

Some nations say Israel does not exist, others recognise its existence out of grudging reality.

Would the world be better off without a State of Israel ?

Scanning the world and taking note of opinions from nations and peoples one comes to realise that few issues are likely to raise passions more than the condition and existence of the "*State of Israel*". The general swathe of opinion ranges from those who wish to see the "*State of Israel*" cease to exist; those who wish to see it modified into something nicer; and those who support its existence come what may. One thing is for sure : with *Iran* desiring to expunge *Israel* and seeking a nuclear option the problem of "*Israel*", a people in the land, is not going to go away.

Most often when *Israel* and its existence are discussed we are presented with arguments about "UN" resolutions; ancient political rights; or negotiated settlements of bartered land for a supposed peace between opposing sides. But is this where the answer truly lies or is the answer to be found elsewhere ? Well ! The answer is 'Yes' and the elsewhere is to be found in *Israel's* ancient book the Bible.

Now I know this is where we'll lose a lot of you folks because you just can't get your heads round to thinking that the book called 'The Bible' holds the answers to anything. In truth you are wrong and if you bear with me for a few pages you may be surprised as to what it does say on and around this matter of *Israel* and its existence.

To answer the question "Would the world be better off without a *State of Israel* ?" it would be helpful to trace events through history with very broad brush strokes to get a grasp of why we are where we are.

Going back to the Book of *Genesis* (Beginnings) we are told of the supreme spirit being, the cause and sustainer of all our material world, creating mankind in his present form to have a special relationship with him. The first humans were given a choice as to whether they wanted this relationship based on submission and obedience to their maker. They chose to turn down the

offer and decided on relationship, but based on their own ideas as to how this relationship with their maker should develop. Thus the pattern for future human existence was set into motion.

Knowing this would happen the Creator had a plan that would redeem humankind from the consequences of this wrong choice and use the situation to create in man a nature that was fully in agreement with his own, yet arrived at through experience and choice, only this time the right one. The first humans were expelled from a beautiful environment (*Eden*), picturing results from a right relationship with their maker to a world in which they would plunder for the next 6,000 or so years. A plunder and degradation which would be entirely due to the ineptitude of the nature they had chosen and consequently passed on by inheritance to all that would come after them.

In the process of time the Creator stepped into man's affairs and got the attention of a man called *Abram* who lived in an area of the Middle East called *Mesopotamia*. We are not told how this contact took place but we are told that this *Abram* was instructed to move out of his comfort zone (*Mesopotamia* was apparently one of the better places to live) to a land called *Canaan*. It seems likely that *Abram* would not have known what he was moving into, yet he trusted the Creator and moved just as he was told. As a result of his obedience *Abram* was promised :

Genesis 12 : 2

"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you. I will make your name great and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and whoever curses you will I curse, and all peoples of the earth will be blessed through you."

A process of development had now been put into motion that through the offspring of this man, building into a great nation, would come the redemption of this world; ultimately turning around the downward spiral that had been set in place by the decision of the first humans.

Next in the book we come to *Genesis 15, 16 and 17*, which are pivotal in the restorative process of man. *Abram* bemoans the fact that he has no heir to pass his estate on to, nor any to carry his genetic line. He must have been puzzled by the promise the Creator had given him, recorded in *Genesis 12 : 2*, about being made a great nation. How was that going to occur with no children? *Abram* and his wife *Sarai* were getting on in years and the chance of children was, in the natural course of life, not looking good.

In *Genesis 15* we are told that God responds to *Abram's* concerns and assures him that he would have a son out of his own body - that is, not adopted; that his future descendants would be as innumerable as the stars in the sky; and that the land he was now living in (*Canaan*) would belong to them.

