyed by the Romans – the Fortress or Citadel, which was left as a symbol of Roman victory and Jewish defeat. Then some years later the Romans renamed Jerusalem, calling it *Aeolia Capitolina* – in honour of the chief deity of the Roman state, *Jupiter Capitolinus*. They even built a temple to Jupiter on the very place where the Temple to worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had once stood. It was most likely this event that provoked another major revolt against the Romans in 132 AD. This Jewish revolt was led by Shimon bar Kockba, who was even endorsed as being the messiah by the great Rabbi Akiva. The Jewish followers of Jesus could not fight under someone whom they believed was a false messiah and as a result they were persecuted and ostracized by many within the Jewish community and were often called *meshummadim* – traitors.

### **The second exile**

During this period the Jewish leaders basically ousted the Jewish followers of Jesus from the community of Israel. The collective attitude towards Jesus and Jewish followers thereafter became progressively more negative. In time Jesus was given the name *Yeshu*, which is an acronym which basically means ‘may his name and memory be blotted out.’ These Jewish followers of Jesus were often badly treated during this period.

By 135 AD the Romans had defeated the Jewish people. They again exiled many of the survivors from the land of Israel (especially from Jerusalem and Judah). Then to further disconnect the Jewish people from their earthly inheritance the Romans renamed the land *Syria Palestina*, or Palestine, in honour of the pagan Philistines! David would have rolled over in his grave!

This exile included the Jewish followers of Jesus – and the *ecclesia* or Church in Jerusalem thereafter became Gentile-led. The broader Church progressively

thereafter became more Gentile-led and in the process lost much of its Jewish character as it mostly erased the Jewish identity of Jesus. Much of this process came following the conversion of Emperor Constantine in 312 AD and especially resulting from the Council of Nicaea (325 AD), which Constantine convened to consolidate the Christian faith throughout the Roman Empire.

As the Christian faith became the official religion of the Roman Empire there was less emphasis given to personal repentance and faith in the finished work of Jesus on the cross. In such a case more than likely many 'members' of the institutional Church were not born-again of the Spirit. (John 3.) Additionally, a wide rift now developed between this new Roman religion of Christianity and the Jewish people and their religion, Judaism.

Emperor Constantine established a new capital for the Roman Empire at Byzantium on the Bosphorus Straits in 330 AD, which was then renamed Constantinople. Today it is Istanbul. In time the Roman Church in the east was centred upon Constantinople, capital of the eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire, while in the west it was based upon Rome, the capital of the western Roman Empire. The representative church of the Byzantine Empire in Jerusalem was the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

It was within this broader dynamic that some unsound teachings were espoused by the leaders (often known as Church Fathers) of the Gentile Church, including:

- That the Jewish people were collectively responsible for the death of Jesus.
- That the Gentile Church inherited all the promises and blessings once bestowed upon the nation of Israel and that the Gentile Church was now the new Israel.<sup>9</sup>

The Roman Church, be it Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox, basically adopted these attitudes and teachings, although they were contrary to those of Jesus and the New Testament. While on the cross Jesus asked His Father to forgive His persecutors for they knew not what they were doing. Additionally, Paul clearly stated that God's gifts and calling to the patriarchs 'are irrevocable.' (Romans 11: 29.) Gentile followers of Jesus, he wrote, were grafted into the natural olive tree (Romans 11:17-24), which is the new covenant community. This new covenant is instituted *with the nation of Israel*, a covenant which is yet to be fully consummated – with Israel. Besides this, the very purpose of Jesus coming to earth as the God-incarnate Messiah was to take the death penalty which was upon ALL humankind, the Gentiles and the Jewish people.

Through many centuries the Church, which was the custodian of God's revelation concerning Jesus, was also the main persecutor of Jesus' brethren according to the flesh. Many evil acts were perpetrated in the name of the Church against the Jewish people, especially on Easter Friday following anti-Jewish sermons relating to how the Jewish people had murdered Jesus. It is essential for Gentile Christians to become familiar with this history.<sup>10</sup> This factor reveals what happens when any individual, institution or movement does not understand the principles of covenant, as revealed in Scripture; does not understand that God's covenant commitment to the nation of Israel has not been revoked; does not abide by the teachings of Jesus, as stated in John chapters 14-17 for instance. A result of this negative attitude towards the Jewish people by the institutional Church was that it further hardened the hearts of the Jewish people against Jesus.

In the physical then the likelihood of a Jewish restoration from exile and for the associated reconciliation between Jesus and His brethren according to the flesh seemed well-nigh impossible. But as God's gifts and calling to Israel are irrevocable (Romans 11: 29) then for the sake of His holy name, of His integrity, and of His word, God will honour the oaths He swore to the fathers, the patriarchs, and Israel would be restored.

### **The land of covenant promise occupied by Islamic imperialists**

In the centuries after the Roman-induced exile other imperialist regimes and ideologies occupied and coveted possession of the land of covenant promise – although a minority of Jewish people always remained in the land. The most notable of these occupying regimes was Islam (which means submission) an ideology which originated in pagan Arabia through Muhammad. Muhammad was from the Quraish tribe, whose god or idol was named Allah.<sup>11</sup>

Muhammad claimed that he had received revelations from the angel Gabriel and that he was bringing to completion that which began with the Jews and Christians. Even a cursory reading of the life of Muhammad and the birth of this movement reveals a huge difference between his character and teachings and that of Jesus.<sup>12</sup> Initially Muhammad was tolerant towards those who did not receive his revelation, especially the Jewish people, who rejected his claims. Then from the year 623 AD he adopted an intolerant attitude, which was basically known as the 'rule or verse of the sword.' This rule stated:

Kill the Mushrikun (unbelievers) wherever you find them, and capture and besiege them, and lie in wait for them in each and every ambush. But if they repent ... then leave their way free. (Sura 9: 5).<sup>13</sup>

Muhammad's intolerant attitude and statements after 623 AD now superseded his more tolerant attitudes from pre-623 AD, a concept basically known as *Nasikh*.<sup>14</sup>

From the outset terrible evil was perpetrated by Muhammad and the followers of Islam as they endeavoured to spread their worldview, mostly by the sword - by *jihad*. Initially they murdered many Jewish people, with Muhammad himself overseeing some of these massacres.<sup>15</sup> Then Muhammad offered three options to subjugated peoples, first in Arabia and then elsewhere:

- Submit and accept Islam.
- Live as second-class people known as *dhimmi*s under Islamic hegemony, and pay a tax – *jizya*.
- Die.

The basic Islamic worldview is very well expressed by Bat Ye'or who wrote in her profound book *Understanding Dhimmitude*:

The aim of jihad is to expand the rule of Islam over all non-Muslim lands throughout the world. Hence the concept of jihad divides the world into two forever hostile camps: the dar al-Islam, that is the regions under Islamic rule; and the dar al-Harb, the land of war, because being still under non-Muslim control, it is targeted by jihad till its incorporation into the dar al-Islam.<sup>16</sup>

In their quest to bring other regions into *dar al-Islam* the Islamic armies ultimately invaded and illegally occupied the land of Israel from 638 AD. Islam usurped the promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, stating that the promises went through the line of Ishmael. Islam was therefore a counterfeit ideology and worldview. This attitude is no better revealed than the Al Aksa Mosque and Dome of the Rock which they built on the Temple Mount – the very location where the Temple had been built to worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

These Islamic invaders exemplified imperialism and colonisation. Not only did people from Arabia (Arabs) now settle in the land of Israel, but they quickly imposed their language and culture upon the surviving local inhabitants.

Various Islamic empires coveted the land of Israel and declared it to be part of the region of *dar al Islam* – the region of Islam. The Jewish people living under Islamic domination, even in their own land, were thereafter classified as second-class citizens with very few rights.<sup>17</sup> Islam, though, was not completely homogeneous. Two major streams developed, one being Sunni Islam, centred

upon Arabia (Saudi Arabia today), and the other, Shia Islam (Shi'ite), centred upon Persia (Iran today).

Following Muhammad's death in 632 AD the movement was thereafter led by successors, known as Caliphs. The first Caliph was Abu Bakr, Muhammad's father-in-law, followed by Omar Ibn el Khattab. Some, however, believed that the rightful successor was Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, and these followers did not acknowledge Abu Bakr as the rightful Caliph.

The followers of Abu Bakr, the majority of the Muslims, became the Sunni, while the followers of Ali, who recognised him as the first caliph, became the Shia, or Shi'ite Muslims.

### **The Crusaders and the Turks**

In the late eleventh century another Islamic empire the Seljuk Turks began seriously persecuting Christians living in and visiting the so-called 'Holy Land.' In response the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church in Europe called for a crusade to redeem the land from Islam. The so-called Christian forces, known as the Crusaders, captured Jerusalem in 1099. Unfortunately, although the overall objective might have been worthy, the outcome was anything but a true reflection of the character of Jesus. Not only were many innocent Arab-speaking people indiscriminately killed, but the Crusaders also massacred Jewish people, all the way from Kings Lynn in England to Jerusalem.<sup>18</sup> The Crusader armies left a stain on the character of Christianity in the minds of many communities in the Middle East.

The Muslim Mamelukes from Egypt finally succeeded in defeating the Crusaders in 1291 and the land of Israel returned to Islamic control. With the reinstatement of Islamic control the resident Christian peoples returned to their previous subservient status as *dhimmi*s, while the surviving Jewish people retained their ages old status of being at the bottom of the social ladder.

Then a new Islamic imperialist force, the Ottoman Turks, entered upon the scene. They captured Constantinople in 1453 and by 1517 had captured Jerusalem. Somewhat ironically the Ottoman Empire became a haven for thousands of Jewish people who were expelled from Spain in 1492. In the land of Israel these migrants joined other, mostly European background (Ashkenazi) Jews, who mostly lived in Safed, Tiberias, Hebron and Jerusalem.

