

Whose Land Is It Anyway?

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION - *Why is this issue important?*

1. IT IS IMPORTANT for the sake of the truth.

2. IT IS IMPORTANT for the sake of God.

- **II Kings 21: 7b** – “In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever.”
- **Deut 30: 4-6** – “If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. ⁵ "The LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. ⁶ "Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.”
- **I Sam 15: 29** – “Also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind.””

3. IT IS IMPORTANT for the sake of Israel.

4. IT IS IMPORTANT for the sake of our faith and convictions.

ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO THE LAND – *A Biblical Foundation*

- **Rom 11: 29** – “for the **gifts** and the **calling** of God are **irrevocable**.”
 - **gifts - charisma** – a favour given without any merit in the one receiving it
 - **calling – klesis** – to be called or invited to a banquet –a metaphor for salvation; to be elected, chosen for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ
 - **irrevocable - ametameletos** – not to be withdrawn or changed because there is no element of regret

I. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

- **Gen 12: 1-3** – "Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; ² And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; ³ And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.""
- **Gen 12: 7** – "The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him."

II. THE PROVISIONS OF THE COVENANT

The provisions of the Abrahamic covenant can be broken into three major divisions

1. THE PROMISE OF A great nation – the nation of Israel.

2. THE PROMISE OF A blessing for all nations.

3. THE PROMISE OF A homeland.

A. THE LAND OF ISRAEL ALWAYS BELONGS TO GOD

- **Psalms 24: 1** – "The earth is the LORD's, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it."
- **Lev 25: 23** – "The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are *but* aliens and sojourners with Me."
- **Joel 3: 2** – "I will gather all the nations And bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there On behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; And they have divided up My land."

B. GOD GAVE THE LAND TO ISRAEL FOREVER

- **Gen 12: 7** – "The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him."
- **Gen 13: 14-17** – " The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; ¹⁵ for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever. ¹⁶ "I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth, so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered. ¹⁷ "Arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you.""

- **Gen 15: 18** – "On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:""
- **Joshua 1: 3, 4** – "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses. ⁴"From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun will be your territory."



1. THE PROMISE OF THE LAND WAS CONFIRMED to the patriarchs.

- **Gen 26: 3, 4** – "Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. ⁴I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed"
- **Gen 28: 13, 14** – "And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and

to your descendants.¹⁴ Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

2. THE PROMISE OF THE LAND WAS CONFIRMED by David and the prophets.

- **II Chron 20: 7** – "Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?"
- **Psalms 105: 5-11** – "Remember His wonders which He has done, His marvels and the judgments uttered by His mouth,⁶ O seed of Abraham, His servant, O sons of Jacob, His chosen ones!⁷ He is the LORD our God; His judgments are in all the earth.⁸ He has remembered His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations⁹ *The covenant* which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac.¹⁰ Then He confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel as an everlasting covenant,¹¹ Saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan As the portion of your inheritance,""
- **Ezekiel 37: 25** – "They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and David My servant will be their prince forever."

C. ISRAEL'S OWNERSHIP OF THE LAND IS UNCONDITIONAL

1. GOD PROMISED THE LAND IN A UNILATERAL COVENANT

- **Gen 15: 1-6**
- **Gen 15: 7, 8**
- **Gen 15: 9-12**
- **Gen 15: 13-18**
- **Heb 6: 13, 14** – "For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself,¹⁴ saying, "I will surely bless you and I will surely multiply you."

2. GOD NEVER PLACED ANY CONDITIONS ON ABRAHAM

There are only two kinds of covenants; conditional and unconditional

- **Gen 17: 1, 2** – "Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. ² "I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly.""
- **Gen 17: 8** – "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.""
- **Gen 17: 10, 11** – "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹ And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you."

Circumcision was given as a sign of the covenant's existence, not a condition to be met for the covenant to be fulfilled!

3. THE COVENANT IS PERMANENT AND UNCHANGEABLE

a) ONCE A COVENANT IS ESTABLISHED IT CANNOT be replaced or altered.

- **Gal 3: 15** – "Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is only a man's covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it."

b) THE COVENANT WAS RECONFIRMED in spite of sin.

