

TRACING THE CRITICAL STEPS IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL IN 1948

A Study in the Supernatural Strategization of Divine Providence

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Out of a resurgence of British interest in the Holy Land as reflected at this time in Benjamin Disraeli's novel *Tancred* and George Eliot's powerfully influential piece of fiction entitled *Daniel Deronda*, The British established the Palestine Exploration Fund in 1865. In 1867 they sent Sir Charles Warren, a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers "to make archaeological soundings at Jerusalem in an effort to determine the exact location of the Temple and the Holy Sepulcher."¹ Very extensive surveys were made over the entire land (which were crucial for General Allenby's campaign in 1917) and out of these Sir Charles wrote a book in 1875 entitled *The Land of Promise: or, Turkey's Guarantee*. In this work he proposes that Great Britain charter a company to take over Palestine from the Turks and as compensation assume a portion of Turkey's staggering foreign debt. He insisted: "Let this be done with the avowed intention of gradually introducing the Jew, pure and simple, who is eventually to **occupy and govern this country.**"² His basis for such an expectation was simply that "It is written over and over again in the Word of God that Israel is to return to their own land." He goes on to assert that "That which is yet to be looked for is the public recognition of the fact, together with the

restoration, in whole or in part, of Jewish national life, under the protection of some one or more of the Great Powers.”³

I invite you to join me in tracing the critical steps in the actualization of this vision - the establishment of the modern state of Israel, which Billy Graham in 1970 called “by far the greatest Biblical event that has taken place during the 20th century.”

I. THE BACKDROP—THE SUSTAINING OF THE VISION AMONG JEWS AND CHRISTIANS ACROSS THE CENTURIES

We sense even among the ante-Nicene fathers that “there is the perception that there would be a literal fulfillment of the promises of the Kingdom to come” and that national Israel and the Church are to be distinguished.⁴ Notwithstanding his move into amillennialism, Augustine saw in Scripture the basis for believing that the “elect Israelites” would be converted through the preaching of Elijah (*Civit. Dei, XX.21, 29*) in the final wrap-up of space-time history. An impressive succession of advocates and conservators of the conviction that God has yet very special things for the Jews would have to include Orthodox Jews (“Next year in Jerusalem!”), Joachim of Fiore and almost all of the Puritans and continental Pietists. John Owen, the eminent Puritan divine and Vice Chancellor of Oxford wrote:

“The Jews shall be gathered from all parts of the earth where they are now scattered, and be brought home to their homeland before the “end of all things” prophesied by St. Peter can occur.”⁵

In his massive work of 1669, *The Mystery of Israel's Salvation Explained and Applied*, Increase Mather, Boston pastor and president of Harvard stated:

“When once God begins this work of Israel’s salvation, it shall be carried on with speed and irresistible might--at their return they shall even fly (Isaiah 11:14). Some have doubted whether they should ever possess the land of their Fathers, but the Scripture is very clear and full on this.”⁶

Some of course have urged a replacement theory or the supersession of the Church over Israel. The notion that God has banished his ancient covenant people to the slag heap of history has of course been a seed-bed of anti-Semitism. John Stott speaks of Christian Zionism as a cult.

Others have argued that something spiritual would happen to the Jews at the end of history but not restoration to the land. George Ladd (who saw the 144,000 as the church), the amillennialist D.M. Lloyd-George and the postmillennialist Charles Hodge would be in this company. At least they see Romans 11 as speaking about the Jews at the end of history and not of the church.

Still others see the present gathering of Jews from the Diaspora as the fulfillment of prophecy - this is it! A return of Jews in unbelief. 5,000,000 Jews in Israel today. Others insist that the return of the Jews is in repentance and faith (cf Deuteronomy 30:1ff) and hence will be at the end of the Tribulation when Christ comes back in power and glory “when every eye will see Him” (Revelation 1:7). My own premise fuses both of

these—there is an inauguration of the restoration in unbelief—a beginning—the vanguard of the 144,000 converted at the midpoint of the Tribulation but the full restoration will not be complete or conclusive until Christ has descended to rule from the throne of David.

Is not the fig tree budding? How can there be a tribulation temple if Jews have not returned in considerable numbers? How can the anti-Christ make a covenant and then break it if the Jews have not returned? How can the 144,000 have a mission of evangelism unless they are converted? The dry bones must come together and be joined bone to his bone and then life will enter into the bones (Ezekiel 37).

This kind of expectation of the Jewish restoration to the land has been a constant over much time and included Charles H. Spurgeon, William Carey, Henry Martyn, Andrew Fuller, Charles Simeon, Phoebe Palmer of our country (in her *Israel's Speedy Restoration and Conversion Contemplated, or Signs of the Times*, 1854), George N.H. Peters and a great host. And our generation has lived to see the return and the establishment of a Jewish state, the first since the days of the Maccabees.