Following their conquests the Ottoman Turks monopolised the ancient trade routes, forcing the prices to increase in Europe. This in turn forced the European

powers to seek alternate routes to the regions of the east. The Eastern Mediterranean region was, temporarily, no longer at the centre of the trade system.

It was within this broader dynamic that the lands of the Caribbean, South and North America, Australia, New Zealand and Oceania were 'discovered' through the voyages of Columbus, Vasco da Gama and Magellan. There were, of course, people already living in these land masses, going there sometime after the great dispersion following the Flood. (Genesis 9.) Ultimately a number of these 'newly discovered' regions would become involved in Israel's modern-day restoration from exile.

In time the Ottoman Turks ruling from faraway Constantinople (Stamboul) had very little interest in the welfare of the citizens of the far-flung regions of its vast empire. The governors who were sent to Damascus, the capital of the province of Syria, and the rulers in provincial towns and cities of this province, such as Jerusalem and Jaffa, were mostly corrupt, cruel and inept. The land of Israel became an impoverished region of the province of Syria.

### **Birth pangs of restoration – the Reformation and Enlightenment**

Within this broader context the likelihood of there being a spiritual and physical restoration of Israel seemed well-nigh impossible. God, though, would at the right time honour His covenant promises so that Israel and the world could enter the fullness of what He had determined. A process of restoration began with the Protestant Reformation, when Bible-believing Christians all over Europe, Britain and Ireland began to read of God's promises to the people of Israel. They then began to remind God about these promises – akin to Daniel reminding God during the period of the first exile. (Daniel 9.)

God then 'remembered' His covenant promises, just as He did when the children of Israel cried out while in bondage in Egypt. (Exodus 2: 24.) The process of restoration now began, led by Christians associated with the Puritans, Pietists, Moravians and Evangelicals, primarily in Britain, Ireland and 'Germany.' Many Jewish people became followers of Jesus, especially in 'Germany'.<sup>19</sup> Interestingly the Puritans and Lutheran Pietists (particularly Philip Spener the founder of the Pietist movement) were both provoked into action concerning the Jewish people from reading Romans 11: 26 – that 'all Israel will be saved.'<sup>20</sup>

Unfortunately, not all Protestant leaders understood the Word of God concerning the Jewish people. One notable example was the great reformer Martin Luther who wrote terrible and vitriolic statements against the Jewish people, especially

in his book *The Jews and their Lies* (1543). A later generation of anti-Jewish Germans used these writings to substantiate their plan to eradicate all vestiges of the Jewish people!

Almost simultaneously two other movements occurred which shaped the cultural environment of Europe, these being the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment had greatest impact upon northern Europe, where it challenged the control of the established Church and led to the increase of what could be termed 'secularism.' It was during this time that an increasing number of Jewish people were able to leave the narrow confines of Jewish Orthodoxy and enter mainstream European society. This exposed them to streams of academia and learning previously out of their reach. The representative of this movement was Moses Mendelssohn.

### **Evangelical awakenings and French Revolution**

From the 1730s there was a powerful Christian awakening in Britain and the American colonies associated with John Wesley, George Whitfield and Jonathan Edwards. Many repented and confessed faith in Jesus as Messiah. Simultaneously in 'Germany' there was an awakened interest in taking the message of Jesus to the Jewish people. This initiative was associated with Pietists such as Johannes Callenberg, as well as Count Zinzendorf and the Herrnhutters or Moravian Church.

The evangelical revival in the British Isles (the United Kingdom and Ireland today) entered a second phase at the time of the French Revolution when many Bible-believing Christians from both Anglican and non-Anglican streams, recognised that the Revolution and subsequent events were signs of the last days, as indicated by Jesus' words in Matthew 24 for example. Seeing the need to fulfill Jesus' command to take the message of salvation to the ends of the earth before His return, numerous evangelical missionary societies were thereafter formed, namely the Baptist Missionary Society in 1792, the London Missionary Society (LMS) in 1795 and the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in 1799.

Concern for the Jewish people and the need to introduce them to Jesus now came to the fore, especially through the LMS.<sup>21</sup> Simultaneously there was an awakened interest in the return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel – which was to precede the return of Jesus to Jerusalem.<sup>22</sup> Many ministers, theologians and authors now began to write and preach on this subject. One such person was Rev. James Bicheno, a Baptist minister in England who predicted that a European power would in the future endorse this Jewish restoration.<sup>23</sup> Collectively these advocates increased awareness in the subject matter throughout Britain and

Ireland and stimulated many Christians to remind Almighty God of His covenant promises.<sup>24</sup>

At this very time a young German-born Jewish man named Joseph Frey (Levi) came to London in 1801 to work for the LMS. Frey then began to introduce Jewish people to Jesus as the God-incarnate Messiah. Many non-Conformists and evangelical Anglicans became aware of this initiative. In 1809 Frey formed a new society (which is today named CMJ) with the aim of introducing Jesus to the Jewish people, and immediately many British evangelicals rallied in support.<sup>25</sup> Among these were William Wilberforce and Rev. Charles Simeon, stalwarts of evangelical Anglicanism.

Simultaneous to these happenings Jewish people throughout western and central Europe were experiencing the beginnings of emancipation, beginning in France in the wake of the Revolution and continuing with the edicts of emancipation pronounced by Napoleon in France in 1807 and Prussia in 1812. At this time few Jewish people though considered a return to their 'promised land.'

### **Napoleon and geo-political moves in and near the land of Israel**

As the European powers sought for trading ventures in the Far East they carved out economic and even physical empires. One landmass in particular, the Indian subcontinent, was central within this broader dynamic. India came progressively under British control, while the French coveted further influence there. In 1798 Napoleon Bonaparte and a large French force set sail from France with the objective of ousting the British from India.

This large invasion force landed in Egypt, with the intention of then sailing from the Red Sea to India. The British, however, dispatched a fleet under Admiral Nelson which destroyed the French fleet in Egypt. Napoleon then entered the land of Israel in 1799. Understanding the connection between this strategic location and the Jewish people Napoleon then made a proclamation near Nazareth calling upon the dispersed people of Israel to return to their promised land.<sup>26</sup> This plan was not fulfilled as Napoleon was defeated by a combined British-Turkish force. Besides, the Jewish people were not in a position at that time to affect such a restoration, being in servitude to both the Muslims and Christians.

## **Beginnings of the second return from exile to the land of Israel**

In the 1820s the first tangible signs of the spiritual and physical restoration from exile began, when British Christians associated with the Evangelical Anglican society, CMJ, restored the message of the Jewish Jesus to the city of the Great King - Jerusalem (Matthew 5: 35). Such a pioneering move was dedicated to introducing Jesus as Messiah to the 'Jew first, and also to the non-Jew.' (Romans 1:16.) Achieving this goal on a permanent basis though, was virtually impossible under Ottoman Turkish control.

The pioneer missionaries, Irishmen Rev William Lewis and Dr George Dalton, wrote back to London and stated emphatically that before they could be firmly established in Jerusalem there would need to be a change in government (the Turks would need to be ousted) and the British had to establish a Consulate there which could offer protection. Those letters were then printed in journal form and sent all over the world. As with Daniel when he reminded Almighty God of what Jeremiah had stated in his letter, Christians now brought these matters before the Throne of Grace and they reminded God of His covenant promises for Israel's restoration.

Then that ages old dynamic of the rivalry between the 'southern empire' and the 'northern empire' erupted once again. In 1832 the 'southern empire' of Egypt rose in revolt against the 'northern empire' of Turkey – and ousted them from the land of Israel. Desiring to establish good diplomatic relations with Britain, the Egyptian regime of Mehmet Ali permitted British subjects to reside in Jerusalem. CMJ wrote that these events were clear evidence of the providence or sovereignty of Almighty God intervening in the events of man.<sup>27</sup>

Although Egypt was a Muslim country its ruler, Mehmet Ali, had recognized that his country needed to enter the modern world, and as such was willing to permit western innovations and even a non-official entity, Protestant Christianity, to be established in the land of Israel. Such moves were truly quite remarkable, and they effectively were a breach in the stronghold of Islam over the affairs of the land of covenant promise.

Accordingly, John Nicolayson of CMJ became the first resident Protestant in the land of Israel in 1833, and was followed in 1834 by workers associated with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Thereafter the message about Jesus being the Jewish Messiah was consolidated in Jerusalem. In 1838 Nicolayson even managed to obtain property for the building of a Protestant Church – immediately opposite the Citadel or fortress of Jerusalem.

A second and equally significant challenge to the power of Islam occurred in 1838 when Britain established a consulate in Jerusalem. Among the first instructions given to the British consul, were 'to afford protection to the Jews generally.'<sup>28</sup> This was a tangible beginning point for Jewish people obtaining some redemption from their terrible status as *dhimmis*, or second-class citizens under Islamic law. Just how anti-Jewish Jerusalem society was is revealed by an official letter sent by Consul Young shortly after his arrival in 1839, in which he stated:

... the Jew in Jerusalem is not estimated in value much above a dog – and scarcely a day passes that I do not hear of some act of Tyranny and oppression against a Jew – chiefly by the soldiers... If a Jew... were to attempt to pass the door of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, it would in all probability cost him his life – this is not very Christian like, considering Christ Himself was a Jew.<sup>29</sup>

The Jewish population of Jerusalem and the land was very weak and impoverished, divided between those of Ashkenazi (European) descent and Sephardi (Spanish) descent. Some had lived there for much longer and these could be termed Oriental Jews. Those from Europe had come to live, pray and die in the in the land, and they mostly existed on the *halukah* (distribution) system. Donations were sent from Europe and distributed by the rabbis and community leaders.

