



# THE ISRAEL DECREE

Understanding God's Unbreakable  
Covenant with His People and Their Land

AMIR TSARFATI

THE  
ISRAEL  
DECREE

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HARVEST PROPHECY  
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## **The Israel Decree**

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I dedicate this book to the all-powerful God who has laid out a path for me, then given me the faith to walk it. To You alone goes all the glory.

I also dedicate this book to my people and to our land. God made a promise to us thousands of years ago, and He is still holding to that promise today. You and I are the evidence of that truth. My prayer is that you will not only recognize Him for the mighty God that He is, but that you will recognize that He wants a close relationship with you, a relationship that can be found in Yeshua the Messiah.

Finally, I dedicate this book to the brave advocates who stand up for Israel day and night, and who don't let deception and confusion weaken their resolve. May they all experience a personal encounter with the Messiah of Israel and believe in Him as their Lord and Savior.



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# CONTENTS

The Dilemma We Face .....	7
1. A Gift from the World to the World .....	17
2. An Eternal Promise Is Made .....	31
3. A Solid Foundation That Endures .....	51
4. You Can't Un-Israel Israel .....	75
5. Two People, Two Plans, One Destiny .....	95
Notes .....	117



## THE DILEMMA WE FACE

It's a beautiful spring morning. You're the first one up in the house and you pad into the kitchen in your slippers. After a quick grind of your coffee, you tamp rich, brown powder into your espresso machine. As you wait for the dark brown liquid to trickle into the waiting cup, you think about your day. It's going to be a good one. Plenty to do at the office, and all of it is good. The anticipation is building for your first sip of the day as you froth a little milk and pour it over your espresso. The aroma hits you as you lift the cup toward your lips, but before you get that first sip, the sirens go off.

Rockets! Inbound!

The diminutive mug is firmly planted back onto the counter as you begin to call out to your family. "Everybody up! We've got to get to the bomb shelter! Hurry, there's not much time!"

Quickly, you see doors open, and you count the family members who are rushing out. Once everyone is accounted for, you follow behind, making sure that no pets have been forgotten in the hustle. The shelter is cold and hard, but it is safe. As you sit

there, you nervously joke with your family, all the while praying that the next blast of sound you hear will be the all-clear and not an explosion. Meanwhile, your cup of espresso cools on the kitchen counter, forgotten.

### WHOSE LAND IS IT?

Welcome to my life and that of a great majority of Israelis. Whether or not we will still be in a state of war when you read this, I don't know. But we are certainly in one now. As wars go, this is one of the more controversial ones. There are those who say we have no right to be fighting as we are. In fact, we don't even deserve to be living where we're living. "Jews, under the auspices of Zionism, came in and stole the land from the hapless Palestinians, then tossed those rightful owners out so they became international refugees."

In contrast, many amongst the globe's population believe we are justified in carrying out this war. Yet even within this camp there are splits. Some believe that we need to go all out and finish the job, no matter what it takes. Others feel that our responses in Gaza and Lebanon are overkill. We need less bombs and more humanitarian aid. And, while you're at it, would you mind firing around the human shields so that you're hitting only the bad guys?

Another question divides the pro-war and even some of the anti-war groups. If Israel truly does belong in the land, then why? Is it due to right of conquest? Did the people buy it up legally? Did the United Nations mandate that affirmed their ownership make it theirs? Or is it something deeper, something biblical, something divine? This divide extends even into the church. Some point to the Abrahamic covenant, saying, "See, God gave

this land to Abraham's descendants—the Jews, also known as Israel." Others counter, saying, "Sure, He did at one time, but the people of Israel, through their idolatry and unbelief, nullified that covenant." Or even, "You're right, the land was forever given to 'Abraham's descendants.' But those two words may not mean what you think they mean."

Here is where we find the crux of this book. When we look at Scripture, there is one reason why the Jews are in Israel: God has given that land to them. In fact, He even gave the descendants of Abraham that very name. When Jacob was about to meet his older, estranged brother, Esau, after years earlier cheating him out of his birthright and blessing, God took the opportunity to first prepare the younger sibling. The night before the potential conflict, the Lord came in a theophany, or a human manifestation, and held a wrestling match with the patriarch. After God had bested Jacob by putting his hip out of socket, we read of Him giving His opponent a new name:

[God] said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But [Jacob] said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed" (Genesis 32:26-28).

