

THE MIRACLE OF ISRAEL: PROMISED  
GOD'S UNBREAKABLE PROMISE TO ABRAHAM  
**DO NATURAL DISASTERS OCCUR  
AS JUDGMENTS FROM GOD?**

Genesis 12:3 tells us: "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Remember how God said that those who harm Israel He will curse? Is there any way to track that? Historically, every nation that has ever risen against Israel has gone on to devastation: Philistia, Amalek, Moab, Syria, Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Rome, Germany to speak of some. But in the present, is there any way to track this?

Recently a lawyer friend of mine sent me his study of natural disasters just in the USA and against that list he noted Israel. The results are ominous! Have you ever compared the weather here and the situation in God's Land? Here are a few events:

1. **October 30, 1991:** President George Bush opens the Madrid Conference with an initiative for a Middle East peace plan involving Israel's land. On the same day, an extremely rare storm forms off the coast of Nova Scotia. (It was eventually tagged "The Perfect Storm," and a book and movie were made about it.) Record-setting 100-foot waves form at sea and pound the New England Coast, even causing heavy damage to President Bush's home in Kennebunkport, Maine.
2. **August 23, 1992:** The Madrid Conference moves to Washington D.C. and the peace talks resume, lasting four days. On that same day, Hurricane Andrew -- the worst natural disaster ever to hit America -- produces an estimated \$30 billion in damage and leaves 180,000 homeless in Florida.
3. **January 16, 1994:** President Clinton meets with Syria's President Hafez el-Assad in Geneva. They talk about a peace agreement with Israel that includes giving up the Golan Heights. At the end of that day at exactly 730 PM Geneva time (430AM in LA), a powerful 6.9 earthquake rocks Southern California. This quake, centered in Northridge, is the second most destructive natural disaster to hit the United States, behind Hurricane Andrew.
4. **March 1 to April 1997:** The combination of PLO Chairman Yassar Arafat touring America and Clinton rebuking Israel for not giving away her land for peace coincide with some of the worst tornadoes and flooding in US history. On the very day Arafat lands in America, powerful tornadoes devastate huge sections of the

nation, ripping across Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi, Kentucky and Tennessee. Arafat's American tour also coincides with the storms in the Dakotas, which result in the worst flooding of this century, in addition to weeks of major storms throughout the Midwest. Arafat finishes his tour and leaves the US and the storms stop.

5. **January 21, 1998:** Netanyahu meets with President Clinton at the White House and is coldly received. Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright refuse to have lunch with him. Shortly afterwards that day, the Monica Lewinsky scandal breaks into the mass media and begins to occupy a major portion of Clinton's time.
6. **September 27-28, 1998:** Secretary of State Madeleine Albright works on the final details of an agreement in which Israel will give up 13 percent of Yesha. The same day Hurricane Georges slams into the Gulf Coast with 110 mph winds and gusts up to 175. The hurricane hits the coast and stalls. On September 28, Clinton meets with Arafat and Netanyahu at the White House to finalize the land deal. Later, Arafat addresses the United Nations about declaring an independent Palestinian state by May 1999, while Hurricane Georges pounds the Gulf Coast causing \$1 billion in damage. At the exact time Arafat departs the US the storm begins to dissipate.
7. **October 15-22, 1998:** On October 15, 1998, Yasser Arafat and Benjamin Netanyahu meet at the Wye River Plantation in Maryland, to continue the talks which ended on September 28. The talks are scheduled to last five days with the focus on Israel giving up 13 percent of Yesha. The talks are extended and conclude on October 23. On October 17, awesome rains and tornadoes hit southern Texas. The San Antonio area is deluged with 20 inches of rain in one day. The rains and floods in Texas continue until October 22 and then subside. The floods ravage 25 percent of Texas and leave over one billion dollars in damage. On October 21, Clinton declares this section of Texas a major disaster area.
8. **May 3, 1999:** This is the same day in Israel that Yasser Arafat is scheduled to declare a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as the capital. The declaration is postponed to December 1999 at the request of President Clinton, whose letter to Arafat encourages him for his "aspirations for his own land." He also writes that the Palestinians have a right to "determine their own future on their own land," and that they deserve to "live free, today, tomorrow and forever." That same day, starting at 4:47 pm CDT, the most powerful tornado storm system ever to hit the United States sweeps across Oklahoma and Kansas. The winds are clocked at 316 mph the fastest wind speed ever recorded.