### **Israel's physical restoration almost a reality**

Breaches in the control of Islam increased in 1839-40 through the 'Syrian Crisis.'<sup>30</sup> Egypt, the 'southern empire' then endeavoured to topple Turkey, the 'northern empire.' As France was by now a major sponsor of Egypt, such a move would have left France in a preeminent position in the Eastern Mediterranean. In desperation Turkey reached out to Britain, which together with Russia, Austria and Prussia, came to its assistance. In recompense the Ottoman Turks then issued an edict of toleration, the *Hatti Sherif of Gulhane*, guaranteeing (in principle) better rights for the non-Muslim residents of the Ottoman Empire.

The Egyptians were ultimately ousted from the land of Israel in 1840 by a mostly British force. It was at this time that the British Government, with firm support from the Evangelical Christians including many leaders, officially proposed to the Ottoman Turkish government (the Porte) that the Jewish people be restored to the land of Israel.<sup>31</sup> Such a proposal had widespread support in both the Christian and secular world.<sup>32</sup> But, as to be expected, this profound proposal was thwarted. It was impossible for the Ottoman Turks, being the custodians of Islam, to sanction and support such an event.

If there was to be such a physical restoration it would require three main components:

- The power of Islam, as represented in that period by the Ottoman Turkish Empire, would need to be disempowered.
- There would need to be a European power with a sympathy for the Jewish people and their restoration to be solely in control of the land of Israel.
- The dispersed and subjugated Jewish people would need to be prepared for such a restoration.

Although greatly disappointed that the anticipated restoration of Israel never occurred, the British people were soon to have their hopes revived. In 1841 King Frederick William IV of Prussia (Germany) proposed to the British government and Anglican Church the idea of establishing an Anglo-Prussian Protestant Bishopric in Jerusalem. The British authorities agreed and in late 1841 a Protestant-Anglican bishop was ordained and then departed for Jerusalem. He was a former rabbi named Michael Solomon Alexander.<sup>33</sup> The foundations of the Protestant-Anglican Bishopric in Jerusalem were very much associated with the restoration of Israel.

The physical symbol of this restoration became the Anglican-Protestant Christ Church inside the walls of Jerusalem, which was finally completed in 1849.<sup>34</sup> As it was forbidden under Islamic law for new churches to be built, Christ Church was officially the private chapel of the British consul. Yet for all intents and purposes it was a church, so the building of Christ Church represented a significant breach in the power of Islam over Jerusalem.<sup>35</sup> Architecturally Christ Church was also unique, being built in part to resemble a synagogue, which itself was quite a statement in a city where anti-Jewish sentiment was very prevalent – even in the Church.

### **Modernisation of Jerusalem and the land of Israel**

The presence of these three British-Protestant institutions was a major stimulus for the modernisation and development of Jerusalem and the land of Israel. Following the lead of the British, every other European power as well as the United States also established consulates in Jerusalem, and many gave protection to Jewish residents. As CMJ established the first modern medical and educational institutions in Jerusalem, every other community, especially the Jewish, then did the same. Influential Jewish philanthropists such as Moses Montefiore and the French Rothschild family were provoked into action to counter the perceived missionary influences of the various CMJ institutions.<sup>36</sup>

All peoples of the city and land, including the Muslims, now benefitted by these improved health and educational facilities. The Turkish and Muslim leaders did virtually nothing to improve the living standards of their fellow Muslim and Arabic-speaking peoples. Most of this was achieved by various Christian enterprises. Following Bishop Alexander's entrance into Jerusalem both the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches increased their activities and even reinstated their patriarchs to Jerusalem.

Associated with the Jerusalem Bishopric various German-speaking and Lutheran institutions now came to the land, and most of these established medical and education work within the Arabic-speaking community. These activities increased under the second Protestant bishop, Samuel Gobat (1846-1879). Bishop Gobat also invited the CMS to come to the land, and in time this Evangelical Anglican society established many philanthropic institutions, especially schools. Other Protestant associations also came, including the Bruderhaus from St. Chrischona in Switzerland and the Society of the Templers from 'Germany.' The Templers played a large role in modernising agriculture throughout the land. In the wake of the three pioneering British-Protestant institutions the *status quo* of Jerusalem and the land of Israel was radically turned upside down.

### **Interest in Israel's restoration increases**

Although CMJ was an Evangelical Anglican society, it represented a much broader range of Evangelical Christians throughout Britain, Ireland, Europe and elsewhere including the United States, who held a similar worldview – that Jesus was to be introduced once again to the Jewish people so that a remnant would be saved, while the Jewish people as a collective entity were to return to the land of Israel. There, at some time known only by God the Father, they as a nation would come to recognise Jesus as their King Messiah. This event would be closely associated with the return of Jesus to Jerusalem. Opinions differed as to exactly how all this would happen, but in the main these pioneer British Evangelicals adopted a very basic perspective concerning the full restoration of Israel. Later generations, especially in the USA, though, developed quite elaborate schemes – which often seem to complicate the matter.

The Jewish interest in the physical restoration also developed from the 1840s. Those advocating such a restoration were basically more secular or cultural Jews. These were the children of the Enlightenment, those who had been accepted into mainstream European society and could divest themselves of an Orthodox Jewish life. The more prominent of such Jewish restorationists were Moses Hess and Leon Pinsker.

For the most part the Jewish religious leaders opposed any such restoration. They basically believed that *shivat Zion*, the restoration of Zion (Israel), or *geulat Israel*, the redemption of Israel, would occur after Messiah came. Several exceptions though were Rabbi Yehuda Alkalai from Bosnia and Rabbi Zvi Kalischer, who lived in the Prussian province of Posen, now in Poland.

Yet alongside this nascent and growing interest in a physical restoration to the land of Israel it became progressively more apparent, especially with the growth of European nationalism after 1860, that Jewish people were not completely accepted within European society unless they completely assimilated. Many Jewish people now desired to leave Europe and escape this growing anti-Jewish sentiment.

This feeling increased following despicable pogroms (outbreaks of violence) within the Russian Empire in 1881 – which were often supported and encouraged by the leaders of the Orthodox Church. Many Jewish refugees sought a haven in Turkish occupied Palestine, which for the most part was under-developed and under-populated (as glass slides from the 1860s onwards and diplomatic records of the time substantiate). These Jewish settlers purchased often very infertile land and usually at exorbitant prices – and began to make the desert places blossom. From 1905 many more Jewish settlers came to the land of Israel following further outbreaks of violence against them in Russia. Most of these people were imbued with quite a pronounced socialist humanist worldview and were associated with what became known as ‘socialist Zionism’.

### **Further European involvement**

In the period following Napoleon’s French incursion the focus of Britain and other European powers shifted back to the region of Egypt and the land of Israel, as this region offered the quickest route to India and the Far East. It was not by ‘geographical chance’ but by God’s sovereign design that this region lay at the centre of the world. It is within this dynamic that a French consortium constructed the Suez Canal in 1869. Thereafter this small area became a major economic and geo-political focal point – and became even more so in time with the discovery of huge deposits of oil in the region in the next century.

The involvement of France in this region was due firstly to their desire to reach the markets of the Far East, and to develop economic interests in the Eastern Mediterranean region, while they also offered protection to numerous educational and philanthropic interests in the ‘Holy Land.’<sup>37</sup> There were fewer British institutions with CMJ, the Consulate, CMS, the Anglican Bishopric<sup>38</sup> and the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF) being the most prominent.

Britain's main involvement in the region was to hinder French encroachment and ensure the link to India was not cut off. For this reason Britain purchased the majority shares of the Suez Canal Company in 1875 and then gained control over Egypt in 1882.

From the 1860s and in the wake of the Crimean War the Russian Empire became a major factor in the land.<sup>39</sup> The Russians built enormous complexes, and it was common knowledge that they coveted possession of the 'Holy Land', which had once 'belonged' to the Byzantine Empire. After Constantinople was captured by the Ottoman Turks, Orthodox Russia thereafter viewed itself as being the custodian of all that once 'belonged' to Byzantium, including the land of Israel.<sup>40</sup>

### **Arab and Jewish nationalist movements**

Despite obvious improvements since 1833 the land of Israel, mostly referred to then as southern Syria, or Palestine, was still a much neglected and impoverished region of the Ottoman Turkish Empire. The region was governed according to the *millet* system. The Muslims were predominant, and all the other minority communities were subservient, be they Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Armenian, Maronite – or officially from 1850, Protestant. The Jewish community, or *millet*, was at the very bottom and they often received harsh treatment. Yet with the growing western influence in the land living conditions improved for all people and many Arabic-speaking and other Muslim groups now immigrated there from surrounding regions. The Turks also transplanted Muslim communities from other regions of their vast empire.

Most Arabic-speaking peoples did not view themselves as being part of a national entity, they did not see themselves as being Palestinian or Syrian or Lebanese. Their first allegiance was to their clan or family or ethnic group or whether they were Sunni or Shi'ite, or as far as the Christians were concerned, which Church they belonged to. The vast majority of the Arabic-speaking population were poor peasants eking out a meagre existence mostly on property owned by wealthy landowners. Then from the 1840s a number of Arabic-speaking people benefitted from western education, especially in Christian missionary schools. In Syria and Lebanon many of these schools were operated by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Historian George Antonius wrote in his book *The Arab Awakening* that one Lebanese Christian in particular, Butrus Bustani, and one organisation, the 'Society of Arts and Sciences', are associated with the beginning of a new movement.