II. THE MODERN REINVIGORATION OF THE VISION OF ISRAEL'S RESTORATION

The Jews in their worldwide dispersion (so literally foretold in Deuteronomy 28-29) were never off the screen. Expelled from England by Edward II in 1242, they were welcomed back by Oliver Cromwell in the days of the Protectorate. None less than Napoleon Bonaparte when on a political adventure in the Middle East cried out in 1799:

“Israelites, arise! Ye exiled, arise! Hasten! Now is the moment which may not return for thousands of years, to claim the restoration of civil rights among the population of the universe which have shamefully been withheld from you for thousands of years, to claim your political existence as a nation among nations, and the unlimited natural right to worship Jehovah in accordance with your faith, publicly and probably forever.”⁷

Napoleon was thus the first head of state to propose the restoration of the Jewish state. Although Germany always had a special interest in the land (remember Frederick the Great’s famous response to this chaplain’s question as to the strongest evidence for the truthfulness of Scripture—‘THE JEW’) and the German Colony in Jerusalem, the British had the most persistent and informed an involvement. Many Brits visited the land including Lord Byron who was involved in the re-opening of Petra in 1811 and the Bonar-McCheyne expedition of 1839 (out of which came the fruitful Budapest mission to the Jews in which Alfred Edersheim, David Baron and Adolph Saphir and other worthies were converted).⁸ National aspirations and a race to build the Suez Canal brought Britain, France, Germany and Russia into serious conflict over Palestine. A key British figure was Anthony Ashley Cooper or Lord Shaftesbury (1800–1885) who was deeply influenced by his friend Bishop Edward Bickersteth in his study of Bible prophecy and his conviction that “Christ would come again suddenly and soon.” He studied Hebrew under MacCaul and in correspondence with the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston,

advocated British support for a Jewish national homeland in Palestine. The Damascus Incident of 1840 when the Jews were accused of the ritual murder of a Capuchin friar saw a chilling pogrom in which “riots, sacking, imprisonment and torture to exact confessions” ran amok.⁹ Shaftesbury (a true Zionist before the fact) according to his biographer “never had a shadow of a doubt that the Jews *were* to return to their own land” or that Lord Palmerston’s intervention on behalf of the Jews made him the antitype of the Persian Emperor Cyrus.

The butchery in Damascus also aroused the protests of the American President, Martin Van Buren. Mark Twain wrote of the prophecies of the Jews returning to their land and “the restoration of their “ancient power and grandeur.”¹⁰ The assassination of the Russian Czar Alexander II brought violent pogroms in which 1 1/4 million Jews were slaughtered. Pivotal to American thinking were M.N. Noah, a Jewish lawyer and American consul in Tunis who became burdened for the Jews and William E. Blackstone (1841–1935), a Chicago businessman who gathered 413 names of prominent Americans and presented them to President Benjamin Harrison in a petition supporting “the political right of Jews to rebuild the nation of Israel.”¹¹

Blackstone was a Methodist who was involved in the Civil War and knew Generals Grant and Mead and President Lincoln. In 1862 Grant had expelled all Jews from his military region but President Lincoln revoked this order.¹²

Blackstone prospered in business and published his widely read book *Jesus is Coming* in 1878. Influenced by Dr. James Brookes of St. Louis and C.I. Scofield, Blackstone’s views were very close to those of the Irish

preacher, John Nelson Darby. Grose observes: “Blackstone’s literal interpretations of Scripture may have offended mainstream American Protestantism, which had long since adopted a more flexible theology. But with his friends, Dwight L. Moody and C.I. Scofield, Blackstone clung to the Holy Text word for word, holding that the Jewish people remained to become once more God’s elect, the chosen people.”¹³

Blackstone spoke of the return of precursors in unbelief which would be just the beginning of the fulfillment of the promises which would embrace the virtual return of all of world Jewry to the land. The permanent restoration will allow for Israel to be a center of blessing for all nations (Isaiah 49:18, 22-23, Micah 4:1-2, Zechariah 8:20-23, 14:16). He established the American Messianic Fellowship in Chicago which is still a viable witness to the Jews. Blackstone had the vision of a Jewish state and the savvy to realize some careful political pressure would have to be part of its ultimate fulfillment. While President Harrison would not be such a “Cyrus,” a later American president would see himself in such a role. The Jews would not forget.

III. THE WORLD ZIONIST MOVEMENT AND MODERN ANTI-SEMITISM

While Gentile interest and involvement in the establishment of a national home for the Jews in the Holy Land gained momentum, such a Jewish concern was also bubbling to a climax in the emergence of the World Zionist movement under the aegis of Theodore Herzl. Because of the stubborn obduracy of the Turkish Sultan and the Ottomans toward any Jewish incursion into Palestine, various Jewish philanthropists sponsored agricultural settlements of displaced Jews as the Rothschild colony in

Rishon le Sion in the land. Baron Hirsh proposed settling the Jews in Argentina or Paraguay in South American. The British talked about El Arish in Egypt and Joseph Chamberlain pled for Uganda. Much later Bernard Baruch of the US projected Angola as the site. Even eastern Saudi Arabia was trumpeted as the solution (before the oil deposits were discovered, to be sure).

All of this was proto-Zionism. Indeed, as former Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu acknowledges - the early rise of Christian Zionism “antedates the modern Zionist movement by at least half a century.”¹⁴ The explosive breakthrough was led by a pompous, brilliant but spiritually shallow assimilated Jew who was born in Budapest in 1860—Theodore Herzl. When he was eighteen he moved with his parents to Vienna, then home for 118,000 Jews. He had studied for the law but obviously writing was his gift. One of his best friends at the University of Vienna was Oswald Boxer who was sent by the Jewish community to Brazil to explore the possibility of resettling eastern European Jews there, but he came down with yellow fever and died at the age of thirty-two. Herzl wrote a play at this time entitled *The New Ghetto* which disclosed a thinly veneered Jewish self-hatred. Always hindered by a congenital heart defect, Herzl was assigned to cover the Dreyfus trial in Paris by his paper the pro-German *Neue Freie Press*. Dreyfus was a gentle assimilated Jew, the highest ranking Jew in the French military. He was accused of selling military secrets to the Germans. The trial was a farce and Dreyfus exclaimed: “I am being persecuted because I am a Jew.”¹⁵ He was found guilty in 1894 and sent to Devil’s Island off South America where he was effectively

destroyed. He was later exonerated and returned to France but it was too late.