Israel is the Jews and the Jews are Israel. There is no difference. And those Jewish people are of the same heritage and ethnicity as the ones in the times of the patriarchs, of the wilderness wanderings, of the united kingdom, of the divided kingdom, of the



exile, of the post-exile, of the time of Jesus, of the early church, of the Middle Ages, of the Ottoman Empire and the British Mandate, and now into the reconstituted State of Israel. There is no break of ownership. There is no shifting of people groups. The people of the promise that was given to Abraham are the same people who are populating Israel today.

Is modern Israel fulfilling the hope found in the Israel Decree given to the great patriarch in Genesis 12:1-3? Yes and no. But we'll get to that later in the book. Undoubtedly, however, if Abraham were to walk through the streets of today's Tel Aviv, it is very likely that he would slap his forehead and say, "*Oy vavoy!* What have I begat?" But neither the sins of today nor the sins of the past are enough to negate a promise of God. As Paul wrote to the Romans, "For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar" (Romans 3:3-4).

But there are many in the church who do not believe this. They either say that God's promise to Abraham was conditional or that it was only spiritual or that it was all part of a grand scheme to do a "God's chosen" quick swap with the advent of the church age. This doctrine continues to spread rapidly through the body of Christ, and it is not new. There have been many in the history of the church who have been doing all they can to erase the ongoing importance of Israel.

## QUESTIONABLE BEGINNINGS

From the beginning of the church, antisemitic Gentiles have been seeking to remove Israel from God's ongoing plans. Maybe

it was because of history or jealousy, or simply because some of the Jews in the church—especially those kosher-eating, feast-keeping, circumcision-bragging, legalistic Judaizers—could be so condescending and holier-than-thou. Whatever the cause, we know this view arose early on, because we find Paul addressing it, once again, to the Romans, writing, “I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!” (11:11-12).

Have the Jews stumbled? Undoubtedly, and they’re still stumbling like a drunk man trying to make his way across a rocky stream bed. But they’ve not fallen completely out of God’s favor, which is why it will be that much more spectacular when, through faith in Yeshua, they regain their feet and finally become the witness to the world that they were originally created to be!

As much as Paul tried to tamp down the growing doctrine that claimed that Israel was replaced by the church in God’s plan, it continued to spread, at times evolving into outright antisemitism. We can see the evolution within the early church fathers.

In the early second century, Justin Martyr asserted the replacement of Israel, saying, “For the true spiritual Israel [a term never found in the Bible] and descendants of Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham...are we who have been led to God through this crucified Christ...”<sup>1</sup> “Christ is the Israel and the Jacob, even so, we...are the true Israelitic race.”<sup>2</sup> True, that sounds a little innocent. But it laid a foundation of Jewish nullification that later church fathers ran with.

Irenaeus, later in the second century, wrote that “they who

boast themselves as being of the house of Jacob and the people of Israel, are disinherited from the grace of God.”<sup>3</sup> Origen, not many years later, wrote, “We say with confidence that [the Jews] will never be restored to their former condition. For they committed a crime of the most unhallowed kind, in conspiring against the Savior of the human race...and [as a result] the invitation to happiness offered them by God [is] to pass to others—the Christians!”<sup>4</sup> In Origen’s words, we see spelled out the reason for the rejection of Israel. The people conspired against the Messiah. But did they? Sure, some of them did. But what about the disciples, or Jesus’ family, or the thousands who were healed by His touch? Did they conspire against Him? More about this later.

Anti-Jewish sentiment steamrolled from that point onward. At the Council of Elvira at the beginning of the fourth century, Christians were prohibited from marrying Jews or having a meal with them. St. John Chrysostom of the late fourth century preached a series of sermons in which he declared, “The synagogue is not only a brothel and a theater; it also is a den of robbers and a lodging for wild beasts...”<sup>5</sup> “Are [the Jews] not inveterate murderers, destroyers, men possessed by the devil?... Why are the Jews degenerate? Because of their hateful assassination of Christ.”<sup>6</sup> Once again, we see a “throw the baby out with the bathwater” argument in which an entire race of people is nullified because of the actions of their spiritual leaders. Is that justified? I know there are many civilians today in Iran, Lebanon, and even some in Gaza who would not buy into that generalized type of thinking.