It was in this environment that seeds of a national Arab identity began, especially from Arabic-speaking Christians, who were influenced by the spread

of nationalism in Europe. They desired acceptance as equals but realised that under Islam they could never achieve this goal. But if the region could be united under the banner of an Arab identity (Pan-Arabism) rather than a Muslim identity, then they could all have a common identity and destiny. The Arab nationalist movement thus began from the 1860s.<sup>41</sup>

The Jewish nationalist desire for physical restoration increased with the formation of the Zionist Movement under Theodor Herzl in 1897. Such a restoration, however, depended upon the sympathy and active involvement of a modern day 'Cyrus' nation which could support their goal to obtain a charter from the Ottoman Turks to settle in the land of Israel in great numbers. They first approached Germany, and thanks to an Anglican minister named Rev. William Hechler, Herzl was able to present the matter to Kaiser Wilhelm II in Constantinople in 1898 while the German emperor was on his official visit to the Turkish Empire.<sup>42</sup> Ultimately though, the Germans refused the opportunity to be the modern day 'Cyrus' nation, as they did not want to jeopardise their geo-political relationship with the Turks. This rebuff occurred when Kaiser Wilhelm II visited Jerusalem, to open the new German Church, the Church of the Redeemer, on 31 October 1898.

There was no possibility of obtaining support and endorsement from the Ottoman Turks. The Sultan was the *Caliph* of Islam, and Islam could not endorse any form of Jewish national autonomy in the region known as Palestine and which Muslims regarded as part of *dar al Islam*. The Jewish leaders then turned to Great Britain, which initially was not at all interested in supporting their goal as they too were seeking to maintain a good geo-political relationship with the Ottoman Turks.

### **End of the Ottoman Turkish occupation of the land of Israel**

The outbreak of the First World War completely changed these dynamics. The Ottoman Turks made a very unwise decision to join with the German alliance against the Allies of Britain, France and Russia. This costly decision ultimately resulted in them losing control of much of their huge empire. This process began with the Dardanelles or Gallipoli Campaign of 1915 - the campaign associated with the ANZACs and moulding of Australian and New Zealand nationhood. Although the Turks were victorious there, nevertheless it was at this time that the Allies began to consider the future of the Ottoman Empire in the event of its ultimate defeat. Thoughts of a future Jewish physical restoration to the land of Israel now came into focus.<sup>43</sup>

Following their victory at Gallipoli the Ottoman Turks then endeavoured to

seize control of the Suez Canal. Realising that the best form of defending the Suez Canal was through capturing the Sinai, in 1916 a British-led force including Anzac horsemen (the Australian Light Horse and New Zealand Mounted Rifles) captured this vast desert region. Then in early 1917, following a decision from the new British prime minister David Lloyd George, this British-led force crossed into Turkish occupied Palestine. The first battles were at Gaza, which was strategically based on the ancient *Via Maris* near the coast, and which had a sizeable water supply. Two major battles were fought in and around Gaza - and the Turks won on both occasions. Many Allied soldiers fought and died in this region, including Australians and New Zealanders, and for this reason many years later the Anzac Memorial was built there.

During this same general period the desires and ambitions of both the Jewish and Arab nationalist movements came to the fore. The Jewish movement was associated politically with Chaim Weizmann and militarily with Zev Jabotinsky who was instrumental in forming both the Zion Mule Corps at Gallipoli and the 'Jewish Legion' for service in the land of Israel.

The Arab nationalist movement was associated especially with the Emir Hussein of Mecca in the Hejaz region of Arabia and his son Feisal. There are some who maintain that the British authorities gave assurances to the Emir Hussein as the so-called representative of the Arab nationalists that the land of Israel would be included in a future Arab kingdom – based in the Hejaz. These considerations are not substantiated when observing the broader perspective and taking into consideration the deception of Muhammad al-Faruqi. This little-known episode is associated with the Arab nationalists committing to foment a revolt against the Ottoman Turks at Gallipoli – which did not happen!<sup>44</sup> Ultimately an Arab Revolt did begin in 1916 (mostly associated with Prince Feisal and T.E. Lawrence or 'Lawrence of Arabia.'). This campaign was of secondary importance compared to the much larger role being played by the British-ANZAC and Indian soldiers in the Middle East. For the sake of the Jewish and Christian inhabitants of the land of Israel this proposed Arab kingdom thankfully never came about.

Then in June 1917 the Jewish nationalists presented a proposal to the British government that in the event of the land of Israel being liberated from Turkish occupation by British-led forces that Britain would consider endorsing the establishment there of a Jewish national home.

Following the Allied defeat at Gaza the military objective now turned inland, to the town of Beersheba, a town associated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Under a new commander, General Edmund Allenby, the British-led force

attacked there on 31 October 1917. Following initial British and New Zealand successes, victory was ultimately gained by the gallant charge of the Australian Light Horse.

On that very same day the British War Committee met in London to consider the proposal of the Jewish nationalist (Zionist) movement for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine – once the land was fully redeemed from Turkish-Islamic occupation. About the same time as Beersheba was finally captured the War Committee agreed to the establishment of such a Jewish national home. This historic decision was later known as the Balfour Declaration.<sup>45</sup>

This campaign was fought with geo-political factors in mind - the land of Israel was sandwiched between Britain (and Europe) on one side and India and the empire including Australia and New Zealand, on the other. Nothing new under the sun! These were very similar dynamics operating at the time of the first restoration of exile when the rivalry was between Persia and Egypt and then at the time of the first coming of Jesus when the rivalry was between Rome and Parthia.

This factor once again provides very clear evidence that a sovereign God not only created the heavens and the earth, but also determined exactly where the physical boundary lines would be established and when certain people groups would be where. God knew exactly what He was doing when He placed the land of Israel at the centre of the world! (Deuteronomy 32: 8-9 ; Psalm 104: 5-9; Acts 17: 24-26.)

This quest for the redemption of the land from Islamic control took another major step forward on 9 December 1917 when British-led forces captured Jerusalem.<sup>46</sup> At the official surrender ceremony on 11 December 1917 soldiers representing the British, Australian and New Zealand forces brushed up against the gates of Christ Church Jerusalem facing General Allenby, the British commander, who stood on the steps of the Citadel or Fortress of Jerusalem opposite.

Ultimately by 31 October 1918 the Ottoman Turkish Empire, which had unwisely first attacked the Allied forces, was defeated. A Conference was convened in San Remo in Italy in 1920 for the victorious Allies to determine the future of the regions once occupied by the Ottoman Turks. The Allies offered mandates to both Britain and France to prepare these regions for local sovereignty. The Mandate for Palestine was officially offered to Britain in 1922 by all member states of the League of Nations to prepare the land for a future Jewish national home.<sup>47</sup> The League of Nations recognized the historic connection of the Jewish

people to the land of Israel and this endorsement became enshrined into international law.<sup>48</sup> This was one of the most momentous occasions in modern history and vindicates that Almighty God will honour His covenant oaths and promises. Islamic control and occupation over the land of covenant promise was being repealed.

In the huge swathe of territory captured mostly by British, Australian, Indian and New Zealand soldiers, at great cost of life, the Arabic-speaking mostly Islamic nations of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan were ultimately formed. A very small percentage of that captured region was to become the Jewish national home - although the majority of those living there were non-Jewish people.

Unfortunately most of these residents, be they Muslim or local Christians, opposed this decision and promise. Like those opponents did after the first restoration from Babylonian exile they did not understand the principles of covenant and did not understand Almighty God's plans and purposes for the redemption of the world. They did not realise that it is not advisable to oppose those with whom Almighty God has entered covenant!

Oh if they had only understood what great blessings such a restoration was sure to bring for them and for the world! But perhaps in the plans of a sovereign God it was destined that they would not acknowledge such a restoration. Perhaps He desires to reveal His holiness to all the nations of the earth, including restored Israel, in a way and at a time known only by Him!

### **Opposition to the restoration intensifies**

The full restoration of Israel was now drawing nearer, a restoration which would precede 'all Israel' coming to know God in a personal way through the new covenant. This reconciliation would be closely associated with the physical return of Jesus to Jerusalem. (Matthew 24: 30-31; Acts 1:6-9; Zechariah 12: 10.) Such a reconciliation would be, as Paul wrote, 'like life from the dead.' (Romans 11:15.)

But most Jewish people living in the land of Israel at the time (and still today) were not at all inclined to consider turning to Jesus. Many Jewish people were either religious to varying degrees and maintained a vigorous opposition to the claims of Jesus being the Messiah of Israel or were secular humanists with strong socialist tendencies. Most of these secular Jews had rejected Orthodox Judaism and any semblance of religion. It would be nothing short of a miracle for the nation to turn en-masse to accept Jesus as Messiah. But miracles are known to happen in Israel's history, especially in the land of covenant promise!

Satan, though, knows that when Jesus returns and establishes His reign over redeemed Israel and the nations from Jerusalem, he is bound, and will do everything possible to hinder this return and the associated spiritual restoration of Israel. It was during this very period that local Arabic-speaking leaders, such as the senior Muslim cleric in British Mandate Palestine, Haj Amin el-Husseini, began to violently oppose the Jewish people. Such violent opposition further invigorated the Jewish people to succeed in establishing the *Yishuv*, or settlement - on lands which they legally purchased often at exorbitant cost.

The adversary of Almighty God then inspired the Nazi Party in Germany into persecuting the Jewish people living there and forcing them to leave Germany. From 1933 many thousands came to the land of Israel, and once again the Arabic-speaking leaders resorted to violence to stop this immigration. As a result, the British proposed a partition of Mandate Palestine in 1937, into a very small Jewish State and a much larger Arab State. Although the Jewish leadership was not completely satisfied with this proposal, the **Arab leadership rejected the offer outright**. For them there could be no Jewish State at all.

Herein lies the physical foundation of the conflict – the Muslim leadership cannot endorse any form of Jewish sovereignty in the region which they contend is part of *dar al Islam* – be that entity small or large.