Being human, *Abram* is overwhelmed by these promises, particularly the one concerning the land, and wants to know how he can be sure he will receive it, seeing at that moment he had no offspring and his life, being shorter by the years, probably didn't seem long enough to realise all of this. The Creator responds to this request for assurance on *Abram's* part and does something that for us in these times is quite strange. He gets *Abram* to kill certain creatures and lay them out on the ground in a certain pattern. He then proceeds to tell *Abram* that he himself would die; how his descendants would be taken into captivity in another land (*Egypt* it turns out); and return to inherit this very *Canaan*. Then the Creator himself passes among these dead creatures. This whole action is called 'cutting and sealing a covenant' which was enacted in this particular way in *Abram's* time and was so powerful a statement of commitment and intent there was no equal. It is saying: "All that I have, all that I am, all that I stand for, even my life, is invested in this agreement which we are making." Seeing that it was the Creator himself that was enacting the covenant *Abram* knew that what was being promised him was absolutely certain, as sure as the rising of the sun on a new morn.

The next stage in events reveals *Abram* and his wife *Sarai* having marriage difficulties over her inability to conceive. So to help the Creator with his promise to them they decide to invoke the assistance of *Sarai's* handmaid to surrogate a child for them.

This handmaid, *Hagar*, was an Egyptian princess, a woman of some standing by some accounts. This would make *Abram* and *Sarai's* decision more understandable by human reason. This was not any surrogate mother but one of noble birth, of genetic excellence.

Like many a human decision to pre-empt the natural order of things, *Hagar's* pregnancy caused a rift in *Abram's* household through possessiveness and jealousies generated in the women. Subsequently a child was born to *Hagar* - a boy named *Ishmael*. Some two decades of difficulty and contention would exist between *Sarai* and *Hagar* with *Ishmael* in the centre, which would ultimately lead to *Hagar* and *Ishmael* leaving the family home.

Some thirteen years later the Creator appears again to *Abram*. Remember he and *Sarai* still have no child of their own, and are still waiting to see how the promises the Creator formerly had made were going to work out. They had

got their fingers burned, so to speak, by their own trying to work matters out for themselves and had been in waiting mode. Incidentally, had they not taken matters into their own hands *Sarai* would likely have fallen pregnant many years earlier.

The Creator informs *Abram* that the covenant made earlier would be confirmed by *Sarai* conceiving and bearing a son who would be named *Isaac*. It was the genetic line through *Sarai* from whom many nations would develop and through whom the covenant promise of ownership of the land of *Canaan* would be expressed. It was (*Genesis 17:8*) an everlasting ownership and not negotiable, underpinned by the very work of the Creator himself.

Abram and *Sarai's* names were changed to reflect their new position in the events of time to *Avraham* and *Sarah* - names that reflect progenitors of nations and peoples and of royal and noble lineage. Not bad for a couple who had been childless for 50 years and more. A year later *Sarah* at age 90 years bore a son who was named *Yitzchak (Isaac)* meaning laughter. Laughter that would one day come upon the world of men through the promises God had made, which would be channeled through the lineage of *Yitzchak*.

Yitzchak and *Ishmael* would develop into numerous, powerful nations. But it was through *Yitzchak* that the Creator's promise, through covenant, would be channeled. *Ishmael's* sidelining through the covenant would become a big issue in later years. The Arab peoples, who are largely Ishmaelite, and those allied to them, have a problem with the Jews, who are of *Yitzchak*, over what was *Canaan*. Blood feuds are therefore demonstrated to go much further and deeper than we would generally realise.

The next major event in the process of the development of covenant promise and a people is recorded in *Genesis 22*. Here we find the Creator directing *Avraham* and *Yitzchak* to go to Mount Moriah, in what would in future be called *Jerusalem*, and make sacrifice. Not just any sacrifice but *Avraham* was told to take *Yitzchak*, kill him, and burn him to nothing. This sacrifice, in later times applied to animals, is called a 'holocaust'. A name we are now familiar with in another context.

Avraham knew the Creator had promised him many descendants, likened to the stars in the sky or sand on the seashore. He had always trusted God, even leaving his native homeland and walking into the unknown. His experiences and testing by his maker had sharpened his devotion and confidence to this ultimate of challenges.

The two men, *Avraham* some 130 years, and *Yitzchak* some 30 years had, it would seem, enormous confidence in each other as well as in their maker. *Yitzchak*, a young strong man, could easily have resisted the exercise when he fully realised what was to transpire, yet he apparently did not. They both went through with what God had told them to do. But *Avraham* was stopped by the intervention of the Creator just as *Avraham* was to plunge the dagger into his bound, prostrate son. A ram, caught in a thicket, provided the sacrifice and *Yitzchak* was spared.