Anti-Jewish riots tore the fabric of France even though many of the literati supported Dreyfus. Emile Zola had to flee France. It was clear that deep rivers of anti-Semitism flowed through refined and enlightened France. "Paris changed Herzl. French anti-Semitism undermined the ironic complacency of the Jewish would-be non-Jew."¹⁶ Herzl was profoundly shaken and wrote an 86 page tractate entitled *Der Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*). Herzl argued that the only answer was a sovereign Jewish state in Palestine. He envisioned the robes of the high priests in the Jewish state and the Cavalry with yellow trousers and white tunics and the officers with silver breastplates. Called "the first Jewish statesman since the destruction of Jerusalem," Herzl rallied World Zionism in behalf of the restoration of the Jews to the land in face of great opposition of many prosperous Jews in the west (like the Rothschilds), the liberal religious establishment and most western governments. The state of Israel was founded in 1948, in forty-six years rather than the fifty years which Herzl had predicted. A British subject and a clergyman, William Hechler, chaplain at the British embassy in Vienna was an avid student of prophecy. He was a quintessential Christian Zionist who believed that "the prophesied moment has come" (1896). He traveled with Herzl and was one of three non-Jews who attended the first World Zionist meeting in Basel, August 29-31, 1897. He helped keep Herzl on the line of Palestine as the location of the Jewish state even in the face of great discouragement from the Turks. Hechler assisted Herzl in gaining entre to the Grand Duke of Baden, Kaiser Wilhelm II and the Prince of Wales in Britain.

It is not difficult to see why the Jews in the face of mounting anti-Semitism in our own time, still see that anti-Semitism has not faded in the west (60% in Europe see Israel as the #1 threat to world peace) and that non-European anti-Semitism is at a frenzied peak, fueled still by *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and the official Saudi line that Zionists are responsible for the 9/11 terrorist attack on New York City. In fact it is clear as one thoughtful Jewish analyst has recently written in the *Jerusalem Post*: “A direct thread runs from Dreyfus to Auschwitz...it was liberal, fin de siecle France that condemned Dreyfus, and it was totalitarian Nazi Germany that carried out the death sentence for his kith and kin. Today there is a Dreyfus mentality in Europe, and there is a foul, Nazi-like mood in the neighboring Middle East. Is Europe the 1930s again? No. Not yet at least.”¹⁷ (60% of the Palestinians advocate armed conflict even after the establishment of a Palestinian State).

Only today it is a collective Dreyfus. No matter how hard earned is their integration. “Anyone supporting Israel will stand trial as well...the innocence of Dreyfus ultimately proved irrelevant to Europe and its hatred for the Jews.”¹⁸ But mounting pressure from Jewish and Christian Zionists needed a breakthrough. And it is coming in a most unexpected way. Again and again we see in this narrative that the truth is stranger than fiction. Our God makes even the wrath of men to praise Him. It has always been so and will be so.

IV. WORLD WAR ONE AND THE BALFOUR DECLARATION

A series of bloody pogroms in Europe, such as the infamous Kishinev pogrom of 1903, in which scores of Russian Jews were murdered, kindled

the Zionist flame even further. Tiny concessions by the Sultan of Turkey such as a 25 year permission to Lawrence Oliphant to function as the Palestine Development Company, gave small ingress to some oppressed Jews from Rumania and Southern Russia. Sir Moses Montefiore had visited Palestine seven times and planted orange groves for immigrants, the old windmill outside the wall of the Old City of Jerusalem remaining as a vestige of his interest and vision. H.H. Kitchener (1850-1916), one of Britain's great generals and Secretary of State for War in the early years of World War I was a devout Christian who gave himself to the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. He had much in common with General Charles Gordon ("Chinese" Gordon) the notable student of Scripture who had explored much of Palestine (after whom Gordon's Calvary is named in recognition of his identification). Gordon was killed by the Mahdi at Khartoum and Kitchener was sent by Gladstone on a mission of conquest. Kitchener's vision is further seen in the secret and very controversial Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 in which Britain and France agreed that after the war Turkey would be divested of its Arab provinces and these would be divided between the big "two" who would be guaranteed permanent spheres of influence.

Other critical born-again personalities playing significant roles in this unfolding drama and true "lovers of Zion" must include the British war-time Prime Minister, David Lloyd-George, Arthur James Balfour, General Sir Edmund Allenby, T.E. Lawrence and Orde Wingate. God always has his person in the right place at the right time. Several of these were very eccentric but God used them for His glory.

The mountainous obstacle was the Ottoman Empire stretched out for 500 years and extended at its peak under Suleiman I to almost all of North Africa and the Balkans.

But now Turkey was “the sickman of Europe.” She had fought an inconclusive war with Russia in the previous century and a war with Italy early in the twentieth century. Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece had slipped away from her. A revolt by the Young Turks in 1908 made little change. The barbaric massacres of the Armenians greatly weakened the fabric of her national life and her integrity.¹⁹ Germany long cultivated the Ottoman Turks and the Turks signed a secret defense treaty with the Central Powers.²⁰ Although scoring early success against the British at Gallipoli, the Turks were mauled hopelessly in the war. Prime Minister Asquith of Great Britain at the beginning of the war opined that “the death-knell of the Ottoman Empire in Europe and Asia” had now been sounded.²¹ Even H.G. Wells raised the issue - “And now what is to prevent the Jews from having Palestine and restoring a real Judaea?”²² World War I removed Turkey as an obstacle to the formation of the Jewish state and set Great Britain as a key player in the opening of the land.