The negation of any Jewish immigration into the land of Israel meant that Jewish people desiring to flee from Nazi controlled Germany were stopped from doing so. Their plight, and those of all Jewish people in Europe, then deteriorated when Germany invaded Poland in 1939, plunging the world into another War. Persecution of Jewish people then intensified, and mass murders began in earnest in 1941. Then in 1942 the Nazi-leadership decreed at a Conference in Wannsee near Berlin to complete the murder of eleven million Jewish people in Europe and surrounding regions. This included all those living in the land of Israel and the Middle East. There can be no greater evidence of the nature and spirit of evil than what the Nazi leadership planned to do.<sup>49</sup>

The quest to murder the 700,000 or so Jewish people in the Middle East would be conducted together with local collaborators, people of the same character as Haj Amin - who was then living in Nazi Germany. Thankfully the attempt upon the lives of the Jewish people in the land of Israel and the Middle East was stopped, due mostly to the victory of the British-led forces under General Montgomery at the battle of El Alamein in Egypt in late 1942. Tens of thousands of British-led forces, including Australians and New Zealanders, were involved in this strategic victory. One of those killed there was my mother's cousin.<sup>50</sup>

Unfortunately, though, some six million Jewish people were murdered in what became known as the Holocaust. Within that vast number were tens of thousands of Jewish people who were associated with the Church. The Nazis did not give any consideration to their faith – they were concerned only with their bloodline, and their bloodline was Jewish.

The spiritual force behind the perpetration of this greatest crime in human history and the greatest evidence of the existence of evil, is the same as that which endeavours to destroy all those connected to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

### **The State of Israel established – a modern day miracle**

Following the end of the War and with hundreds of thousands of Holocaust survivors desperate to leave Europe, the British sadistically closed the gates to 'Palestine.' Further conflict broke out, between Jewish, Arab and British forces, forcing Britain to finally relinquish the Mandate to the United Nations, which had superseded the League of Nations. The United Nations ultimately formulated a plan for the partition of Palestine into a Jewish State **and** an Arab State.

A vote was taken at the United Nations on 29 November 1947 at which a majority of nations voted for the establishment of **both Jewish and Arab States**. While the Jewish leadership accepted the offer, **the collective Arab leadership refused to accept** the United Nations decision, these being the Arab leaders in British Mandate Palestine and those in the Arab League. Instead, they ordered the immediate attack upon Jewish settlements. This decision meant the collective Arab leadership refused the opportunity to form their own sovereign state!

Here is tangible proof that the Muslim-Arab leadership again made unwise decisions and was not committed to what was best for their own people.

The Jewish people had no choice but to defend themselves – and in the process they managed to secure certain strategic areas which had originally been designated to be part of the Arab State. Those unwise decisions made by the Arab leaders caused considerable angst for the ordinary Arabic-speaking peoples.

The British were to withdraw at midnight on 14 May 1948. The Jewish leadership led by David ben Gurion made the courageous decision to establish a State and thereupon be able to obtain weapons and thus to defend themselves. This they did – and immediately five surrounding Arab nations invaded the fledgling Jewish State. It would still be near impossible to defend itself against national armies,

as the weapons Israel had purchased would need to arrive and be assembled.

Although this invasion by belligerent nations was a clear violation of the United Nations decision, the UN did not tangibly intervene on Israel's behalf. This, unfortunately, became a trend thereafter. No other nation has received more condemnation and negative resolutions against them than has Israel! This itself is clear evidence that Israel's restoration as a nation is a challenge to the powers and principalities of darkness which control nations and political entities in the world.

In the ensuing conflict Israel somehow managed to not only defend and preserve itself, but they also gained more strategic territory. Unfortunately, in the process numerous Arab people were forced to leave their homes, some by the Israeli forces for strategic reasons, some of their own accord, and some by order of their leadership. Those who left by order of their leaders were told they could come back once the Jews had been driven into the sea.

Many Arabic-speaking peoples in the southern region were forced into the region of Gaza, which was then taken over by Egypt. They were encamped thereafter in refugee camps – and like elsewhere they were not permitted to assimilate. Jordan took control over much of biblical Judea and Samaria including the Old City of Jerusalem. The Jewish residents of the Old City were forced to leave and the synagogues were destroyed. Jordan then illegally usurped control over Judea and Samaria and later they annexed these areas and did not permit the establishment of an independent Arab State – as voted for by the United Nations!

Altogether more than 500,000 Arabic-speaking people became refugees, including many Arabic-speaking Christians, a few of whom were housed at Christ Church. But almost an equal number of Jewish people also became refugees, being forced to leave surrounding Muslim countries. Israel was able to absorb these Jewish refugees into their small State. As in any conflict there were innocent victims and atrocities were committed on both sides.

Interestingly during those very same years there were multiple conflicts which involved population exchanges and refugees, including in post-War Europe and India-Pakistan, so this situation was not an isolated event in that period. Yet while Israel managed to integrate its refugees, the surrounding Arab countries refused to allow their co-religionists to be absorbed. This was done purposely. Additionally, a large mostly Muslim population remained within the State of Israel, with most of them, thankfully, prepared to co-exist. These became citizens with equal rights. No Jewish people, though, were permitted to live in

those regions illegally occupied by Egypt and Jordan.

The preservation of the Jewish people in the land of Israel from the ill-intended designs of both Nazism and the mostly Muslim leaders enabled the establishment of Israel in 1948 - a modern miracle. (See Isaiah 11:12, where the word 'banner' in the context of a second national restoration is the Hebrew word *nes* - miracle.) The very existence of the modern State of Israel, despite its many imperfections, is clear testimony to the existence of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the One who keeps His covenant oaths and promises.

It is therefore not surprising that any ideology and worldview which does not acknowledge the existence of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would seek to destroy or discredit Israel's very existence. Foremost of these is Islam. Western worldviews such as secular humanism and cultural Marxism will also be reluctant to accept claims that Israel's restoration is testimony to the existence of this sovereign God. Unfortunately, there are also many in the worldwide Church who do not accept Israel's establishment as being part of God's universal plan of redemption. Most of these adhere to what is often termed 'replacement theology' or 'supersessionism' – the false belief that the Gentile Church has replaced the nation of Israel.

Somewhat ironically the Communist regime ruling the Soviet Union supported Israel's establishment, most likely viewing it as a possible platform for increasing its geo-political goals in the strategic Middle East. Over time, however, Israel's main support came from the United States of America. There were many Jewish people living in the USA, while there was also many conservative Christians, who like the Puritans and Evangelicals in Britain and Ireland in a former period, well understood that Almighty God had not revoked His covenant commitments to the people of Israel. As the influence of the USA increased, that of the Soviet Union decreased, and they began supporting the antagonistic Muslim nations, especially Syria and Egypt.

The support of a smaller entity by a larger power has been a reality for millennia in the Middle East and is clearly evidenced by the many suzerainty treaties which archaeologists have discovered and deciphered from the ancient world. Such a dynamic is also evidenced by the situation facing Australia and New Zealand for the last two centuries, who have only been able to exist and prosper due to the big power support of either Great Britain or the United States! Many other countries are in a similar predicament, including Ukraine today.

After 1948, while the surrounding Arab and Islamic countries were making no efforts at all to integrate the Arabic-speaking refugees, the Jewish people set

about consolidating their fledgling state. But their existence was always going to be somewhat precarious. There were constant border infiltrations and clashes – which always resulted in responses from the Israelis. Cross-border and even international terrorism against Jewish people increased after the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) was formed in 1964 by mostly nationalist and ‘secular’ Muslims – with some participation from Arabic-speaking Christians.

For the most part this terrorist organization was composed of young men from the refugee camps who were inflamed with the ideal of redeeming the lands from which they and their families had to leave. The PLO itself was not homogeneous, but was composed of several groups, the largest of which was Fatah whose leader became Yasser Arafat. Also, although Egypt and other antagonistic nations were predominantly Muslim, they were not governed by Islamic or *sharia* law. But in the aftermath of these humiliations by Israel an Islamic group named the Muslim Brotherhood emerged in Egypt.

### **The Six Day War of 1967 and Yom Kippur War of 1973**

By June 1967 the nations of Egypt, Syria and Jordan were preparing for an unprovoked attack upon Israel. Israel had to pre-empt this attack – or she would have been overwhelmed. This she did through her airforce, and as a result Israel was able to successfully limit the attack from these three nations. Fighting nevertheless was intense, and ultimately Israel found itself in control of the regions of the Sinai, Judea, Samaria, the Golan Heights, Gaza – and Jerusalem.

Unfortunately there was again a human tragedy – more people were killed, and more Arabic-speaking people became refugees. Once again, the Arabic-speaking leaders made very unwise decisions and created considerable angst for their own people. It also now meant that Israel, almost against its will, found itself in possession of areas which combined had a very large Arabic-speaking population. Israel began to administer these regions as best they could – but it was never going to be easy and mistakes in governance were bound to occur.

Perhaps this could have been the opportunity to create an ‘Arab State’ as decreed by the United Nations in 1947 and which the Arab leaders had refused to establish. To achieve this there would need to be a just settlement with Israel which would provide her with security. This possibility was nullified when the Arab League met in Khartoum in Sudan shortly after and on 1 September 1967 the eight member nations categorically stated:

‘No peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with it...’<sup>51</sup>

This stark statement was followed in November 1967 when the United Nations issued Resolution 242, which called for the ultimate withdrawal of Israeli forces from those captured areas. But the problem now facing Israel was the realisation that Egypt, Syria and Jordan had all launched their assaults upon the small Jewish State from those very regions – and unless there was a complete change of attitude, further attempts would be made to destroy Israel. Such a distinct possibility is evident in the statement of the Arab League at Khartoum and the Charter of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) which clearly called for the destruction of the Jewish State of Israel. (Until today the wording of their Charter has not been changed.)