Genesis 12:3 tells us: "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." I can't think of a more dramatic verification of God's promise than the facts listed above. However, I'll bet you didn't hear them connected on the six o'clock news or read about them in the newspaper. And there's a reason for that. Over the past fifty years or so we have been

taught as a culture to ignore the supernatural and to even scoff at it when it presents itself. And therein lies the problem. "Thinking ourselves wise, we have become foolish."

God deliver us from our foolish failure to discern His hand in the events of our times.

So with an unbreakable promise God gave to Abraham a people, a blessing, and a land! Tonight remember this incredible summary of all specifics God has revealed about His Chosen People of Destiny, the Jews? Here they are again.

1. **GOD PICKED HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY AS THE JEWS, DESCENDENTS OF ABRAHAM, CALLED ISRAEL.**
2. **GOD PRESENTED A LAND TO HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY THE JEWS WITH CLEARLY DEFINED BOUNDARIES.**
3. **GOD PROCEEDED TO BRING HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY TO THE PROMISED LAND.**
4. **GOD PRONOUNCED A CURSE UPON HIS UNFAITHFUL BUT CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY AS THEY WANDERED THE WORLD WITHOUT THEIR PROMISED LAND.** God promised the children of Israel great blessing in the land of promise if they would remain faithful to Him. He also predicted great suffering, persecution and worldwide dispersion when they forsook Him. These prophecies came to pass. God warned that wherever they wandered the Jews would be "an astonishment, a proverb, a byword...a curse and a reproach" Some of these warnings were as follows:
  - ✓ Deuteronomy 28:64,66 "**The LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other;** . . . And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life".
5. **GOD PRESERVED HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY FROM ANNIHILATION.** God declared that in spite of such persecution and the periodic wholesale slaughter of Jews, He would not let His chosen people be destroyed, but would preserve them as an identifiable ethnic, national group.
  - ✓ Jeremiah 30:11 I am with you and will save you,' declares the LORD. 'Though I completely destroy all the nations among which I scatter you, **I will not completely destroy you.** I will discipline you but only with justice; I will not let you go entirely unpunished.'

Absorption by those among whom they found themselves would have seemed inevitable, so that little trace of the Jews as a distinct people should have remained today. After all, these despised exiles have been scattered to every corner of the world for 2500 years since the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. Could "tradition" be that strong without real faith in God?

6. **GOD PROMISED TO REGATHER HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY BACK TO THE PROMISED LAND.** The Bible declares that God determined to keep His chosen

people separated to Himself because He would bring them back into their land in the last days prior to the Messiah's second coming.

- ✓ *Isaiah 11:11-12* "And **it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time** [note, the second time -- the first was when He brought them back from the Babylonian captivity] to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, . . . and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth"
- ✓ *Jeremiah 30:10* "'So do not fear, O Jacob my servant; do not be dismayed, O Israel,' declares the LORD. **'I will surely save you out of a distant place, your descendants from the land of their exile.** Jacob will again have peace and security, and no one will make him afraid.
- ✓ *Jeremiah 31:8-12* See, **I will bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the ends of the earth.** Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labor; a great throng will return. 9 They will come with weeping; they will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel's father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son. 10 "Hear the word of the LORD, O nations; **proclaim it in distant coastlands:** 'He who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.' 11 For the LORD will ransom Jacob and redeem them from the hand of those stronger than they. 12 They will come and shout for joy on the heights of Zion; they will rejoice in the bounty of the LORD— the grain, the new wine and the oil, the young of the flocks and herds. They will be like a well-watered garden, and they will sorrow no more.
- ✓ *Ezekiel 36:24, 35-38* "'For **I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land.** 35 They will say, "This land that was laid waste has become like the garden of Eden; the **cities that were lying in ruins, desolate and destroyed, are now fortified and inhabited.**" 36 Then the nations around you that remain will know that I the LORD have rebuilt what was destroyed and have replanted what was desolate. I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it.' 37 "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: **Once again I will yield to the plea of the house of Israel and do this for them:** I will make their people as numerous as sheep, 38 as numerous as the flocks for offerings at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts. **So will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD.**"
- ✓ *Ezekiel 37:21* "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and **will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land**"
- ✓ *Hosea 3:4-5* For the children of Israel **shall abide many days without king or prince,** without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. 5 **Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king.** They shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days.

