

Why Israel Matters (20-25 Minutes) Genesis 17–19

Thank you, International Christian Embassy of Jerusalem, Susan Michael, Arlene Samuels, Dr. Tony Crisp, and all other ICEJ leaders involved with inviting me to address you today. I am honored and grateful to deliver this address about the “Why Israel Matters.”

Israel matters to people because it matters to God. So that with me: “Israel matters to people because it matters to God.”

God’s desire is to bless the people of all nations. It is a promise that has blessed the world. My talk today was inspired by a sermon I once heard Dr. Jack Graham preach many years ago entitled “God’s Miracle Nation,” so I want to give credit where it is due.

On an introductory note, Israel matters because of the promise and the principle.

A. The Promise (vv. 1–3)

A Covenant

Genesis 17:1–3 says, *When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty;^[1] walk before me, and be blameless,² that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly."³ Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him,*

It is an unchangeable, unbreakable promise. It is an unconditional promise.

B. The Principle

The Principle of Grace

God called Abraham out of paganism into a faith relationship by grace. No merit in this man or any man.

I. The Miracle of Israel's Conception (v. 5)

Genesis 17:5 says, *⁵ No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have*

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made you the father of a multitude of nations.

Abraham was past child-bearing years, yet he experienced a promise of progeny.

Genesis 18:9–14 teaches us of the miracle of Israel. Abraham was 100 years of age, and Sarai was 90.

Every Jew is a result of a miracle. God began it with a miracle. As an aside, Jews who have a hard time believing in the salvific nature of Jesus Christ due to the strangeness surrounding His birth should note how just as Judaism was begun miraculously in Genesis 18, so was Christianity begun miraculously Matthew 1–2.

II. The Miracle of Israel's Continuation (Gen 17:7)

Genesis 17:7 says, ⁷ And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

Israel is eternally indestructible. Israel was prophesied to be disobedient, disbursed, and discredited, but never destroyed.

Satan has tried to exterminate God's ancient people and destroy His promise multitudinous times:

- The **King of Egypt** could not **diminish** the Jew.
- The **Red Sea** could not **drown** the Jew.
- The **Great Fish** could not **digest** the Jew.
- The **Furnace** could not **devour** the Jew
- The **Nations** could not **disseminate** the Jew.

God's people are kept by an everlasting promise. The Jewish people are assimilated, but are never decimated. Jews have their language, their land, and their life.

Jesus said, in **Matthew 24:34, ³⁴ Truly, I say to you, this generation will not**

pass away until all these things take place.

The Jews are like the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic Ocean. They flow through the seas of humanity separate and distinct.

The Miracle of Continuation

Jeremiah 31:35 says, ³⁵ Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—the LORD of hosts is his name:

If God breaks promises to Israel, He's not faithful and true to His own Word. Every Jew is a testimony to the faithfulness of God. The indestructible Jew survives and stands beside the grave of his persecutors.

Here are some amazing facts about the miraculous continuation of the Jewish people:

- A Jew financed Christopher Columbus' voyage to the New

World. A Jewish man was on board and was the first to set foot on these shores.

- Hym Solomon financed George Washington and the Revolutionary War.
- Both Aspirin and Bayer were invented by a Jew.
- Salk-Saban invented the vaccine for Polio. He was a Jew.
- Digitalis was invented by Trabo, a Jew.
- Novocaine was invented by Stricker, a Jew.
- The blood test for marriage, the Wasserman Test, was invented by a Jew.
- Do you have an infection? Streptomycin was invented by Waxman, a Jew.
- Psychoanalysis was invented by Freud, a Jew.
- Do you ever put change in the red kettles during the Christmas season? That's the great charity, Salvation Army, developed by the mother of William Booth, a Jewess.

All of history revolves around the names of six Jews:

1. Moses
2. Jesus
3. Paul
4. Marx
5. Freud
6. Einstein

What a miracle race!

III. The Miracle of Israel's Constitution

Apparently, God thinks Israel matters a lot because of the many miracles He has performed for her sake.

Genesis 17:8 says, ⁸ And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."

"Everlasting" tells us that Israel will exist even after the millennial reign.

Here's an interesting factoid: Today, we celebrate 70 years of Israel

becoming a nation again. It took place May 14–15, 1948.

Amos 9:14–15 says, ¹⁴ I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. ¹⁵ I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted out of the land that I have given them," says the LORD your God.

They will no more be plucked out.

A. A Military Miracle

70 years ago today, In May of 1948, there were only 650,000 people in Israel, and they were surrounded by 40 million Arabs who vowed to destroy them. The Jews could not carry a gun, but they had to defend themselves against six Arab states.

In one battle, 70,000 Arabs were captured by 400 Israelis. By the time

of Armistice, the Jews were 150 miles into Egyptian territory!

How? **The fight was fixed!**

God doesn't love the Jew any more than the Arabs. God is, however, sovereign in history. God has and will work in history.

B. A Sociological Miracle

The Jews came back to Israel, 70 years ago, from 61 countries. They spoke different languages.

IT was said that it would take three generations for these people to become a nation (100 years). They did it in one generation.

Israel is not a melting pot; it is a pressure cooker.

C. An Agricultural Miracle

If you've ever been to Israel, then you know what I am saying is true . . . the place is "rich in rocks." There are a lot of rocks there.

60% of Israel is desert. It is small, the size of New Jersey. It only rains in the winter.

However, with water projects, expert horticulture, agriculture, and irrigation, the land is blossoming.

Israel is one of six nations in the world that raises enough food to feed itself. It is the bread basket of Europe.

For example, the Jezreel Valley was a Malaria swamp. It is now growing avocados, plums, strawberries, and bananas. They have record-breaking milk-cows.

D. A Linguistic Miracle

The ancient language of Hebrew is now studied and spoken. One of my Master's degrees is in biblical languages, and I got to study it for years. It is a wonderful language.

Here is something odd about Hebrew: 130 years ago, no one spoke Hebrew. It was one of the many dead

languages, but it has since been revived.

IV. The Miracle of Israel's Conversion

Again, Genesis 17:8 says, ⁸ *And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.*¹

God has not given up on Israel. God loves them and many love Him. There will be a great revival of faith in Jesus Christ in the last days.

The Messiah of Israel is Jesus!

Allow these Scriptures to trickle over your soul as I close out this talk:

Zechariah 12:2–3, 9–10 says, ² *"Behold, I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding peoples. The siege of Jerusalem will also be against Judah.* ³ *On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt*

themselves. And all the nations of the earth will gather against it.

⁹ And on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. ¹⁰ "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.

How can God be pierced? God became a man and died.

Zechariah 13:1 says, "On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.

Aren't you thankful for God? Aren't you thankful for His Holy Land? Oh yes . . . Israel matters!

Israel matters to people because it matters to God. So that with me: "Israel matters to people because it matters to God."