This hateful rationale carried through the history of the church and, sadly, was reinforced during the Reformation. Martin Luther

demanding, in his aptly titled work *The Jews and their Lies*, “Set fire to their synagogues or schools and bury and cover with dirt whatever will not burn.” Why? “This is to be done in honor of our Lord and of Christendom, so that God might see that we are Christians.”<sup>7</sup> I’m guessing that little tidbit didn’t follow a lengthy exegesis on Jesus’ words, “But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you” (Luke 6:27-28).

Even John Calvin got into the act, writing, “[The Jews’] rotten and unbending stiff-neckedness deserves that they be oppressed unendingly and without measure or end and that they die in their misery without the pity of anyone.”<sup>8</sup> Ouch! *Et tu*, John?

Sadly, this is the legacy that has led us to the replacement theologians of today. Do I think that most who hold to this doctrine are echoing Luther’s words to burn synagogues and schools? Of course not. But they do have to come to terms with the origins and evolution of their beliefs.

This is the very same doctrinal thread that led a key Reformed theologian to write,

The promises made to Abraham, including the promise of the Land, will be inherited as an everlasting gift only by true, spiritual Israel, not disobedient, unbelieving Israel...By faith in Jesus Christ, the Jewish Messiah, Gentiles become heirs of the promise of Abraham, including the promise of the Land...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.<sup>9</sup>

Although this statement was written nearly 20 years before the start of our present war, it still informs the opinions of many in the church. This theologian is saying that as Christians watch the actions of Israel, it should be understood that they are not fighting for what has been promised to them by God, but what was graciously bequeathed them by the United Nations. And because they were born out of the international community, they should listen more to the international community. Israel is not fighting for God, and God is certainly not fighting for Israel.

### STRIVING FOR 100 PERCENT

This replacement belief system is nothing new. Again, it's been around since the beginning of the church, and all that has changed is that it's experiencing a marked upswing. So why address it now?

Not long ago, I was with a good friend of mine. He is a Bible scholar and has done great things within the Christian world. Many look up to him for his wisdom and understanding of the Scriptures. And they should!

Our conversation covered numerous doctrinal issues, and eventually migrated to discussing Israel. We talked about the nation's history and the place that it was taking in the world today. Then he said, "You know, Amir, I am 98 percent sure that the Israel of today is the Israel of the Bible." I was floored! It's possible that he was trying to encourage me by giving Israel that high of a percentage. I can't know for sure, because I was

so preoccupied attempting to figure out what could possibly be contained in that last 2 percent.

It was that conversation that ultimately led to me writing this book. I had thought of calling it *100%!*, but our publisher thought that might be a little too abstract. But that title is my goal. I wish this book could convince all in the church that the Israel of today is the same Israel that God promised to Abraham. It would be amazing if this book could 100 percent stamp out the horribly errant replacement theology with one fell swoop. But I know that's virtually impossible. If Paul couldn't do that with his letters, how could I possibly do it with this short book?

I want those who love Israel and support God's chosen nation to know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that what they believe is absolutely true. And I also want them to be fully equipped so that they can explain the reasons for their beliefs to others. I pray that this work will get into the hands of those who are on the other side of this debate too. When you look at the scriptures mentioned in this book and you read them from a literal point of view, you will see that there is no reason there must be only Israel or the church as God's chosen people, but that we serve a both/and God who has a unique and special plan for both of His holy nations.





## CHAPTER 1

# A GIFT FROM THE WORLD TO THE WORLD

**T**he day had finally arrived. You'd made it! You had been assigned a parking spot, a primo space near the front. No more back lot for you with its weeds and cigarette butts and janky cars. Forget all that! You'd worked hard to be noticed, and now your hard work was paying off. You ease your sedan into your spot with no problem. Plenty of space between you and the white lines in this lot. Stepping out, you take a moment to stretch, hoping that those making their way toward the building will notice you. Finally, you reach back in, take hold of the shoulder strap of your case, straighten up, and make your way toward your office. As you walk, you press the button of your fob. The resulting chirp-chirp sounds a lot like your car telling you, "Yeah, I see you. Well done, old friend."