But equally significant was the Balfour Declaration of 1917 which expressed her Majesty’s government in support of the Jewish aspiration for a homeland in Palestine. The focus here is first on Fritz Haber, a German Jew, who developed a poison gas used by the Germans early in the war greatly demoralizing the Allies. Britain turned to Dr. Chaim Weizmann, a Russian refugee, working as a chemist at the University of Manchester. Weizmann, president of Britain’s Zionists, devised a commercial process

for the production of acetone, a prime ingredient in the manufacture of explosives. The British owed something to Weizmann.

With the accession of the Lloyd-George/Balfour government, we have two leaders both favorable to Zionist goals. Lloyd-George was raised in a non-conformist home in Wales. He knew his Old Testament and loved the Jews. Balfour had what one described as “an elegantly detached appearance.” He was raised in a devout conservative home where he was taught to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem.” He often spoke of his mother’s fervent belief in the second advent. He was something of a philosopher and his Gifford Lectures in 1922, *Theism and Humanism*, are still worth reading. He detested anti-Semitism. He was deeply perturbed by the atomized state of world Jewry. Weizmann helped him see how he could help the Jews. At this point his life-long study of the Bible and his Scottish upbringing commandeered his whole being. Even Barbara Tuchman concedes that “the motive was biblical not imperial.”²³ Balfour spoke of what he called “the new decree of Cyrus.” Balfour’s letter was directed to Lord Rothschild and in part simply states British support for a Palestinian national home for the Jewish people. It was dated as of November 2, 1917. Fiercely debated in the cabinet and opposed by the one Jew in the Cabinet, Edwin Montague, the letter prevailed. Winston Churchill was always a fervent Zionist. Most significantly, the Balfour Declaration, hated and maligned by the enemies of Israel, was incorporated into the permanent record of the Supreme Council of the Peace Conference at San Remo in April of 1920.

American support for the 67 word Balfour Declaration came promptly and vigorously from President Woodrow Wilson. Wilson felt “God sent me to do something.”²⁴ The ubiquitous Jews, eleven million strong, were on his

heart. "To think that I, a son of the manse, should be able to help restore the Holy Land to its people."²⁵ His Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, knew nothing about the move and the State Department as always was opposed to anything not pro-Arab.

The key figure was Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis who had been raised apart from Jewish contacts or tradition, and who became an ardent Zionist in the year of Wilson's first election. Even some Arabs were euphoric at the prospect of some capital being pumped into their lifeless economy, but that soon changed. Wilson was surprised at the opposition expressed at Versailles but he stood firmly. Also helping at this time was General Allenby's "Christmas gift to the British people" who were so spent and weary of war. Lloyd-George had asked for the gift and Allenby marched into Jerusalem on December 11, 1917 followed immediately by T.E. Lawrence who had raised rebellion against the Turks through the Muslim world. The shift into Christian control after 730 years sent shock waves through the Christian world. In London, Dr. F.B. Meyer, the Baptist leader and many others rallied in great meetings. A manifesto was issued indicating that God's promise to restore the Jews to Palestine was beginning to be fulfilled. Thousands gathered in London for the exposition of prophetic themes. So it was around the world.

At bottom line, the British historian Paul Johnson is probably correct in saying that "Weizmann pulled the Zionists through a brief window of opportunity, fated never to open again. Thanks to *Tancred* (Disraeli's novel) and *Daniel Deronda* (George Eliot's novel), he successfully appealed to the instincts of the British ruling class and thus received the last *ex gratia* gift of a great power, which went clean against the arithmetic spirit of the age."²⁶

Do we not see the hand of God working out His glorious plan and purpose which calls for the restoration of Israel to Zion?

V. WORLD WAR II AND THE HOLOCAUST

Zionism set itself to work within the League of Nations' mandate to Great Britain, but of course anti-Semitism continued to raise its ugly head around the world. Poland's large Jewish population suffered acutely. Allen Dulles, nephew of Wilson's Secretary of State Lansing fumed at Zionists. The Vatican was dismayed. Mainline and liberal Christendom consistently railed at the developments. Charles Lindberg the aviator and Henry Ford were arch-anti-Semites, the latter speaking of "the Jewish subversion of Christian society." Hirohito's Japan offered to resettle the Jews in Manchuria in 1939. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt spoke out of both sides on the issues and it is unquestionably true that there never would have been an Israel had he been president at the end of the war.²⁷ Zionism's true friends in Europe and in America were Bible-believing conservative Christians. Then and now.

They saw that Islam's anti-Zionism is also essentially anti-Christianity.²⁸ Conservative Christians never rejected the Jewish Scriptures but saw their real fulfillment in the return of Jews to *eretz Israel*. The liberal establishment in Christendom was embarrassed by predictive prophecy. They did not accept the idea of Messianic prophecy. Cardinal Spellman pled with President Truman not to recognize the state of Israel. The vicious Roman Catholic anti-Semite from Detroit, Father Coughlin had access to the American airwaves for too long. But fundamental Christians have argued for the major role of a restored Israel in an apocalyptic setting

faithfully and consistently over many centuries.²⁹ Great Britain under immense Arab pressure retreated from the Balfour Declaration and finally abandoned the Mandate. The British White Paper of 1939 betrayed the Balfour Declaration and I believe Britain has paid a heavy price for her perfidy (cf Genesis 12:1-3). As early as 1922 Britain partitioned Palestine and gave a huge chunk of the mandated land (4/5), the whole East Bank, to constitute the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in an effort to placate the oil-rich Arab states. The first fracture of the land.