- **Lev 26: 42-45** – "then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land. ⁴³ For the land will be abandoned by them, and will make up for its sabbaths while it is made desolate without them. They, meanwhile, will be making amends for their iniquity, because they rejected My ordinances and their soul abhorred My statutes. ⁴⁴ Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor will I so abhor them as to destroy them, breaking My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God. ⁴⁵ But I will remember for them the covenant with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God. I am the LORD.""

CONCLUSION: ISRAEL CANNOT AND NEVER WILL LOSE CLAIM TO THE LAND

D. ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO LIVE IN THE LAND IS CONDITIONAL

There are many who deny Israel's rights to the land today arguing that Israel is unworthy!
Example – John Piper

"Throughout the history of Israel, covenant breaking and disobedience and idolatry disqualified Israel from the present divine right to the Land. Be careful not to infer from this that Gentile nations (like Arabs) have the right to molest Israel. God's judgments on Israel do not sanction human sin against Israel. Israel still has human rights among nations even when she forfeits her present divine right to the Land."

Piper's conclusion – *"Therefore, the secular state of Israel today may not claim a present divine right to the Land, but they and we should seek a peaceful settlement not based on present divine rights, but on international principles of justice, mercy, and practical feasibility."*

(<http://www.desiringgod.org/sermons/israel-palestine-and-the-middle-east>)

It is vitally important to understand and differentiate something ...

"ISRAEL HAS NOT EVER FORFEITED HER DIVINE RIGHT TO THE LAND – WHAT SHE FORFEITED WAS THE RIGHT TO REMAIN LIVING IN THE LAND SHE OWNS!"

1. ISRAEL WOULD ONLY REMAIN IN THE LAND if righteous.

- **Deut 4: 25-27** – "When you become the father of children and children's children and have remained long in the land, and act corruptly, and make an idol in the form of anything, and do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD your God *so as* to provoke Him to anger, ²⁶ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will surely perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to possess it. You shall not live long on it, but will be utterly destroyed. ²⁷ "The LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD drives you."

- **Deut 29: 25-28** – "Then *men* will say, 'Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt. ²⁶ They went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they have not known and whom He had not allotted to them. ²⁷ Therefore, the anger of the LORD burned against that land, to bring upon it every curse which is written in this book; ²⁸ and the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger and in fury and in great wrath, and cast them into another land, as *it is* this day.'"

CONCLUSION – *Israel may remain in the land ONLY if she remains obedient and righteous!*

2. AND YET ISRAEL IS BACK IN THEIR LAND TODAY – and without faith in God!

So why does Israel have the right to live in the land today?

E. GOD HAS GRACIOUSLY BROUGHT THEM BACK TO THEIR LAND

1. GOD PROMISED TO MAKE THEM worthy of the land they were given.

THE PURPOSE OF THE COVENANTS WAS TO ENSURE THAT ISRAEL WOULD BE ABLE TO POSSESS AND LIVE IN THEIR LAND FOREVER!

1. **ABRAHAMIC COVENANT** – The promise of ownership of the land forever
2. **MOSAIC COVENANT (The Law)** – The conditions for remaining in the land
3. **THE LAND COVENANT** – God's promise to enable them to meet the conditions = to save Israel
4. **THE DAVIDIC COVENANT** – the promise of the Seed – the promised Messiah Who would do all required to save Israel so they could meet the righteous conditions to dwell in the land
5. **THE NEW COVENANT** – The promise of unconditional grace and salvation for Israel

Therefore...

2. GOD HAS BROUGHT THEM BACK TO THEIR LAND while still in sin.

- **Ezek 36: 22-28** – "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went."²³ "I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD," declares the Lord GOD, "when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight."²⁴ "For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land."²⁵ "**Then** I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols."²⁶ "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."²⁷ "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."²⁸ "You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God."

Israel is NOT coming back to their land because they deserve it!

GOD IS NOW BRINGING ISRAEL BACK TO THEIR LAND TO VINDICATE HIS GLORY AND REPUTATION AS GOD!

GOD HAS SOVEREIGNLY ESTABLISHED THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL!

3. GOD WILL SOON MAKE THEM WORTHY OF THE LAND through salvation.

- **Deut 30: 5, 6** – "The LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers."⁶ "Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live."

“Israel’s presence in the land today is because of the gracious promise of God to bring them back when still undeserving and unbelieving and then save them, making them worthy to remain in the land which God has given them forever!!”