Through the week, you bask in the glow of your new status. At a backyard barbecue on Saturday, you tell the other guys around the grill how nice it is to not have to dodge broken bottles and overgrown thistles in the common people's lot. Sunday

night comes, and you find yourself picturing the “Reserved” sign that marks out your front-lot territory.

Monday morning arrives, and you bypass your left turn to the old parking area, turning right instead. As you pass the back rows, you see your space up ahead. But just before you reach it, a fancy sports car races past you and brakes hard in your spot.

Surely, this must be a mistake! No problem, though. Easily remedied. You pull up behind the car as the driver steps out. He’s big, well-muscled.

You roll down your window. “Excuse me,” you say with a little laugh. “I’m afraid there’s been a mistake. Easy to happen. You see, that’s my parking space.”

The driver glares at you, then turns away.

That’s okay, maybe he just misunderstood. “Sir, do you see the ‘Reserved’ sign in front? I’m the one it’s reserved for. So if you wouldn’t mind backing out...I mean, no harm, no foul, right?” Again, you follow up with a small chuckle.

The driver turns back to you and says, “No.”

No? What does he mean, “No”? Doesn’t he know how these things work? There are people who have reserved spots and those who don’t. You’re one of the ones who has earned your reserved spot. You’re about to get out of the car to explain this to the big man, but then the other door opens. Looking like a fully erect bear cresting the top of a hill, the passenger unfolds himself from the opposite side of the car. He’s the size of an NFL offensive lineman, and when he slams the car door, you can feel the blast radius in your floorboard. After giving you the stink eye, he walks to his friend, and they make their way toward the building. It’s obvious that they’re laughing, and it’s just as obvious that they’re laughing at you.

This is how many people in the world perceive the Israel/Palestine question. The Palestinians were in the land, thriving due to their hard work and industriousness. Just when they were finally making something of themselves, the Jews came along and began to drive them out. The interlopers built off the strong foundation of the Palestinians and were able to forge a new nation based on the sweat of their predecessors' brows. If anyone tried to stop them, be they other Arab countries, the United Nations, or the European Union, Israel had the big bully on the block, the United States, in their corner to shut down the complainers. All the US had to do was to send a carrier group to intimidate the complainers, or worse still, threaten to cut off aid to them, and that would shut them up.

On most college campuses, this is the story you will likely hear, particularly if you converse with the matted-hair masses of protesters. But is this really what happened? Was Palestine thriving before the outsiders came in? Are the outsiders really outsiders? And do they have any legal right to be in the land?

The answer to whether the land was thriving before the people of Israel began returning in the late nineteenth century is, "Definitely not." Palestine was a pit. Made up of desert, uncultivated land, and malarial swamps, the area between the eastern shoreline of the Mediterranean and the Jordan River was a long stretch of nothing that armies were forced to pass through to get from Africa to Eurasia or the other way around. In his 1867 travel memoir *The Innocents Abroad*, Mark Twain wrote, "There was hardly a tree or a shrub anywhere. Even the olive and the cactus, those fast friends of a worthless soil, had almost deserted the country...The only difference between the roads and the

surrounding country, perhaps, is that there are rather more rocks in the roads than in the surrounding country.”<sup>10</sup>

So, no, the land was not thriving before the Jews began to resettle. As for the second question—Are the outsiders really outsiders?—we’ll deal with that in the ensuing chapters when we look at Israel’s biblical and historical rights to the land. The question for this chapter is the third in our list: Does Israel have any legal right to be in the land? If it doesn’t, then we are fighting a battle in which religious belief goes against international law. Israel may have a biblical right to be in the land, but it has no political standing. The people are simply interlopers, and it can be understood why so many without a knowledge of Scripture stand against them.

The truth, however, is that Israel has full legal standing to exist as an independent state exactly where it is currently situated. The international community bestowed upon the Jewish people the full right to plant themselves and thrive exactly where they are. Believe it or not, that even includes the United Nations!