While Britain tried to manage the sizzling tensions between the Jews and the Palestinians in the land and while Adolph Hitler was on his way to the ominous base of power from which he murdered 6,000,000 Jews and almost destroyed Europe, conservative Christians were clashing with modernists in ever-increasing intensity. A.C. Gaebelien (1861-1945) wrote a key article in *The Fundamentals* on prophecy and dealt with the return of the Jews to Palestine and the Balfour Declaration (11.60-61). He gave as his opinion that “The OT is practically a sealed book to every person who does not believe in a literal restoration of Israel to their land.” While he argued that only the return of Christ could usher in the real restoration of the nation of Israel, the partial restoration in unbelief must be seen as significant.³⁰

That so many of the Jewish Zionists were not practicing Jews and were indeed quite left-wing was troubling to many fundamentalists, but God does use Cyrus and many a crooked stick. David Rausch argues persuasively that Zionism was part of the fabric of fundamentalism (as does Ernest R. Sandeen).³¹ *Our Hope* magazine edited by A.C. Gaebelien consistently

documented rising anti-Semitism in the thirties and spoke of MONSTER HITLER.

The unspeakable tragedy and devastation of World War II need not be documented here other than to reference the unimaginable atrocity of the Holocaust which must be seen as the supreme pogrom. The fact is that the Holocaust was planned, supervised and executed by university men and women trained before Hitler came to power. We can see an endemic anti-Semitism in Central Europe going back to Luther's tirade of 1543 entitled *The Jews and Their Lies*. The world basically turned its back on the suffering of the Jews including President Franklin Roosevelt. Even his close cohort, Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter refused to believe the reports.³²

Why did so few in Germany protest? Where were the churches? Paul Johnson put it well : "The First World War made the Zionist state possible. The Second World War made the Zionist state essential."³³ The earlier war opened the land to the Jews and the later war opened the Jewish people to the land. God is at work!

VI. THE END OF THE BRITISH MANDATE AND THE UNITED NATIONS

After the peace treaty with Turkey in 1923, the British assumed the mandated trusteeship of Palestine. The first military governor (1920-25) described the people in Jerusalem as waiting for the new High Commissioner "almost faint with happiness and moving as if in the glory and freshness of a dream come true."³⁴ The bloom was soon off the roses. Jolting clashes between Palestinians and Jewish settlers became the order of the day. Chosen as head of the Arab Council was Haj Amin el-Husseini,

the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, who turned out to be staunch admirer of Hitler and his guest. Leon Uris's *Exodus* describes how British destroyers fired on the ship and finally its refugees from the death camps were interred again in Cyprus. 769 refugees drowned at sea when the *Struma* was denied entrance to Palestine. Read John Bierman's *Odyssey*, the last escape from Germany and how 500 Jews sailed down the Danube and suffered shipwreck, starvation and internment. That Jews should again be behind barbed wire but this time held by the Allies was a very bitter pill for many to swallow.

Generally the Jewish Agency handled matters of immigration but underground groups who challenged the British bias in favor of the Arabs came into being, such as the Irgun with Menachem Begin and the Stern Gang which included another future Prime Minister, Itzhak Shamir. The regular Jewish Defense league was *Haganah*. The Passover Riots of 1920 saw six Jews killed and 200 injured with much destruction of property. A wave of Arab attacks in 1921 killed 95 and seriously wounded 219. Of course the Jews were not perfect and were drivingly acquisitive in their desire to establish kibbutzim (communal agricultural colonies) and their moshavim (cooperative agricultural settlements). Stemming from disagreements on Jewish procedures at the Western Wall, there was great violence in 1929 (with hundreds of Jews killed including 67 massacred in the town of Hebron) in what must be termed the revolt of 1936.

Some like Vladimir Jabotinsky fought the Arabs. Some Jewish leaders advocated the establishment of a bi-national state. A Royal Commission headed by Lord Peel was established to study the situation and then recommended partition of the land and reduction of immigration (1936).

The Arabs refused to sit down with the Jews. The Commission concluded that the purpose of the Mandate was to “promote the establishment of the Jewish National Home.” Streams of immigration now could not be staunched. Are these not the dry bones coming together? Into this ferment comes the neurotic but very devout believer, Captain Ord Charles Wingate, loved in Israel to this day because he taught the Jews of the *yishuv* how to defend themselves and thus laid the foundations for the Israel Defense Force.³⁵ In February of 1947 after an Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry, the British admitting total failure asked the fledgling United Nations to take over the mandate and find a permanent solution.

A Special Commission on Palestine (UNSCOP) was formed consisting of eleven member nations (no major power was included). Judge Sandstrom of Sweden headed the commission and Dr. Ralph Bunche represented the UN. The Arabs blundered by boycotting the entire process. Great Britain was angry and offish. The United States was passive seeking a consensus. The Soviet Union was favorable to a Jewish state in order to humiliate Britain. The Commission was not afforded customary courtesy by the British in a stopover at Malta enroute to Palestine. By a remarkable coincidence they saw with their own eyes the British handling of the *Exodus*; the immigrant ship with 4500 Jews on board. They watched British soldiers “using rifle butts, rubber hoses and tear gas on survivors of the death camps.” In this connection the British condemned five Jews to death. Most inopportune.

