

Remnant Life Church

September 6, 2015

Signs in the Heavens:
The Importance of Israel
Genesis 12:1-3

- This morning we continue to examine the signs of Jesus eminent return
 - Our series is looking at the events of Israel in conjunction with the Blood Moons (signs in the heavens) and how they are foretelling "...the great and glorious day of the Lord." (Acts 2:20)
 - Last week we talked about the difference between astronomy and astrology
 - Astronomy – the tracking and understanding of God’s creation and, to Christians, how He uses them for His purposes
 - Astrology is the worship of the stars and looking to them for direction and meaning in your life
 - # Divination
 - # Accomplished through demonic activity and born in pagan rituals
 - Why is Israel so important to the United States and the rest of the world?
 - To understand that means we need to take a brief historical trip and we see the formation of the people and nation of Israel
1. In Genesis God tells Abraham that He is going to make him into a great nation (Gen 12)
 2. NOTE – He does not say how He is going to do this or when
 - There are times when God will give us the destination without the map on how to get there
 - Many times the map is revealed ON THEN JOURNEY to increase our faith in Him
 3. Abraham and Sarah did not fully believe God as Abraham had a son through Hagar by the name of Ishmael (Gen 16)
 - Their unwillingness to wait on God sets in motion a conflict that would follow Israel throughout history
 - Many ancient as well as modern-day scholars point to Ishmael as the father of the Arab nations (his Egyptian mother and wife)
 - “You are now pregnant and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard of your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone’s hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers.” (Gen 16:11-12)
 - The Arab and Israeli nations will never be at peace – God has declared it!
 - Ishmael also had 12 sons – just like Jacob
 4. The 12 tribes end up in captivity and God frees them through Moses and they eventually come to the land of Canaan where they thrive under the leadership of the judges and the kings
 5. In 587 BC Nebuchadnezzar captured and destroyed Jerusalem and took the Israelites into Babylonian captivity (modern day Iraq)
 6. Over time they returned and rebuilt the temple but the Roman army in 70 AD captured the city again, destroyed the temple and the Israelites scattered.

- As a result of the outcome of WWI in 1918 Britain gains control of the Palestinian area that was once the home of the Jews
 - In 1921 a portion of that is given for the creation of the country of Jordan which initiates the first major violence of the divided area that left many Jews and Arabs dead
 - It was the General Assembly of the United Nations in November of 1947 that recommended a partition that would provide separate states, one for the Jews one for the Arabs
 - The Arabs nations rejected this immediately but in May of 1948 it was announced by Zionist leaders that the state of Israel now existed
 - On December 11 of that same year Resolution 194 is passed in the Gen Assemb of the UN that those who had been deposed could return to their homes in effect creating a new nation.
 - As a result of those events that year President Harry Truman becomes the first world leader to recognize the newly-reborn nation of Israel
 - The surrounding Arab nations immediately react and for the next 19 years there are ongoing skirmishes between Israel and their Arab neighbors
- In 1967 these skirmishes came to a head
 - On June 5 the Israeli army made a pre-emptive attack against Egypt and gained control of territory formally controlled by Egypt, Syria, and Jordan.
 - This became known as the Six Day War and in those six days Israel tripled the size of its territory
 - The tension between Israel, Palestine, and surrounding Arab states remains high
- On September 5, 1972 Palestinian terrorists kill 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics
- One year later in October of 1973 Egypt and Syria organize a surprise attack on Israel on the day of the Jewish feast Yom Kippur. The attack failed to take back the land in dispute
- In September 1978 Egypt and Israel signed a peace treaty under the leadership of President Jimmy Carter known as the Camp David Accord.
 - Egypt was expelled from the League of Arab Nations for their betrayal
 - On October 6, 1981 Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was assassinated by 3 Egyptian soldiers primarily for his role in establishing diplomatic relations with Israel
- Through the early to mid-90's the focus is on negotiations for return and land and peace between Israel and Jordan as well as the Palestinians
- Several treaties are signed and diplomatic relations established
- There are still times of violence and killing through all this time but in 1995 the Taba Agreement is signed in Washington between Palestinian leader Yassar Arafat and Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin
- On November 4 of that same year Rabin is assassinated by an orthodox Jewish student who opposes the plans for Israel to withdraw from territory as a part of the treaty
- For the next 10 years under the leadership of PMs Shimon Perez; Binyamin Netanyahu; Ehud Barak and Ariel Sharon Israel continues to live in the midst of calm and violence
- Today, Binyamin Netanyahu is Prime Minister again and the United States along with several other countries have entered into a nuclear deterrent treaty with Iran that Israel has condemned