This act that *Avraham* and *Yitzchak*, on God's instruction, was carrying out, was an acting out in type of the most important singular event ever to occur : That of the Creator allowing an expression of himself in the form of *Yeshua* the *Messiah* (Jesus the Christ) some 1600 years later – an event that would make possible the fulfilling of the covenants given to *Avraham* as well as those that were to follow.

Some ten years later *Yitzchak* was to marry a young woman whose name was *Rebekah*. *Rebekah* was found to be barren, yet God intervened and provided twin boys, one of which, *Yaacov* (Jacob) would inherit the covenant promises.

God further appeared to *Yitzchak* and confirmed the covenant promises :

Genesis 26 : 3-5

“Stay in this land for a while (Canaan) and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Avraham. I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give all these lands, and through your offspring all nations of earth will be blessed because Avraham obeyed me and kept my requirements, my commands, my decrees and my laws.”

Again, ownership and dwelling in the land is emphasised by God among all other bestowed favours.

Next person in the frame of promise we have *Yaacov* (Jacob) who would carry the mantle of the covenants. It was his twin brother *Esau*, born as the first twin, who would normally carry the inheritance of his father *Yitzchak*, yet it was to be transferred to *Yaacov* instead by the direction of the Creator.

Rebekah, whilst she was carrying the twins, was having a difficult time because of the jostling in her womb between these two children. After enquiring of the Creator she was told :

Genesis 25 : 23

"Two nations are in your womb and two peoples from within you will be separated. One people will be stronger than the other and the older will serve the younger."

This competitiveness between these two sons of *Yitzchak* would continue throughout their lives.

Esau would develop into a man's man, rugged, warrior, hunter type of person - his father's favourite. *Yaacov* was more a woman's man - in touch with his feminine side we might say today. He was into growing things and keeping sheep, and being around the home. He used his head rather than the power of his arm. He was his mother's favourite.

Yaacov was an ambitious and focused individual who knew what he wanted and he wanted to inherit the promises made to his fathers by the Creator. *Esau*, on the other hand, wasn't that fussed about it and was more interested in his 'now' situation rather than something of the future. This expressed itself in him selling his inheritance as firstborn for a bowl of soup when he was in difficulties. (*Genesis 25 : 23 -34*).

This inheritance or birthright was to be expanded with *Yaacov* as he went off back to the land where *Avraham* had originally come from, married into *Avraham's* extended family; and produced twelve sons from four women.

Yaacov's life was a tortuous one in which he had to deal with his ambition and self-will. He tended to try and work things out through his own efforts instead of relying on the Creator in the way his fathers *Avraham* and *Yitzchak* had done. He did change however and realised this when he had a meeting with a messenger from God. (*Genesis 32 : 22-31*).

The account itself is intriguing and does not go into detail. I personally suspect that *Yaacov* was having an emotional downer as his life was at a crossroads, and this messenger from God turned up. A discussion took place and *Yaacov* was told some home truths about his life. He was in the end desperately sorry for what he was, yet wanted the approval of the Creator so much that he wasn't going to let the messenger go without it. It was through this act of tenacity and single-mindedness to receive God's approval that his name was changed by the Creator to *Israel* to reflect his newly formed character.

The name *Israel*, from this time on, was a name that was to be used to identify a people the Creator was to use for his purpose of bringing mankind back to the condition he is meant to exist in.

These twelve sons of *Israel* grew up and one of their number, *Joseph*, was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers. This account of *Joseph* and his life is one of the better known stories of the Bible. *Joseph*, through a series of miracles by the hand of the Creator, was ultimately elevated to position of second in command of the whole of *Egypt*, the world super-power of the age.

Whilst *Joseph* ruled in *Egypt* the rest of his family dwelt in *Canaan*. *Joseph's* new found situation was quite unknown to *Israel* and his brothers who thought him dead. Through a series of events the family of *Israel* and *Joseph* were re-united and came to dwell in a most favoured part of *Egypt* at the behest of *Joseph*. And so a sojourn of many years would begin for the children of *Israel* that would start spectacularly good and end desperately bad.