Israel at that time realised that to ensure such an attack could never happen they needed to establish settlements in places of strategic significance. In time these settlements grew in number and size. Yet, it must be said, had the Egyptians, Syrians and Jordanians not attacked Israel there would have been no such settlements! But in view of the clear goal of the Arab, mostly Muslim, leaders to destroy Israel (see Psalm 83), can one seriously expect Israel to dismantle these settlements and withdraw from that region? Which other country when faced with the same dilemma would do anything different?

This Israeli victory in 1967 was a serious affront to the Islamic world. They now had to avenge the dual defeats of 1948 and 1967. This they attempted to do with a surprise attack on Israel on *Yom Kippur* (the Day of Atonement) in 1973, the most solemn day in the Jewish calendar. In the first days the Egyptians and Syrians almost succeeded in overpowering Israel, which had been caught unawares, due to shoddy intelligence, complacency, and perhaps even due to pride in their armed forces following the success of the Six Day War. Once again Israel somehow miraculously survived - due to a large degree to the timely assistance of the United States, which at one point came close to conflict with the Soviet Union. The United Nations called for a ceasefire and issued Resolutions 338 and 339 and finally the fighting ceased.

After coming so close to being militarily defeated, is it any wonder that Israel thereafter would do all in their power to ensure her borders were secure and that such an event would never occur again?

## **The Israeli Messianic movement grows**

This near miss sent shock waves through the tiny nation, and many were forced to reflect upon this near defeat. What is also interesting is that although there had been Jewish followers of Jesus in the land since the 1830s and Israeli followers of Jesus from 1948, in the years after 1973 there was a marked increase in the number of Jewish people coming into a personal relationship with Jesus as the God-incarnate Messiah in the land of Israel.

By the end of the 1970s the modern day Israeli Messianic movement became very vibrant – and has continued to grow ever since. This movement has witnessed more Jewish people coming to faith in Jesus as Messiah in the land of Israel than at any time since 135 AD. Also, whereas in that period Jewish followers of Jesus refused to fight under the false messiah Bar Kockba, today almost all the eligible Messianic Jews serve in the Israel Defence Forces (IDF).

## **Settlements an obstacle to peace - really?**

It has been the slogan of many opposers of Israel's existence and Israelis on the political and ideological left for many years that Israeli settlements in the Sinai, Judea and Samaria, Gaza and the Golan are an obstacle to peace and that so-called occupied Arab lands had to be surrendered. Thus, there was somewhat of a receptive audience when President Anwar Sadat of Egypt made an offer to enter into a peace treaty with Israel – peace for the dismantling of settlements and surrender of the Sinai. This treaty was signed between Sadat and Prime Minister Menachem Begin in 1979. Most Muslims, though, regarded Sadat as a traitor and he was assassinated in 1981. Nevertheless, this treaty has been quite successful – but there was no sizeable Arabic-speaking population in the Sinai.<sup>52</sup>

As for Judea, Samaria and Gaza throughout these years, although there were terrorist attacks, there was nevertheless a great amount of 'good will'. Tens of thousands of Arab workers would enter Israel each day for work. Living conditions throughout the Israeli administered territories improved dramatically. Life for the ordinary person in Gaza was as good as it could possibly be, indeed much better than when it was occupied by the Egyptians. Israel did though maintain quite a tight security control over these areas.

But all this stability changed in late 1987 with the outbreak of very serious Arab-led violence known as the first *Intifada* (tremour, or uprising) – and Arab workers were thereafter stopped from entering Israel. Israel, however, needed labourers, and thus began to bring in many overseas workers, especially from

Romania and several Asian countries. Once again, the Arab leaders had made unwise decisions which negatively impacted the lives of ordinary Arab peoples.

This outbreak of violence saw the formation of an Islamic organization named Hamas (an acronym for 'Islamic Resistance Movement'), and whose founder, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin had been involved with the Muslim Brotherhood movement. Hamas was ideologically dedicated to the destruction of the State of Israel and the return of the land of Israel to Islamic control. Another similar organization named Islamic Jihad was also formed.

Ultimately regional leaders recognized this outbreak of violence needed to end. Such endeavours resulted in the first major political steps in obtaining a lasting 'peace' with the 'Palestinians' – even with Yasser Arafat, the violent leader of the PLO. Accordingly in 1993 the Oslo Accords were signed in which varying degrees of autonomy were to be handed over to local Arab leaders, especially Arafat. It was a huge gamble. A large part of the Israeli administered territories was to be designated as the Palestinian Authority, or PA. It was never officially named Palestine. Jordan relinquished its claims to the so-called 'West Bank' and this resulted in a peace agreement between Israel and Jordan in 1994. Many Israelis, although pleased that there would now be peace, were at the same time quite apprehensive. One such person assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995.

In good will Israel was involved in arming the police force of the PA. 'Peace' did initially follow – but it was rather short-lived. Then a sustained period of terror against Israeli civilians began, much of it instigated by Hamas, as well as by Islamic Jihad. Terrorists crossed over into the State of Israel and began bombing buses and indiscriminately murdering Israel's citizens. We lived in Jerusalem during that period and can testify that it was not a pleasant time.

There were some cases of Israeli retaliation and aggression towards Arabic-speaking people. One such atrocity was when a right-wing Israeli named Baruch Goldstein entered the mosque at the Tomb of the Patriarchs (Machpelah) in Hebron on 25 February 1994 and shot dead some twenty-nine defenseless Muslim worshippers. Almost all Israelis were abhorred by this senseless act of indiscriminate murder. There is a minority of ultra nationalist Jewish people in Israel who desire to oust all Arab people from the administered territories. Every time there is a terrorist attack upon Jewish people, the number of people holding this view is bound to increase.

This cycle of intolerable violence was precipitated on almost all occasions by acts of terrorism against Israelis which resulted in often times a harsh Israeli

response. To dissipate this cycle President Clinton of the USA invited Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat of the PA to a meeting at Camp David in the year 2000. Although significant concessions were offered to Arafat and the Palestinian Authority by the Israelis, these were mostly rejected. The PA wanted more than Israel was prepared to agree to, including control over part of Jerusalem.

This setback was followed in late 2000 by the beginnings of a second *Intifada*, which resulted in terrible consequences, first for the Israeli population upon whom the atrocities were perpetrated, and secondly upon the ordinary Arabic-speaking population who endured the often-harsh Israeli responses. Part of the Israeli response was to further curtail Arabic-speaking people from Gaza, Judea and Samaria entering into Israel for employment. The reason given by the Arab leaders for this outbreak of violence was the visit of Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount – but this was only an excuse to have a ‘legitimate’ reason to begin a new cycle of violence.

The violence then spiralled out of control. In 2002 a security fence began to be constructed to thwart the infiltration of murderers into Israel. We lived there during that period and supported this initiative – even though a few Arab landowners lost some land in the process. The higher ideal was the preservation of life. Any self-respecting nation would do the same in order to protect its citizens from harm.

Preservation of Israeli lives also meant better conditions for the local Arab population, as they would not get caught up in the crossfire of Israeli counter measures. Unfortunately, and inevitably, with each terrorist attack, Israeli measures became more restrictive and harsher – sometimes those measures were possibly too harsh. The number of Israelis being murdered though was significantly reduced by the security fence, which in part was also a security wall.

This new wave of deadly terror basically ended on 8 February 2005 at a Summit at Sharm el-Sheik in the Sinai which was attended by many regional leaders including Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Then quite amazingly also in February 2005, Prime Minister Sharon and the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) passed a law calling for the **unilateral** withdrawal of **all** Israeli settlements in Gaza. Most Israelis were shocked by this decision and were extremely apprehensive – except for those who continued to hold onto the adage that peace would follow the dismantling of the settlements and the surrender of territory. The final Israeli withdrawal in August-September 2005 was done in good faith – that

the Palestinian Authority would adhere to their adage that ‘settlements were an obstacle to peace.’

Unfortunately, this did not happen. During those years I would take the Light Horse groups down to the area near Gaza on a bi-weekly and even weekly basis, especially to the Anzac Memorial near Kibbutz Be’eri. Only on rare occasions was I stopped going there for security reasons. However, following the Israeli withdrawal, I would often be thwarted from going there because of security reasons, primarily rocket attacks – from Gaza.

Wait on, that can’t be right. It was always said that the Israeli settlements were an obstacle to peace – but all the Israeli settlements were withdrawn, so there should not have been any rockets being fired into Israel. Yet there were. Such incidents increased when the radical and extremist Islamic group Hamas gained control over the political life of Gaza from 2007 onwards, and militarily defeated the Fatah faction of the PLO. Hamas, as stated, is an avowed enemy of Israel and the Jewish people and is dedicated to the destruction of the State of Israel.

### **The current crisis**

Since then there has been constant tension emanating from Gaza. The Hamas leadership, though, is not able to sustain such violent opposition without financial, moral and military support from a senior party, mostly Iran, but also from other sources.

Somewhat surprisingly Israel has of late established diplomatic relations with several Islamic nations, the so-called Abraham Accords, and was even forging closer links with Saudi Arabia. Such a move would potentially further isolate Iran, and it was this development which might very well have precipitated the recent violent attack upon innocent Israelis, whereby some 1,200 were murdered, mostly in cold blood. Interestingly following this recent massacre, the Palestinian Authority seemingly gave financial ‘rewards’ of some US\$2,789,430 to the families of Hamas terrorists who were killed!<sup>53</sup> Many democratic countries provide financial support to the PA, so perhaps this is the time to seriously reconsider this support and call the PA leaders to account.