How does the United States come into play through all of this?

- Through the early years the US stood in silent support of Israel as they struggled to maintain their independence
- It is not until 1973 that we take an active role as President Nixon airlifts military hardware to Israel at the outset of the Yom Kippur war
- In 1979 the peace treaty at Camp David is signed
- In 1991 at the outset of the first Gulf War President Bush pressures Israel to stay out of the conflict
- President Clinton is a primary driving force in peace accords between Israel and Jordan as well as the Palestinians
- The relationship between the United States and Israel has become strained over the past 10 years

Why is it important for us to support this small, combative country?

1. God promises to bless those who bless Israel
 - **READ Gen 12:1-3**
 - See the Bible as a single love story played out in 66 books
 - # They connect – look for it in the principles of the OT shown in the lives of the NT
 - We see the blessing promise of the Old played out twice in the NT
 - First - **Luke 7** – the story of the Roman centurion who understood the Jewish ways
 - # Told Jesus not to come to his house (unclean)
 - # The Jewish elders supported him “...because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue.” (**Luke 7:5**)
 - Second - Cornelius the centurion who, after hearing the gospel from Peter, receives salvation along with his whole family
 - He too was “...a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people.” (**Acts 10:22**)
2. We are commanded to pray for the peace of Israel and Jerusalem
 - Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May those who love you be secure. (**Psalm 122:6**)
 - Jerusalem is where Abraham offered Isaac on Mt. Moriah (**Gen 22:2**)
 - The seat of Godly rule – the City of David (**2 Sam 5**)
 - The location of Solomon’s temple (**2 Chron 3:1**)
 - It is where Jeremiah and Isaiah wrote the principles of righteousness that became the foundation of the moral compass for the western world
 - Outside its gates is where Jesus gave Himself as a sacrifice and was crucified for the sins of the world (**Matt 27:33; John 19:17**)
 - It is also where Jesus will come and rule again (**Isaiah 9:7**)
 - Jerusalem is the central focus point of God’s people and will be again
3. We are commanded to watchman on the walls for Israel

- *I have posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the LORD, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth. (Isaiah 62:6-7)*
 - We are the ones who “call on the Lord” and we are to continue to pray for them until God establishes Jerusalem again
4. We are commanded to minister to Israel in material things
- Paul writes the following in **Romans 15:27** - *...for if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings.*
 - What are the spiritual blessings that the Jews have given?
 - # the written Word of God
 - # the patriarchs of the faith Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
 - # all of the great OT prophets
 - # the first family of Joseph, Mary, and Jesus
 - # the disciples of Jesus

The church down through history has been cruel to the Jewish people in many ways

- The early church set out to destroy the Jews
- In 1095 Pope Urban II sent out the first of 7 crusades to liberate Jerusalem
- He forgave all of the soldiers in advance for anything they might do – it was a campaign of slaughter, thievery, and rape
- This was done under the flag of Christianity
- Could any scholar answer this question? – “How is that Christianity, born through the teachings of a Jewish rabbi named Jesus of Nazareth, just 300 years later seek to kill Jews in the name of God?”

The United States and the churches within this nation need to pray for the peace of Israel and the protection of the Jewish people.

Romans 11:17 tells us that when we become Christians we are grafted into the olive root which are the people of God (the Jews)