The time came for *Israel (Yaacov)* to die and this was to occur in the land of *Egypt*. We read in *Genesis Chapters 48 and 49* of him preparing for this event and passing on his inheritance to his sons. *Genesis 48:3* records *Yaacov* speaking to *Joseph* where he relates :

"God almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there blessed me and said to me 'I am going to make you fruitful and will increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land (Canaan) as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you'."

The prophetic utterances of *Yaacov* in *Genesis 48 and 49* have to do largely with our times now, and give some indication as to what the descendants of these boys would develop into. We are talking here of powerful, wealthy, nations who are prime movers in our world today.

On the question of the inheritance of the land of *Canaan*, which is pivotal in the blessings given by God to these patriarchs, it is no longer spelt out and obviously transferred. The blessing has now arrived where it will remain with the descendants of the children of *Israel*. It is a done deal; the only question remains is the 'when' they would receive it in the permanency to which it was intended.

Israel's children multiplied in numbers greatly in the area of *Egypt* where they had settled. This area called *Goshen* was a most fertile and geographically favoured of places to live. Yet what started out as their *Eden* turned into a concentration camp. The children of *Israel* cried out in their distress and the Creator acted to release them from the situation they had descended into.

A man called *Moshe (Moses)* was raised up by the Creator to lead the release of the children of *Israel*. Most people have heard of this account in one form or another. After a series of miraculous events and the destruction of the world super-power of the time, this land called *Egypt*, *Moshe* led this group of Israelites, some 2.5 million in number, together with a number of people from other nations who allied themselves to these Israelites, into the Arabian desert.

A new chapter had begun for this people. Now they were on their way to receive the inheritance given to them by the Creator, through their fathers *Avraham, Yitchak* and *Yaacov*.

They arrived at a mountain called *Horeb*. These days it is called *Jabelel Laws*, in Arabic, and is found in *Saudi Arabia*. Not the Sinai mountain most people think of for this event. Here *Moshe* was given a list of rules which would act as a guide and foundation for their new life in *Canaan*. The core of these instructions was called the 'Ten Words' or, as now known, 'The Ten Commandments'.

I wish to interject here and remind ourselves of the actual aim the Creator is seeking to get us humans to arrive at. This is central to all that I have recorded here and all that will follow after. The Creator is bringing humans to a place where we can receive his instruction, as was *Adam* meant to do - to stay in *Eden* and have a meaningful relationship with his Creator. The decision *Adam* made together with his wife (*Eve*) was to reject this instruction and relationship, thus setting man on the road of horrors which is human history. Man's nature in its present form is not capable of receiving from the Creator anything to any measure that is helpful in addressing the relationship breakdown.

The patriarchs and their children were selected as an avenue for mankind to get to the place where man can receive what *Adam* rejected, and this is the sole reason for the whole exercise. Man's nature has to be changed so that it can receive what the Creator has to give; and embrace what God is and stands for, rather than our natural proclivity to reject.

Whilst *Moshe* was up on the mountain receiving these instructions the Israelites got impatient and decided to do the *Adam* thing and approach God in their own way; ways they had learned in *Egypt*. The Israelites had been taken out of *Egypt* but *Egypt* was still in them.

A golden calf was smelted and fashioned to represent the Creator and, along with certain practices of a sexual nature, they sought God's attention. They certainly got that for, because of this and other further errors of judgment on

their part, most of that 2.5 million people were to die in the Arabian Desert over the following 40 years.

After 40 years in the desert where they were instructed in God's ways, known as the '*Torah*', they were ready to enter the land of *Canaan*, the promised land, to receive their inheritance. Their remaining in the land however would depend on their attitude toward this *Torah* that *Moshe* had given them from God.

Moshe, their great leader and servant of the most high, never entered *Canaan* with them – this was left to his trusted assistant *Joshua* to lead them into this new land. *Moshe* however addressed the matter of the future of this people in a prophecy recorded in *Deuteronomy 47* - how this people would fail to obey God and be scattered abroad to other lands. How correct this proved to be.