So how did the Jews happen to reconstitute a nation in this land?

## **OUT WITH THE OTTOMANS, IN WITH THE BRITS**

In the late nineteenth century, antisemitism began to worsen again in Europe. An anti-Jewish undercurrent has always existed there, but every now and then, the waves would build and wreak havoc. Pogroms broke out in Eastern Europe. Jews were persecuted and driven from their homes in Western Europe. In a grand example of

this anti-Jewish attitude, Alfred Dreyfus, a French artillery officer who was Jewish, was set up and wrongly convicted of treason with the Germans in 1894 and given a life sentence on Devil's Island in French Guiana. It was only after he had spent five grueling years in harsh conditions that the real culprit was discovered. Dreyfus was brought back for a new trial. However, despite the real traitor having confessed after fleeing to London, Dreyfus was once again convicted. Paris blew up between the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusards, and the Supreme Court was forced to pardon him.

The lesson that Western European Jews learned from the Dreyfus affair was not that there are many good people amongst the bad, but that at any time and for any reason, the tide could suddenly turn against you and pull you under. Meanwhile, Eastern European Jews were learning the same lesson as they were beaten and battered and driven from their homes and their properties. It was into this situation that Theodor Herzl stepped.

Theodor Herzl was born into a Jewish family in Pest, across the Danube from Buda, in the Austrian Empire. As a lawyer and a journalist, Herzl covered the Dreyfus affair from its beginnings in 1894. He saw the way that Dreyfus was railroaded. He could feel the tide shifting. The time was rapidly coming when Europe would not be safe for Jews anymore. In 1897, Herzl established the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, at which he was elected president. For the next seven years, the final ones of his short life, he committed himself to opening doors for Jews to make *aliyah* ("to emigrate") to their ancient homeland in what is now the State of Israel.

Aliyah didn't begin with Herzl. The people of Israel had been making their way back to their homeland for centuries. In fact,



there has never been a time when the land of promise was “Jew-free.” God always kept a remnant there, much as He did after the Babylonian exile in the sixth century BC. But in the years leading up to Zionism\*, through its birth and growth, more and more people of Israel came home. It’s estimated that between 20,000 and 30,000 arrived from the early 1880s to the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>11</sup> Many created *moshavot* (“farm villages”) so they could band together under the extremely harsh conditions and against Arab opposition. Outside money, including that from Baron Edmond de Rothschild, helped these early settlements to survive. Contrary to modern stories of how the Jews swept in and stole the land, all of the acreage for the early settlements was purchased from Arab owners who were more than happy to sell their properties, which were worthless because they were arid desert or murky swampland.

The early settling of the land was done under the watchful eyes of the Ottoman Empire, which encouraged the Rothschild-backed Jews to come in so that they could fleece them with high taxes. This changed with World War I and the defeat of the Ottomans. The Turks were driven out of the Levant, leaving a leadership vacuum that Western Europe quickly stepped in to fill.

Britain mollified the Russians by secretly allowing them to take Constantinople, while also retaining control of the Dardanelles and the Gallipoli peninsula. Moscow said, “*Spasiba*,” finished off their part in World War I, then went back home so they could launch

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\* *Zionism* is defined as “the national movement for the return of the Jewish people to their homeland and the resumption of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel.” (“Zionism: A Definition of Zionism,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/a-definition-of-zionism>.)

the world-changing Russian Revolution. That left Britain and France looking at a map of the Middle East, each wondering how they could trick the other side so that they could get the best piece.

In walked Sir Mark Sykes and François Georges-Picot. I'll let you guess who was English and who was French. After many hours of negotiations and possibly some rock-paper-scissors, they had the remaining part of the Ottoman Empire all divided up. Signed on May 9 and 16, 1916, the Sykes-Picot Agreement allowed for France to take Lebanon and up the Syrian coast of the Mediterranean. Britain would claim Mesopotamia and oversee what is now Iraq. As for a few remaining portions of Iraq and much of Syria, Transjordan, and Palestine, local Arab chiefs would be allowed to rule.<sup>12</sup> Of course, their leadership would happen under French and British supervision, because how can you really trust a government without a European to oversee it? But I digress.