It was known by Hamas that Israel would retaliate hard, as has been the case on several previous occasions when they sent numerous rockets into Israel. It is well known that Hamas will shelter within civilian locations and use the general Arab population as shields, but on this occasion they also have Israeli hostages as human shields. What is quite amazing is that Israel, although by no means a perfect army, will nevertheless broadcast to the people what it intends to do, to

allow them the time to move out of harm's way. Yet this move is still criticised.

But let us ponder on this for a moment. Most informed people will agree that D-Day in June 1944 was a necessary event to rid Europe and the world of the evil Nazi regime. Yet tens of thousands of innocent French people were killed, wounded and uprooted in Normandy, as the Allies could not broadcast their intentions for fear of surrendering their invasion plans.

The main problem in this situation at the physical level is not the Israeli government and army – even though both parties are by no means perfect and do make mistakes. The main problem is the leadership of the Arabic-speaking people, as these leaders have time after time made unwise decisions and placed their own people in harm's way. This means that despite Israel's best intentions and best efforts, innocent civilians will be affected. So why do they do it?

In this current situation Israel has every right from a legal perspective as a sovereign nation to hit back against Hamas. Any democratic country would do the same. Unfortunately, the innocent civilian population will again suffer and once again Israel will be blamed for disproportionate response. But from the perspective of Hamas and the Arab leaders the suffering of their people matters little. The only matter of importance is the elimination of Israel.

But the elimination of Israel and redemption of the land into *dar al-Islam* is only the first step. This would be followed by further *jihad* to bring the remainder of *dar al-Harb* into *dar al-Islam*. This quest would mean that not just Jewish people would be targeted, but Christians as well – as is already happening in many parts of the world.

From a practical perspective is there any human solution to this seemingly unsolvable problem? The common solution proposed by many, even world leaders, is that Israel must grant the 'Palestinians' more autonomy, even statehood, and that Israel is to dismantle their settlements in the administered territories of Judea and Samaria. Then, they say, there will be peace.

Here though we need to ask the basic question – what constitutes peace in the region? Basically, Muslim leaders cannot tolerate an independent Jewish national entity within the land of Israel. The humanistic worldview of some Israelis, especially on the political and ideological left and many others of a similar persuasion throughout the world (including some Jewish people) is that peace will result from:

- The dismantling of Israeli settlements.
- The surrendering of land.
- Recognition of Palestinian statehood.

But even if all these criteria are met there still would not be any true peace. All it will do is create a larger platform for the enemies of Israel to launch further attempts to destroy the State of Israel. Those who entertain such a possibility really have little or no understanding of the broader ideological and spiritual dynamics involved. There is no political solution – although there could be a false peace, which Islam allows, seeing it as a precursor for the accomplishment of its ultimate goals. But this would be a false peace.

In the end nations, individuals, movements and ideologies will align themselves against Israel. They all think they are doing a noble thing by opposing the so-called pariah Jewish nation. But ultimately, they will find themselves battling against God, as against God, as He defends those who personally and as a nation are in covenant relationship with Himself.

### **What is true peace?**

I postulate that true peace is only possible when there is harmony and reconciliation with our Maker and Creator – the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This peace and harmony can only occur if we approach Him in the way that He has prescribed – through (a) a repentant heart, and (b) through a blood sacrifice. As there is no blood sacrifice offered in the prescribed way according to the Sinai-Mosaic Covenant, there remains only one option. This is by accepting that reconciliation is accomplished by the finished work of Jesus who took the penalty of death that is upon us all.<sup>54</sup> Through repentance we enter a covenant union with Jesus and because of this we have restored relationship and access into the presence of Almighty God. (Jeremiah 31: 31-34.) Then there is peace.

Today there are many thousands of Jewish people confessing Jesus as the God-incarnate Messiah, known mostly as Messianic Jews. But there are many within Israel, however, who do not accept that such a person remains Jewish, and they will oppose and even persecute those who do. But it is unwise to attack anyone who is in a covenant relationship with Almighty God – as Pharaoh and other dictators, nations and empires have discovered over the centuries. This principle is obvious in the story of Saul (Paul) while en route to Damascus, when Jesus spoke to him saying: “Saul, Saul why do you persecute me.” (Acts 9: 4-5.) When Jesus said that Saul was persecuting Him, Jesus meant that Saul was persecuting those in covenant relationship and union with Jesus. This is a stark lesson for people to heed.

The situation facing the Messianic Jews today is like that of the first century. In fact, there are many similarities to that period. Then there were two main groups of Jewish people in the land of Israel, and many smaller groups, as there are today. Then there were some who were more so-called 'secular' in outlook, while there were many who were more conservative adherents to Judaism. There were ultra-nationalists, the zealots, as there are today. Some rabbis contend that Israel was defeated, and Jerusalem and the Temple destroyed in 70 AD, not just because of Roman might, but because of internal division within Jewish society at the time.

What then will need to happen before the nation of Israel as an entirety comes to that point of acknowledging that Jesus is the King Messiah of Israel? Perhaps it will be that they will recognize that they can no longer depend upon the strength of their own arm, upon their much-vaunted high-tech and military prowess, upon a superpower ally. Perhaps it will be when they realise that their only sure support is their senior covenant partner, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Perhaps then they will call out while in bondage and God will remember His covenant.

But God desires for all humankind to enter a personal relationship with Himself, and as this includes those under the spiritual bondage of Islam, what will be required to bring the Muslim peoples to repentance and acceptance of the source of true peace found only in the Jewish Messiah *Yeshua*? Perhaps it will be when Islam is just not able to conquer Israel and 'redeem' the land for Islam. The very best future for the Arabic-speaking people living in Gaza, in the areas governed by the PA and in those areas administered by the Israelis, is to accept the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and to accept God's prescribed way to live in true peace.

It is not a simplistic cliché to say that the only solution rests in both people groups submitting to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and accepting His prescribed way of true reconciliation.

### **What role should the Church now be playing?**

What role then should the Church, the custodian of this message of true peace and reconciliation, play at this time.

- First and foremost, it is to reveal the true face of Jesus and the true gospel to all peoples, Jewish and Arabic-speaking. Paul wrote 'The gospel is the power of God for the salvation of all people, to the Jew first and also to the non-Jew.' (Romans 1:16.)

- It must comprehend the principles of covenant and understand that it must not oppose those with whom Almighty God has cut covenant and entered relationship with, namely Israel and the Jewish people. Israel is not perfect and does make many mistakes, as all nations do, and as too does the Church. If God is displeased with Israel, then He must be even more displeased with the Church for not behaving the way it should be. The Church is far from being that entity that Jesus asked for in that profound prayer in John: ‘... that they all may be one, as you Father, are in Me, and I you; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.’ (John 17:21.)
- It must renounce the false teaching that the Gentile Church is the new Israel. This attitude is akin to the sin of covetousness.
- It must renounce all forms of anti-Semitism, which is often cloaked under the banner of anti-Israelism. This is contrary to the teachings of Jesus who said that ‘Salvation is of the Jews’. (John 4:22.) Besides, true followers are in covenant union with Jesus, who is a circumcised Jew.
- It must recognize that by supporting anti-Israel activities they are basically endorsing the objectives of Islam, which is to restore the land of covenant promise to Islamic hegemony and for it to once again become part of Islamic territory. Seriously, what status would Christians and Jews have in such an entity?
- It must heed Paul’s instruction for the Gentile Church to provoke Israel to jealousy – for their Messiah. (Romans 11: 11.) Such Gentiles can be from the nations, and more importantly Arabic-speaking Christians and Muslim-background followers of Jesus. What a great witness it would be for these people to reveal the true face of Jesus to the Jewish people and to provoke them to jealousy for their own Messiah.

## **Conclusion**

What a great time it will be for the entire world when the nation of Israel turns to Jesus, when ‘all Israel shall be saved’ and when Jesus shall be the glory of God’s people Israel. Concerning Israel Paul further declared that: ‘... if their casting away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?’ (Romans 11: 15.) Which of Jesus’ followers would not want to see this happen? If one believes that Jesus did what He said He came to do – to be a ransom to set humanity free from the prison of sin and the penalty of death - then how can we withhold this great message from them, or from anyone.

But there is an adversary who opposes this very message, who opposes everything associated with Almighty God's plan of redemption, who opposes the fulfillment of God's covenant promises. This is the ultimate source and foundation of the current crisis, and in fact of every crisis in the world. Yet the contention is at its most intense when it revolves around the people of Israel in general, and the people of Israel in the land of Israel – for this is where God's great plan of redemption will be consummated, where His covenant promises will be fulfilled.

For the here and now, however, there is only one matter of immediate concern. This revolves around the only remedy for true peace, which is God's desire for all people to repent and call upon the One whom He has raised from the dead (Acts 17: 30-31) and to receive a heart transplant. True peace results from individuals entering covenant union with Almighty God, through Jesus. True peace for the world will be when the nation of Israel enters the fullness of this new covenant relationship and have their hearts of stone replaced by hearts of flesh and have God's Spirit indwelling them. (Ezekiel 36: 24-28.) Having such a heart transplant is the key for ALL peoples, the Jewish people, the Arabic-speaking people and every other people group in the world. When this happens then there will be no further evil in the world, evil of the likes that was witnessed on 7 October 2023.

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For further information contact: CMJ Australia, New Zealand, India, on:  
[www.cmj.org.au](http://www.cmj.org.au) & CMJ UK as per the details on the inside cover, or other Christian organisations who are concerned for the welfare of Jewish people and all those who live in the land of Israel.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The Australian and New Zealand soldiers were collectively known as ANZAC – an acronym for Australia and New Zealand Army Corps. My own research on the subject is found in: *Anzacs, Empires and Israel's Restoration 1798-1948 ; Anzacs & Israel ; Gallipoli – The Road to Jerusalem.*

<sup>2</sup> My research on this subject is found in *The Oath of the Covenant ; In Covenant with Jesus; Israel, Jesus and Covenant.'*

<sup>3</sup> For more on this see *Israel, Jesus and Covenant*, published by Heritage Resources.