Joshua led the Israelites into *Canaan* where they were meant to cleanse the land from all opposition to that which the Creator stood for. Their progress started promisingly enough with the supernatural destruction of *Jericho*, a place of resistance to God's order of things, yet this did not last.

The Israelites never dominated the land as was intended. Over the next some hundreds of years they were guided by people selected by God, called 'Judges'. They were constantly harassed by native tribes and paid a hard price for a consistent attitude problem toward God and his standards.

Their last judge was called *Samuel* who did his best for them, yet the people decided they wanted a king to lead them like the nations around them. They assumed that their problems were due to inadequate leadership, not realising that their problems lay in their own behaviour.

Another big mistake was to take place as, with a king of their nature, this would simply add to the problems they were already experiencing. It just meant that they were going to be lighter in their pockets providing for the excessive lifestyle kings demand at the expense of their subjects.

The Israelites' first king was *Shaul (Saul)* who stood head and shoulders over most everyone else. He had visual appeal but proved a failure as far as the Creator was concerned, and a replacement was found in a young man named *David*.

David was physically quite the opposite of *Shaul*. He was the youngest of a line of brothers and cut an insignificant figure. It was this man that the

Creator would use to propel the Israelites to super-power status, its zenith being reached in the time of *David's* son *Solomon*.

David's life was a mixture of bitter sweet. He made lots of mistakes but, above it all, his heart was right before his maker. The Creator made a special covenant with David to the effect that a descendant of his would always at some time and some place rule over Israelite peoples :

II Chronicles 13 :5

"Should you not know that the Lord God of Israel gave the dominion over Israel to David forever, to him and his sons, by a covenant of salt ?"

It would seem likely that most of the royal households of western Europe are of Davidic stock.

Under *David's* rule the Israelites put down all opposition to their dwelling in *Canaan*. *Jerusalem*, which was a stronghold of a tribe called 'Jebusites', was taken and made capital of the new *State of Israel*. *Israel* at last had a sort of peace; all hostile force had been subdued or vanquished; and a new era had begun for them. The land promised to *Avraham*, *Yitzchak* and *Yaacov* had become theirs.

After *David* came *Solomon (Shlomo)* who was to take the state of *Israel* to new heights of prosperity and power. It was under *Shlomo* that *Israel* developed sea power and a vast trading empire. Israelite ships called into ports in foreign lands bringing goods from *Israel* and taking merchandise back. Those traders are known to us as 'Phoenicians' today as largely our history has been shaped from a Greco-Roman viewpoint and that is what they called them.

Shlomo eventually died and his son *Rehoboam* took over the throne. There was a considerable amount of discontent among the Israelites over the level of taxation they had to endure (What's new ?) *Shlomo* had taxed the people heavily to pay for palaces, armies, navies, etc. all of which was bearable to the Israelites in their ascendancy but now they had had enough.

The Israelites, although being one people, were a tribal amalgam. There were twelve tribes who traced their lineage to *Israel (Yaacov)*, yet the tribe of *Joseph* had split into two to reflect their specific lineage to *Joseph's* sons *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, who were considered as *Yaacov's* own sons. So, in effect, the twelve tribes of *Israel* became thirteen.

Anyway, when *Rehoboam*, *Solomon's* son, came to the throne representation was made by ten tribes saying : "We will serve you if you reduce our tax burden". *Rehoboam's* response was, against the advice of his older advisors, to make their tax burden even greater and so a schism occurred.

Three tribes remained loyal to *Rehoboam* - *Judah*, *Benjamin* and the greater part of *Levi*. The remaining ten went their own way and set up their own kingdom and so Israelite people were divided into what became known as 'Houses' - the *House of Judah*, after the leading tribe of the three; and the *House of Israel*, representing the ten. These two houses would continually be fighting each other over the following two centuries (*I Kings and II Kings*), and have been separate even to this day.

The behaviour of the two houses was largely bad and fell far short of the standard the Creator required of them. He sent prophets, persons representing his authority, yet mainly they were abused or even killed. So in stages the God of *Israel* was going to remove them from the land of *Canaan*.