All was well. The Arabs were mad at the Jews. The Jews were mad at the Arabs. And the fine people of Western Europe watched it all from their nice new hotels and resorts along the Mediterranean. The only problem that remained was that, like a trickling leak that eventually swamps the garden, the people of Israel kept flowing into the land west of the Jordan. But when they came, it was with Rothschild money. So the Arabs happily continued to sell their properties, and Israel's settlements multiplied across the land.

### **AN INTERNATIONAL THUMBS-UP**

It was into this political setting that Lord Alfred James Balfour, while serving as Britain's foreign secretary, wrote a declaration to

Lord Walter Rothschild, a noted Zionist and supporter of Jews who made aliyah. In the letter, Balfour made known the pro-Israel viewpoint that many in Britain's government held. Balfour wrote on November 2, 1917,

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.<sup>13</sup>

Amazingly, in that single phrase about "religious rights," Lord Balfour summed up the heart of almost every Jew in Israel. Israeli law does not demand that Christians who move to Israel become Jewish. It does not insist that Muslims convert to Judaism. There has been enough persecution of the people of Israel around the world that we simply want a place where we can be safe from those who hate us simply because we are Jewish. And if you want to come and be a productive member of our nation, we're happy to have you, no matter what you believe.

The Balfour Declaration was very encouraging to the Jews and to the Zionist movement. Unfortunately, despite Balfour being foreign minister, it was still nothing more than a nice support letter. There were no teeth behind it; no built-in actions or next steps. It was essentially an "I wish I may, I wish I might."

Then in April 1920, representatives from the British Empire,

France, Japan, and Italy met in San Remo, Italy, with some from the United States attending as observers. Earlier, I mentioned that after the division of the post-war Ottoman Empire, Syria, much of Mesopotamia, and Jordan/Palestine were to be placed under local Arab leadership. But what would that look like, what borders would be drawn, and how would the outside powers factor into the mix? Those were the issues taken up in San Remo. Decisions were made and important agreements were signed. But in relation to the Jewish people, the key excerpt from the San Remo Resolution, ratified on April 25, 1920, reads:

The High Contracting Parties agree to entrust, by application of the provisions of Article 22, the administration of Palestine, within such boundaries as may be determined by the Principal Allied Powers, to a Mandatory, to be selected by the said Powers. The Mandatory will be responsible for putting into effect the declaration originally made on November 8, 1917, by the British Government [the Balfour Declaration], and adopted by the other Allied Powers, in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.<sup>14</sup>

In this remarkable document, the international community officially asserted its intention to allow for a Jewish national

homeland in the area that was then called Palestine. Again, the goal was for Jews, Christians, and Muslims to live together in peace. The Jews were all for that. The Christians were all for that. It was and is only from large parts of the Muslim community that we hear calls of “Death to Israel,” and that we read in the Hamas Covenant, “Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.”<sup>15</sup> By the way, Hamas made its attempt to follow through with that commitment on October 7, 2023. It failed.

Many people point to the Balfour Declaration as the document that solidified Israel’s future, but that foundation really emerged from San Remo. Then, the curing of that strong base took place with the Palestine Mandate, issued by the League of Nations and signed on July 24, 1922. This remarkable piece of work recognized Israel’s historic, unbreakable connection with the land. It called for “the establishment of the Jewish national home” and encouraged “close settlement” for returning Jews throughout the country. All areas were open to aliyah, “including State lands and waste lands not required for public purposes.”<sup>16</sup> If the new settlers found unclaimed land, they claimed it, then set to work bettering it. It is because of these industrious emigres that, when I look out my back window at the Jezreel Valley, I see lush farmland instead of the malarial swamps that were originally there.