Great Britain never thought the UN would vote 2/3 for a Jewish state. The Labor Party now in power under Clement Attlee thought they would get Palestine back on referral from the UN and at better terms. Dr. Chaim

Weizmann and David Ben-Gurion made eloquent appeals to the Commission. Weizmann said “It is our last chance.”³⁶ The black American diplomat working for the UN had the Commission see Begin and to doubting members said “I am also a member of a persecuted minority.”³⁷ A British diplomat asked Bunche if all of his experience had not made him an anti-Semite to which Bunche replied—“Never, a wise Negro can never be an anti-Semite.” The commission which had only three sympathetic to a Jewish state at the beginning of the three-month process nevertheless voted unanimously to end the British mandate and partition the land. The change of these votes was a miracle!

The vote in the United Nations was two more than necessary to accept the commission’s recommendation, being 33 in favor, 13 against, 10 abstentions. When the vote was announced the Jews were jubilant—there would be a Jewish state for the first time since the days of the Maccabees. The Arabs rioted. On May 14, 1948, the Jewish state of Israel was declared. The Star of David fluttered over Jerusalem.

VII. THE EXTRAORDINARY EMERGENCE OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

On May 14, 1948 the British left Jerusalem for good, and the key to Zion Gate was handed over by a contrary British officer to Rabbi Mordecai Weingarten. The interval of time between the UN vote and the declaration of the Jewish State was chaotic. Many Jews were killed and the Jews took reprisals including the Deir Yassin massacre in April of 1948 by the Irgun. Six neighboring Arab states prepared for war. At this point, 500,000

Palestinian Arabs fled their homes upon instruction from their leaders in the expectation that the Israelis would quickly be defeated and they would be able to come back to their homes and also to take a share in what the Jews would leave behind in their flight. The Arabs had walked out of the UN declaring that “The partition line shall be nothing but a line of fire and blood.”³⁸

The right of return is still a live issue in Middle Eastern negotiations since these persons are still refugees in camps for the most part, never having been welcomed into any Arab nation (although some do live in Jordan). The 900,000 Jews forced out of Arab lands with only what they could carry and the shirts upon their backs are seldom discussed. That the Palestinians are not victims of the establishment of the Jewish State is quite clear.³⁹

The critical issue was now whether or not President Harry S. Truman would recognize the new state of Israel. The State Department wanted to delay recognition in hope that a better solution might be found, viz. giving Israel the *Negev* or UN trusteeship or some such. President Truman was a nominal Baptist and had a tilt to Zionism because of his upbringing. His advisors almost unanimously urged him to take no action and these included General George Marshall, Dean Rusk, Edward Stettinius, George Kennan, James Forrestal (very anti-Zionistic) and Warren Austin the US representative at the UN. Eleanor Roosevelt also on the US team at the UN was in favor of recognition but she did not cut much with the President. He had become somewhat negative to Zionist interests because they pestered him all the time. He did not want to see Dr. Chaim Weizmann or anyone.

The influential B'nai B'rith Executive Vice President Maurice Bisgyer called his friend in Kansas City, A.J. Granoff and asked him if there was some Jewish person in Kansas City with the name Jacobs, Jacobstein, Jacoby. He replied: "You are talking about Eddie Jacobson. I am his lawyer." Jacobson and Truman had been in the haberdashery business together and had fought in the war together. Truman had great confidence in Jacobson and through his good offices Truman was the first to recognize the state of Israel going contrary to all of his advisors. He doubtless went too far on an occasion when he was introduced as "the man who helped create the state of Israel." Grose observed that Truman "let his love of ancient history go to his head.... 'What do you mean helped create? I am Cyrus, I am Cyrus.'"⁴⁰

Fascinatingly enough the Soviet Union followed immediately and encouraged their vassel satellite Czechoslovakia to supply arms to Israel. Ben-Gurion sent Mrs. Golda Meir, later prime minister of Israel (who was raised in Milwaukee) to the US to raise funds for the imminent war. She had \$5 in her pocket when she left but returned with \$50 million. This one trip, humanly speaking, ensured the survival of the new born state. South Africa soon joined in the parade of nations to recognize Israel, her leader being General Jan Christian Smuts, last surviving member of the British War Cabinet which had approved the Balfour Declaration three decades earlier.⁴¹

Of course many were outraged at the establishment of the state of Israel, many of them liberal thinkers like the historian Arnold Toynbee. Among the Jews, Menachem Begin and other strict constructionists lamented that Israel did not have Bethlehem and Hebron and the whole of

the land. Of course the ultimate return will see greater Israel as described in Scripture and as emblazed on the outer face of the Knesset Building in Jerusalem. For the present some compromise had to be made as Begin himself learned when he made peace with Egypt. Only 4% of the American Jews polled indicated they intended to make aliya. But this too will change before the final shape of things to come. The vengeful Palestinian Arabs (1,100,000 people) made all further discussion of refining the UN vote extraneous and launched with their allies (such as the Arab Legion) an all-out onslaught against poorly armed Jews who numbered 650,000. Israel's War of Independence lasted 5 1/2 months and cost her 1% of her population. Approximately 6,000 Israelis were killed, which would be like 2,500,000 being killed in a war in our country (our deaths in Viet Nam were about 35,000). Jerusalem was isolated and in grave danger as the Arab Legion under Glubb Pasha advanced. Syria and Lebanon came from the North, Iraq and Jordan from the east and Egypt from the south. Many times Israelis were fighting tanks with Molotov cocktails. Still Israel prevailed.