The "wandering Jews" were without a national home for "many days" and it seemed impossible that such prophecies as these could ever be fulfilled. Even many Bible-believing Christians thought for centuries that God was through with Israel and that all the Old Testament promises to Israel should be spiritualized and applied to the church.

But now, with the return of the Jews and the re-establishment of their nation, it is evident in a unique way that God's Word means exactly what it says.

That prophecy and promise, so long awaited, was fulfilled in the rebirth of Israel in her Promised Land. It happened at last in 1948, nearly 1900 years after the final Diaspora at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by the Roman armies of Titus. This restoration of a nation after 25 centuries is utterly astonishing, a phenomenon without parallel in the history of any other peoples and inexplicable by any natural means, much less by chance.

7. **GOD PROPHESIED HE WOULD MAKE HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE OF DESTINY A SOURCE OF FEAR FOR THE WHOLE WORLD WHEN THEY GET BACK TO THE PROMISED LAND IN UNBELIEF** God declared that in the last days before the Messiah's second coming, Jerusalem would become "a cup of trembling...a burdensome stone for all people" At the time Zechariah uttered this prophecy 2500 years ago, Jerusalem lay in ruins and was surrounded by wilderness. And so it remained century after century. Zechariah's prophecy seemed to be utter madness even after Israel's rebirth in 1948. Yet today, exactly as foretold, a world of nearly 6 billion people has its eyes upon Jerusalem, fearful that the next world war, if it breaks out, will be fought over that tiny city. What an incredible fulfillment of prophecy! Even more impossible than the fact that a people could retain its identity without a homeland for two thousand years is the fact that they should then return and establish their ancient nation once again. Yet this is exactly what the Bible had predicted. What an incredible fulfillment of prophecy!

- o Zechariah 12:2-3 "**I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling.** Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. 3 On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, **I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves.**

#### **GOD IS AT WORK TODAY IN THE SAGA OF THE JEWS:**

- ✓ The Jews began to return to Palestine in small numbers in the early part of the twentieth century, and then in much larger numbers after World War I and the Balfour Declaration. Jerusalem was still under British rule, however.
- ✓ After World War II, the Israeli nation declared its independence in 1948 and was soon recognized by most of the nations and by the United Nations. The new city of Jerusalem indeed did go back to the Jews at this time. However, the old city, including the all-important temple site on Mount Moriah, remained in the hands of the Jordanian Arabs.
- ✓ In the "six-day war" of 1967, Israel finally recaptured the old city of Jerusalem, and the Israelis insist they will never let it go again. As of Christmas 2000 they have retained possession of all of Jerusalem for thirty-three long years, and there is no indication at all that the Arabs are going to recapture it.

**COULD GOD BE WAITING FOR SOMETHING TO HAPPEN?** Yet, the Lord has not come! The times of the Gentiles are still in full sway, even though Jerusalem has apparently gone back to the Jews. However, there is one exception. This exception makes all the difference and indicates with what fine lines the Holy Spirit inscripturates His Word. Jerusalem is not, in God's judgment, a collection of houses and streets, like other cities. It is a temple where God dwells, where His people approach Him through sacrifice, and where He meets with them.

**GOD HAS FOCUSED ON 40 ACRES OF LAND:** As Solomon built the temple on the 1200 foot long and 800 foot wide Temple Mount, God said to him:

- ✓ "I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there" (2 Chronicles 6:6). But long before this, God had first spoken through Moses:
- ✓ "There shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there, thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD" (Deuteronomy 12:11).

**WHERE IS GROUND ZERO:** This place was not just any place in Jerusalem; it was an exact spot, chosen by God.

- It was on Mount Moriah (*2 Chronicles 3:1*) Now Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.
- the spot which God told David to purchase from Ornan the Jebusite and to set up the altar there (*1 Chronicles 21:18*) Therefore, the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David that David should go and erect an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.
- This was the same spot where Abraham had, almost a thousand years before, prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac (*Genesis 22:2*) Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."
- These 40 acres are only a short distance from Calvary itself. This spot, to the Jews and to God, is Jerusalem! And, amazingly, this one spot is the only spot in Jerusalem still controlled by Gentiles. It is on Mount Moriah that the Arabs have built their famous Dome-of-the-Rock, the second most holy place in the Muslim world. The Jews, for political or other reasons, have not yet dared to expel the Arabs from this site, raze it, and proceed to rebuild their temple, as they surely desire to do. It is apparently by this exceedingly slender thread, therefore, that the "times of the Gentiles" are still suspended.
- As the Lord Jesus said, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (*Matthew 5:18*).