“That’s fine, Amir, but that’s all history. The British Mandate—gone. The League of Nations—gone. Now we’re under the United Nations, and we all know the UN hates Israel.” True on all points, especially the UN’s seething antipathy toward my tiny country. However, in just this one small area, I’m happy to announce we

even have the United Nations on our side. In the UN's original charter, which went into effect on October 24, 1945, Article 80, often referred to as the Palestine Clause, stated:

Except as may be agreed upon in individual trusteeship agreements, made under Articles 77, 79, and 81, placing each territory under the trusteeship system, and until such agreements have been concluded, nothing in this Chapter shall be construed in or of itself to alter in any manner the rights whatsoever of any states or any peoples or the terms of existing international instruments to which Members of the United Nations may respectively be parties.<sup>17</sup>

Now, if you're thinking that sounds like a bunch of lawyerly gobbledygook that doesn't even mention Israel, you're exactly right. However, it was placed in the charter specifically because of the Arab objections to Israel and affirms the right of the Jews to eventually establish their own homeland. How do I know this was the intention? Because it was upheld by the International Court of Justice in 1960, 1971, and 2004. As much as the United Nations would like to take their words back, they can't. They're stuck with us because of their very own charter. I mean, that's got to hurt at least a little bit.

### **BIRTH OF "THE PALESTINIAN"**

What about the rights of the Palestinians who were living in the land when the Jewish people started to move in and take over?



To answer that question, one must determine what exactly a Palestinian is. Prior to 1948, a Palestinian was anyone who lived in the British Mandate of Palestine, whether they were Muslim, Jew, or Christian. Not until after the State of Israel came into being was the term honed down to refer only to those Arabs in the land who chose not to become citizens of the new nation. Suddenly, out of the blue, there was a new people group.

Some of these new Palestinians stayed in Israel. Others moved to surrounding countries, such as Jordan and Syria. As soon as Israel declared its statehood and drove off the instantly invading armies, the United Nations got involved. In 1949, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was formed, and immediately, handouts were given to the Palestinians. Not surprisingly, as soon as the charitable support began, the Palestinian population exploded.

It takes a while for a population to double. In 2023, the world's population reached eight billion. That's twice what it was 48 years earlier in 1975. Undoubtedly, high birth rates and medical science are causing an exponential increase in the number of living people and the lengths of their lives. However, according to a 2022 statement by the chairperson of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), "the Palestinian population at home and in the diaspora has doubled about ten times since the Nakba in 1948."<sup>18</sup> *Nakba* is an Arabic term that means "catastrophe" and is used of the advent of Israel's statehood and the subsequent departure of Arabs from their homes in the land.

Think about that statistic put forth by a Palestinian-sympathizing organization. According to the latest figures, worldwide, it took almost 50 years for the population to double. The Palestinians,

however, have doubled their numbers ten times in 84 years. There are only two possible explanations for this near-miraculous population increase. Either the Fertile Crescent is truly the *fertile* crescent, or many Arabs from the countries surrounding Israel suddenly began identifying as Palestinian. Why would Arabs jump on the Palestine bandwagon? I mean, living as a Palestinian is not the most glamorous life. However, trying to eke out an uncertain living in many parts of Syria, Jordan, and Iraq is even less glamorous. The positive side of being Palestinian is that even if you sit around all day and do nothing, you still have UNRWA available to help make sure you have schools for your kids, food for your cupboards, and shovels for digging your terrorist tunnels.

### **A BOND THAT CANNOT BE BROKEN**

There is a bond between the Israeli people and the land. When folks think of that connection, their minds will often go back to Abraham and Moses, King David and Jesus. But this is more than just a religious belief or a cultural history. The land belongs to Israel because the international community has said it belongs to Israel. The Jews are not invaders or interlopers. They did not drive people out, nor did they wipe off the map huge groups of innocents in genocidal attacks.

From the beginning of the first aliyah, the Jewish people began moving in with the intention of sharing the land with those already living there. But at every negotiation, with every treaty proposal, the Jews had their outstretched hands of friendship swatted away by the Arabs. This includes before and after Israel declared independence in 1948. There is nothing that Israelis

want more than to be able to tear down the walls and border fences that surround their nation and live as friendly neighbors with those around them. From the beginning, though, Israel has had to constantly take a defensive posture because the surrounding countries have repeatedly stated their intention of pushing the Jews into the sea.

But that's not going to happen. First, it can't because Israel has an internationally recognized legal right to exist and dwell in the land. But more importantly, God is not going to let it happen.