The Sinai Campaign of 1956 (in collusion with Britain and France) was a brilliant "work of art" in terms of military strategy and marked the introduction of the United Nations peacekeeping force in the region. The Six-day War of 1967 saw Israel launch a dramatic pre-emptive strike and reap the prize of the Golan Heights, the West Bank, all of Jerusalem (where the Palestinians had desecrated Jewish cemeteries and holy sites and forbidden Jews to pray at the Wall), Gaza and the Sinai Peninsula, a fourfold increase in land assets. The P.L.O. was in place after 1964 led by Yassir Arafat who was born in Egypt. What followed was the atrophying "war of attrition" and the almost disastrous Yom Kipper War of 1973.

Twenty two Arab states were pitted against Israel and the “Peace for Galilee” War in Lebanon was clearly a debacle for Israel, in terms in galvanizing world opinion against her, dividing herself internally, precipitating the fall of Begin and failing to resolve the issue of the P.L.O.⁴² Still little Israel continues to thrive as an intellectual, economic and military power. She is the only democracy in the Middle East, electing her government. Israel is the premier “immigrant” society in the world, drawing Jews from 105 different countries. Remarkable stories of how the Kurds helped the Iraqi Jews to escape (a community which once numbered 130,000), the flight of Jews from Yemen, the rescue of the Jews from Egypt in the Six-Day War (with the help of the Spanish ambassador), liberation for the bulk of Romanian Jews, the exodus of the black Jews (the Falashas) from Ethiopia, and more recently the mass movement of Soviet Jews. Presently the emigration of Jews from Argentina and now France continues to build the population of Israel, which is now 6,780,000 people, of which 5,180,000 are Jews and 19% Arab.⁴³

The fact is that “Jews are the most universally hated and persecuted ethnic group in history.”⁴⁴ The Arabs refuse to have the name of Israel on any map, refuse to acknowledge that the temple ever stood on what they call “Haram al-Shariff.” Sheik Hassan Naasrallah, general secretary of Hezbollah said awhile back: “If Jews all gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide.”⁴⁵

The Israeli left under Barak really offered Arafat *all*, but he refused. The Arabs do not want a settlement, they want to destroy the Jews. The present uptick of worldwide anti-Semitism is incontestably taking place before our eyes.⁴⁶ The Palestinians do not want Israeli settlements in their proposed

state but numerous Arab cities and towns dot Israel's landscape. Why no mention of this? Christian Arabs are being driven out of Palestine by radical Islam (500 Christian Arabs have left Bethlehem in the last six months).⁴⁷ Palestinian children are brainwashed to die as suicide bombers. The World Court has ruled against Israel's wall of protection. "Europe herself becomes more and more a province of Islam, a colony of Islam" concludes Oriana Fallaci, the Italian writer, given the hollowing out of European Christianity and the anemically low birthright. We can only foresee the increasing isolation of Israel with ultimately even the US forsaking her when "all nations" gather against in the end-time scenario (Joel 3, Zechariah 12).

What we have seen developing over the last century would certainly seem to be the inauguration of the fulfillment of great OT promises like Isaiah 11, Jeremiah 16 and Zechariah 12. In a most remarkable series of what appear to be providential steps, the modern Jewish state of Israel has been established and sustained. We see great tensions within and immense pressure from without to return land to the Palestinians which would make Israel indefensible. How open would we be to return California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas to Mexico because we took them by force? I believe that the French writer, Jacques Maritain is absolutely correct when he says: "It is a strange paradox to see that the Israelis are being denied their right to the one and only territory to which, considering the entire history of humanity as a whole, it is an absolute certainty that one people has an incontestable claim: for the people of Israel are the one and only people in the world to which one land, the land of Canaan, has been given by the true God, the unique and transcendental God, the center of

the universe and of the human species. And what God has given once, he has given for all eternity.”⁴⁸

ENDNOTES

1. Charles Warren, quoted in Ronald Sanders, *The High Walls of Jerusalem: A History of the Balfour Declaration and the Birth of the British Mandate for Palestine* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983) 11
2. *ibid.* 12
3. *ibid.* 12
4. Larry Crutchfield, quoted in David L. Larsen, *The Company of Hope: A History of Bible Prophecy in the Church* (Bloomington, IN: Authorhouse, 2004) 299
5. John Owen, quoted in David L. Larsen, *Jews, Gentiles and the Church* (Grand Rapids, Discovery House, 1995) 126
6. Increase Mather, quoted in *ibid.* 126
7. Napoleon as quoted in Barbara W. Tuchman, *Bible and Sword: England and Palestine from the Bronze Age to Balfour* (New York: Ballantine, 1956) 163. Napoleon took an army of 38,000 men into the Middle East as far as Acre.
8. Andrew Bonar and R.M. McCheyene, *Mission of Discovery: The Beginnings of Modern Jewish Evangelism* (Fearn, Roos-shire: Christian Focus, 1996). Rich study.
9. Barbara W. Tuchman, *op. cit.* 195. The same issues but from a Jewish perspective, cf Franz Kobler, *The Vision Was There: A History of the British Movement for the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine* (London: Lincoln-Praeger, 1956).
10. Peter Grose, *Israel in the Mind of America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1983) 27. Written by *The New York Times* bureau chief in the Soviet Union and Israel.
11. David L. Larsen, *The Company of Hope*, *op. cit.* 292
12. Peter Grose, *op. cit.* 27
13. *ibid.* 35-36
14. Benjamin Netanyahu, *A Place Among the Nations: Israel and the World* (New York: Bantam, 1993) 16. Former Prime Minister of Israel.

