

The Easy Bible Truth



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Companion 
Christadelphians

Israel – God’s Chosen People.

Although Israel is a small country with a small population, it constantly attracts attention on the world scene. The main reason for its high profile is the fact that it is surrounded by a large population of hostile Arabs. The reason the Jews and their land have survived is that they belong to God.

Deuteronomy 7:6: “*The Lord, thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the Earth.*”

Few nations could point to a richer heritage, tracing their genealogy back to a single founder, the man Abraham, the faithful servant of God. For more than 3,500 years, the history of the Jews has illustrated the miracle of their survival. In about the middle of the second millennium BC, Abraham was called by God to leave his native city of Ur in Chaldea, to go to the land of Canaan or Palestine. After many years of living in the Promised Land, Abraham had a son named Isaac, and Isaac had a son named Jacob, who was subsequently named Israel. These three men became known as the fathers of the race, which sprang from them. As recorded in Genesis, to all three were given divine promises concerning their descendants. In Genesis 12:7, God declared to Abraham, “*unto thy seed will I give this land.*” The promise of the land is repeated in greater detail in Genesis 13:14-17, where Abraham is told to survey the land in all directions. The dimensions of the land promised to the descendants of Abraham are recorded in Genesis 15:18-20. The entire area from the river of Egypt or the Nile, to the Euphrates River, is given to Abraham and his descendants as a perpetual possession.

Throughout the Bible, these promises have threefold applications. First, that Abraham’s descendants would become a mighty nation. Secondly, those who adopt the same faith as Abraham, styled in the New Testament “Children of Abraham by faith” or in other words, those baptised and judged worthy would inherit the land of promise, forever. Thirdly, that a special descendant, a singular descendant, would be made effective – namely the Lord Jesus Christ.

God has described His people Israel as the apple of His eye. He is very possessive of them and very protective of them. Zechariah 2:8 says: “*For thus saith the Lord of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.*”

This is the type of close relationship Israel has with their God. Yet, in past times, because Israel would not heed God’s law and keep His commandments, He caused them to be carried away captive by foreign powers, culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and the later expulsion of God’s people from their homeland by the Romans. They have been in exile from that time until 1948 when the modern state of Israel was set up.

God always intended that His people would inherit the land they now possess, even though He has scattered them among the nations. It is His plan to regather His people, to show once more to them and the rest of the world, that they are still the people of God. Jeremiah 31:10: “*Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.*”

The importance of the history of Israel lies in its connection with God’s plan of salvation. The greatest Jew of all, Jesus Christ, declared in John 4:22, “*Salvation is of the Jews.*”

Paul shows that being part of Israel gives the opportunity of being connected with God’s plan for His people. Galatians 3:7: “*Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.*”