The following excerpt<sup>1</sup> is from an article by L. Nelson Bell, M.D., the Father-in-Law of Dr. Billy Graham and executive editor of Christianity Today. "That there is a deep mystery in God's dealings with and plans for Israel is obvious to all students of the Bible. Many wild interpretations have come out of the study of the subject. But there has come rich blessing to those who will let the Scriptures speak for themselves. In the Old Testament and New there are prophecies that speak definitely of Israel as a nation. Many have been fulfilled, and their literal fulfillment strengthens our faith. Other prophecies have yet to be fulfilled. Our Lord, giving a panorama of the last days { the duration of which is not specifically stated), says in speaking of the Jews, 'They will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive among all nations; and Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled' {Luke

<sup>1</sup> Arthur W. Kac M.D., *The Death and Resurrection of Israel*. Baltimore: King Brothers, Inc., 1969, pgs 225-28.

21:24). That for the first time in more than 2,000 years Jerusalem is now completely in the hands of the Jews gives a student of the Bible a thrill and a renewed faith in the accuracy and validity of the Bible. The Jews as a separate people demonstrate a mystery and a hope. Their continuance as a people in the midst of all other nations is in itself a miracle. The cohesiveness of these Jews is demonstrated by the fact that at least ninety-six countries are represented in Israel today—from the ends of the earth, but Jews all. I have visited Palestine twice, the last time four years ago, and have been amazed to note the resourcefulness, unity of purpose and hard work by which Israel has truly made the desert to 'bloom as the rose' (Isaiah 35: 1). These people did not return to Palestine primarily because of religious convictions. It is rather a strong nationalism that has drawn them together. But a small minority in their midst pore over the Old Testament Scriptures and see God's hand working in their behalf. The entire world has been impressed with the Israeli fighting forces. Military experts have used such terms as 'unbelievable', 'fantastic', and 'overwhelming' in speaking of their brilliant tactics and efficiency in the recent war. We ask, Did this just happen? Pictures show the pinpoint accuracy of the raid on Arab air fields. In many cases planes on the ground were destroyed one by one (over 400 in all) without great damage to the landing strips. Just as the Egyptian army was beginning a retreat through the Milta Pass in Sinai, a perfectly placed bomb destroyed a large Egyptian tank in the pass, completely blocking retreat. Hundreds of Egyptian tanks and trucks were either destroyed or stranded. A veteran of Rommel's retreat at El Alamein\* said that this spectacle of destroyed or immobilized heavy equipment beggared anything he had ever seen. The same element of overwhelming military victory is found in every area of the six-day war. We ask again, Did it just happen? One cannot help thinking that in all of this God was working out His own purposes, far above and beyond the capabilities of men and nations! Christians must remember that in events like this we see only a tiny segment of history. Not only does God move in mysterious ways; with Him a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as a day. For this reason unwarranted dogmatism can lead to foolish conclusions. At the same time, the events in the Middle East certainly fit at least in some measure into the picture revealed in the Scriptures. If we say, as the Arabs do, that Israel has no right to exist, we may prove blind to her peculiar destiny under the providence of God. Isaiah's and Ezekiel's prophecies regarding Egypt seem singularly applicable at this time. Nasser's dire threats still ring in our ears: 'Israel must be destroyed', 'We will swallow you up'; 'You invaders will be driven into the sea'; and 'The Gulf of Akaba is permanently closed to Israeli shipping.' But we read in Isaiah, 'In that day the Egyptians will be like women, and tremble with fear before the hand which the LORD of hosts shakes over them. And the land of Judah will become a terror to the Egyptians; everyone to whom it is mentioned will fear because of the purpose which the LORD of hosts has purposed against them' {Isaiah 19: 16-17). It is thrilling to see a segment of prophecy being fulfilled!"<sup>2</sup>

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\* This has reference to the defeat of the German army in North Africa in World War Two.

<sup>2</sup> L. Nelson Bell, "Unfolding Destiny", article in *Christianity Today* (Washington, D.C.), July 21, 1967. Copyright 1967 by *Christianity Today*. Reprinted by permission.