15. Ernst Pawel, *The Labyrinth of Exile: A Life of Theodore Herzl* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989) 126. Still the best biography of Herzl.
16. *ibid.* 206
17. Emanuele Ottolenghi, "The second Dreyfus trial," in *Jerusalem Post*, June 25, 2004, 14
18. *ibid.*
19. G.S. Graber, *Caravans to Oblivion: The Armenian Genocide 1915* (New York: John Wiley, 1996). German Chief of Staff Von Moltke: "Militarily Turkey amounts to nothing" 121.
20. Ronald Sanders, *op. cit.* 42
21. *ibid.* 59
22. *ibid.* 60
23. Barbara W. Tuchman, *op. cit.* 179
24. Peter Grose, *op. cit.* 66
25. *ibid.* 67
26. Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Harper, 1987) 430ff
27. Peter Grose, *op. cit.* 113
28. *ibid.* 121
29. Paul Charles Merkley, *Christian Attitudes Toward the State of Israel* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001) 154
30. Michael D. Stallard, *The Early Twentieth Century Dispensationalism of A.C. Gaebelien* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002) 78
31. David Rausch, *Zionism Within Early American Fundamentalism 1878-1918* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1979) 84. Ernest R. Sandeen documents the same thesis in his *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970, 1978).
32. A general survey of the Holocaust, its roots and tragedy, cf David L. Larsen, *Jews, Gentiles and the Church*, *op. cit.* 97-111. A gem of insight: David A. Rausch, *A Legacy of Hatred: Why Christians Must Not Forget the Holocaust* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984, 1990).
33. Paul Johnson, *op. cit.* 107
34. Barbara W. Tuchman, *op. cit.* 340

35. Leonard Mosley, *Gideon Goes to War: The Story of Major-General Orde Wingate* (New York: Scribners, 1955); Christopher Sykes, *Orde Wingate* (London: Collins, 1959). His father's cousin, Sr. Reginald Wingate (also a very committed Christian) was British High Commissioner in Egypt starting in 1916, cf Gabriel Warburg, *The Sudan Under Wingate* (London: Frank Cass, 1971).

36. Peter Grose, op. cit. 232

37. *ibid.* 237

38. Abba Eban, *An Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1977) 999

39. Joan Peters, *From Time Immemorial: The Origin of the Arab-Jewish Conflict in Palestine* (New York: Harper, 1984); another fine study of the refugee issue is Samuel Katz, *Battleground: Facts and Fantasy in Palestine* (New York: Bantam, 1973).

40. Peter Grose, op. cit. 293

41. *ibid.* 299

42. Still the best classic analysis is Chaim Herzog, *The Arab-Israeli Wars: From the War of Independence through Lebanon* (New York: Random House, 1982)

43. "Israel, Go Figure" in *The Jerusalem Post*, May 7, 2004, 4f

44. David Horowitz, *Why Israel is the Victim in the Middle East* (Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Popular Culture, 2002). Arabs argue that the Germans were victimized by the Jews. Holocaust deniers continue to thrive.

45. Quoted in Elena Lappin's review of Richard Ben Cramer's *How Israel Lost* in *New York Times Book Review*, May 23, 2004, 15

46. Gabriel Schonfeld, *The Return of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Encounter, 2004)

47. For key insights on the Christian Arabs and what they face, cf Raphael Israeli

Green Crescent Over Nazareth: The Displacement of Christians by Muslims in the Holy Land (London: Frank Cass, 2002). For a searching study of serious internal tensions in Israel, cf Noah J. Efron, *Real Jews: Secular vs Ultra-Orthodox and the Struggle for Jewish Identity in Israel* (New York: Basic Books, 2003). Sobering.

48. Quoted in Paul Charles Merkley, op. cit. 144. Merkley has another sterling book entitled *The Politics of Christian Zionism* (London: Frank Cass, 1998). As to how liberals have opposed Israel, cf Herschel Fishman,

American Protestantism and the Jewish State (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1973). *The Christian Century* has been consistently hostile to the restoration of the Jews, 28. Their position is: "Old Israel has ceased to exist - the New Israel is the Church." Sadly, *Christianity Today* has been increasingly pro-Palestinian and anti-Israeli in tone. It should be noted that nearly half of world Jewry now lives in eretz Israel. Not unexpected is Timothy Weber's new diatribal assault on dispensational Zionists, built on the supersessionistic premise that "the church is the New Israel and that Jews have already had their day," *On the Road to Armageddon: How Evangelicals Became Israel's Best Friend* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004) 113. Weber virtually ignores the long history of a Christian belief in the future destiny of geo-political Israel. My much fuller critique of Weber will be in an upcoming issue of *The Discerner: An Interdenominational Quarterly Exposing Unbiblical Teaching and Movements*. Curiously, in the July 27, 2004 issue of the *Christian Century*, tribute is paid to the well-known Jewish scholar, Michael Wyschograd who forcibly argues that the "divine election of Israel is unconditional, based solely on God's love" (22). He roundly castigates the error of supersessionism (26). Further, a Jewish convert to Catholicism, Roy E. Shoeman in his best-selling book, *Salvation is from the Jews* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2003), holds that supersession is wrong because the Jews must persist since they are such a critical part of the events in relation to the parousia of Christ (251). He quotes Cardinal Lustiger of Paris who argues for the irrevocable calling of Israel and that the existence of Israel is one of the guarantees of the parousia. On the other hand is the lamentable selective choice by the United Presbyterian Church USA of certain companies doing business with Israel for divestment and their condemnation of Christian Zionism. David Brickner, Executive Director of Jews for Jesus is right on when he terms this "arrogance toward the branches" (Romans 11:18) in *JEWS FOR JESUS* (November, 2004. 1ff).