<sup>4</sup> Jerusalem was also associated with the 'mysterious' priest king, Melchizedek, to whom Abraham once gave a tithe. David later wrote of a coming leader of Israel who would be a priest-king of the order of Melchizedek. (Psalm 110: 4.)

<sup>5</sup> As recorded in the *Jewish Stones Edition* of the Tanach (the 'Old Testament').

<sup>6</sup> Although Israel was composed of twelve tribes and at one point in history were separated into two kingdoms (Israel to the north and Judah to the south), yet many people from the northern tribes chose to live in the region of Judah and Jerusalem. Judah therefore is representative of the collective nation of Israel.

<sup>7</sup> Some would say that she was an *almah*, a young woman. But Scripture reveals that invariably a young woman was always a virgin.

<sup>8</sup> The four Gospels have slightly different wording, but the common words are 'The King of the Jews.' Matthew 27:37; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19.

<sup>9</sup> For more on this subject I recommend the writing of Marvin Wilson, *Our Father Abraham*, Michael Brown, *Our Hands are Stained with Blood*; and the various writings of Rev. James Parkes.

<sup>10</sup> I refer you to the previously mentioned sources.

<sup>11</sup> Laffin, J. *The Dagger of Islam* (London: 1971), p. 11. See also Durie, M. *The Third Choice* (Deror Books: 2010).

<sup>12</sup> For further reference see; Laffin, J. *The Dagger of Islam* (London: 1979); Gabriel M, *Islam and the Jews* (Lake Mary Florida: 2003); Durie, M, *The Third Choice* ((Deror Books: 2010).

<sup>13</sup> Sura 9: 5, cited in Gabriel M, *Islam and the Jews*, op. cit.

<sup>14</sup> Gabriel, M. *ibid*, p. 48.

<sup>15</sup> See Durie, *ibid*, p. 110 & Gabriel, op. cit., pp. 108-117.

<sup>16</sup> Ye'or Bat, *Understanding Dhimmitude* (Kindle locations 377-380). RVP Publishers, Kindle Edition, Christians and Jews under Islam and the actualisation of History.

<sup>17</sup> There are numerous sources detailing this dynamic. My own research is mostly found in *Gallipoli – The Road to Jerusalem.*

<sup>18</sup> While recently visiting the small town of King's Lynn I located a Jewish cemetery and on the wall was a plaque from the local historical society detailing how many in the Jewish community were massacred by Crusaders enroute to the 'Holy Land.'

<sup>19</sup> There was no actual nation of Germany, but a conglomeration of many German-speaking entities.

<sup>20</sup> For further information on this subject see Murray I. *The Puritan Hope* (Edinburgh: 1971) ; Clark C. *The Politics of Conversion* (Oxford: 1995) ; Crombie, K. *Three Sons of Abraham* (Heritage Resources: 2013).

- <sup>21</sup> *Evangelical Magazine*, 1796, (London), pp. 403-405.
- <sup>22</sup> For more on this I refer you to *Anzacs, Empires and Israel's Restoration 1798-1948; Gallipoli – The Road to Jerusalem; Three Sons of Abraham*. Important primary sources are found in these publications.
- <sup>23</sup> Bicheno wrote a profound book entitled *A Glance at the History of Christianity and of English Non-Conformity*, (London, 1798). Further details are in *For the Love of Zion, A Jewish Bishop in Jerusalem*, and *Gallipoli- The Road to Jerusalem*.
- <sup>24</sup> There are numerous primary sources on this subject matter, many of which are in the British Library in London.
- <sup>25</sup> The original name was the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. CMJ – Church's Ministry among Jewish People.
- <sup>26</sup> Although the original of this proclamation was never found, copies were later discovered, while reports about it appeared in French newspapers shortly afterwards, especially in the *Moniteur Universel*, on 22 May 1799. For further information see Schwarzfuchs, S. *Napoleon the Jews and the Sanhedrin* (London, 1979), p. 24.
- <sup>27</sup> CMJ Report, 1833, p. 161.
- <sup>28</sup> Tyranny as spelled in the original. Bidwell (Foreign Office) to Consul Young, 31 January 1839. FO 78/368 (2), National Archives, Kew.
- <sup>29</sup> Consul Young to Lord Palmerston, March 1839, FO 78/368, No. 131. Cited in Hyamson, A. *British Consulate in Jerusalem in relation to the Jews of Palestine 1838-1914* (London, 1939), Vol. 1, p. 6. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is the main Church in Jerusalem.
- <sup>30</sup> Also in 1840 there was the notorious 'Damascus Blood Libel' affair.
- <sup>31</sup> Foreign Secretary Palmerston to British ambassador to Turkey, Ponsonby, 11 August 1840. FO 78/390, No. 134.
- <sup>32</sup> See for example the Editorial in the *Times*, cited in *Jewish Intelligence* 1841, p. 35.
- <sup>33</sup> Ironically in the 1970s one of the assistant bishops of the Anglican diocese of Jerusalem was Elias Houry, a member of the Executive of the notoriously anti-Jewish terrorist organization the PLO.
- <sup>34</sup> My research on this subject is found in: *For the Love of Zion ; A Jewish Bishop in Jerusalem; Three Sons of Abraham; CMJ – 200 Years of Serving the Jewish People; From Exile to Restoration*.
- <sup>35</sup> See Tibawi, A.L. *British Interests in Palestine 1800-1901* (London: 1961), p. 75.
- <sup>36</sup> For more on this see: Ben Arieh, Y. *Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem 1984), Volumes 1 & 2. Perry, Y. *British Mission to the Jews in Nineteenth Century Palestine* (Frank Cass, London: 2003). Carmel, A. *Activities of the European Powers in Palestine, 1799-1914* in *Asia and Africa Studies*, No. 19, 1985.
- <sup>37</sup> France had been a protector since the Capitulation agreement with the Turks in 1535.
- <sup>38</sup> In 1887 the Germans formally nullified the Anglo-Prussian Bishopric and established their own independent Lutheran entity. The Anglican Church then adapted the Bishopric and to appease some of those with more of a High Church leaning, the character of the Anglican Bishopric became less evangelical. A new bishop, George Blyth then built St. George's Cathedral in 1898.

<sup>39</sup> Following the Crimean War of 1853-56 the Ottoman Turks issued another edict of toleration, the *Hatti Humayan*, which in theory provided more toleration for non-Muslims.

<sup>40</sup> For further on this matter see Derek Hopwood, *The Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine, 1843-1914: Church and Politics in the Near East* (Oxford: 1969).

<sup>41</sup> For more on this matter see Antonius, G. *The Arab Awakening*, (Beirut: 1938) ; Hourani, A. *Syria and Lebanon* (Oxford: 1946).

<sup>42</sup> For more on this matter I refer you to the research of Rev David Pileggi of Christ Church, Jerusalem.

<sup>43</sup> My research on this subject is found in *Gallipoli – The Road to Jerusalem*.

<sup>44</sup> This is not the place to provide an in-depth description of this scenario, but there are many excellent publications on the subject, including Fromkin, D. *A Peace to end all Peace*, (New York: 1979) ; Kedourie, E. *The Chatham House Version and Other Middle East Studies* (London: 1970) ; Kedourie E. *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth* (London: 2000) ; Sanders, R. *The High Walls of Jerusalem* (New York: 1983). My own research is primarily found in *Gallipoli – The Road to Jerusalem* (Mundaring: 2014), pp, 360-370, which cite my primary sources especially from the British War Office and British Foreign Office.

<sup>45</sup> My own research and involvement in this period is found in *Journey to Beersheba*.

<sup>46</sup> On this occasion one Anzac unit was involved – the 10th Light Horse Regiment from Western Australia.

<sup>47</sup> The original area designated to be the Jewish National Home included all of present day Israel, Judea, Samaria , Gaza and Jordan. This area was modified primarily by Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill in 1921 to accommodate the realities at that time, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan was ultimately formed. The area designated as the Jewish National Home was thereafter about 23% of that original area.

<sup>48</sup> Space does not permit to provide more details about this process, but I point you to the exceptional work of ‘The Hague Initiative for International Co-Operation’, Thinc, headed up by Andrew Tucker, [www.thinc-israel.org](http://www.thinc-israel.org). Also to the various works of Hugh Kitson of Title Deed Media, [hugh.kitson@titledeedmedia.com](mailto:hugh.kitson@titledeedmedia.com). My own research is found in *For the Love of Zion, Anzacs, Empires and Israel's Restoration 1798-1948*.

<sup>49</sup> My own research on this subject is mostly found in: *Seven Phases of the Holocaust; Bazyl & Anna Jocz – Jewish Christians Victims of the Holocaust ; Jewish Christians in the Netherlands during the Holocaust*.

<sup>50</sup> My own research on this subject is found in: *El Alamein – Halting an Impending Holocaust in the Middle East* (Mundaring: 2012).

<sup>51</sup> LAS Khartoum Resolution, 1 September 1967, Point 3. [www.un.org](http://www.un.org).

<sup>52</sup> President Sadat was later assassinated in 1981 by members of an Islamist group which opposed the peace treaty with Israel.

<sup>53</sup> Itamar Marcus, *Palestinian Media Watch*, PMW, 15 October 2023, [www.palwatch.org](http://www.palwatch.org)

<sup>54</sup> Jesus is also a priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 5: 1- 7: 28).







The Church's Ministry  
among Jewish People