The *House of Israel* was the first to go. Being in a weakened state after crippling weather conditions they were removed from *Canaan* by the Assyrians. This *House of Israel*, after many centuries of occupying areas of land north of the Euphrates, would descend on western Europe in the form of tribes we would call 'Caucasian'. In other words people who had come over the Caucasus mountains. They would more specifically be called Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Franks etc.

The people of the *House of Judah* would remain in *Canaan* for another hundred years or so before being removed by *Nebuchadnezzar* and his new Babylonian Empire. And so it was that those who entered into the land under *Joshua* to receive the glorious promise made by God to the patriarchs were removed from the land of *Canaan*.

This is a pivotal moment for God's dealings with a people of promise. We are now back to square one so to speak. The Creator had brought the Israelites into *Canaan* as he had promised the patriarchs but they had fallen short of the standard of behaviour required. He had revealed himself to them through many a miraculous event : parting a sea; providing water out of a rock; food from the sky; a great city's walls to crumble before them and, to cap it all, the sun to stand still in the sky which, incidentally, is an event which affects the whole solar system. The Creator demonstrated his power to them and his care by taking them out of severe servitude in *Egypt* but to no good effect.

The Israelites' nature was still the same as *Adam's*, the first human, who made the choice of a decision that would affect his and all our nature. We have therefore human nature which at its root is in direct opposition to the Creator and his standards. The Israelites reflected this even though they were given every physical and sensual reason not to.

So we come to the next stage in the Creator's plan : the restoration of *Israel* back into *Canaan* to fulfill his promise to the patriarchs, but this time with a different nature. A nature we all would have received had *Adam* made a different choice.

The *House of Israel* is scattered to the north of the Euphrates. The *House of Judah* is in captivity in *Babylon* way out of *Canaan*. Seventy years were to pass in that captivity in *Babylon* as was foretold by God's prophet *Jeremiah*.

Around 538 BC the Persians invaded Babylon and a new order of empire began. *Cyrus*, who as leader of this Persian Empire, was shown a prophecy of *Isaiah* recorded many years before that, foretold of his conquest and even mentioned him by name. By some account he was mightily impressed by this and granted the Jews exceptional favour even to allowing their return to *Canaan*.

Over the coming decades some few Jews returned to *Jerusalem* and *Canaan* starting with *Zerubabel*, a Jew of royal lineage. Those who returned however were relatively few in number. The main body of the *House of Judah* either remained in the far flung reaches of the Persian Empire or drifted north in the train of their fellow Israelites, the *House of Israel*.

Those who did go back to *Canaan* and develop a Jewish state were the forebears of those who inhabited the land when *Jesus (Yeshua)* turned up on the scene some 500 years later. These however represented but a portion of the *House of Judah* that existed.

Those that did return to *Jerusalem* and *Judea* (that area of *Canaan* occupied by the *House of Judah*) built a temple and restored a state function. Other invaders came over the coming hundreds of years, the Seleucid Greeks and Romans being the main ones.

This is the picture we are presented with when the Creator seeded an expression of himself into Jewish society in *Canaan*. The person whose name was *Yeshua* (means 'salvation') taught in *Judea* for three and a half years. He showed how God's instructions given to the Israelites by his servant *Moshe* should be lived, and what living with the right attitude entailed.

He told that the reason for his coming on the world scene was for the rescuing of the *House of Israel*, long lost among the other nations beyond *Canaan* (*Matthew 15 : 24*).

At the end of his teaching he was killed in a brutal manner by a rejecting Israelite and Gentile humanity. But through this death he paved the way for the reconciliation of *Israel* and of the world. He being God in the flesh could alone pay the price for *Adam's* wrong decision that brought with it death to mankind. *Yeshua's* life was worth at least the equivalent of all human life that ever was or ever will be. The Creator's scales of justice were balanced, a price was paid that satisfied the degree of offence.

Yeshua was raised from the dead after three whole days in a grave and, speaking to his followers, said he would return. This time, not as a teacher and priest, but as a King. This time not to instruct and pay the price of man's wrong attitude, but to establish *Israel* back into the land of *Canaan*.

Once there they would be used as a kingdom of priests and kings showing by example how to serve God and how to govern. This task, which was always meant for them, had always eluded them.

Yeshua, when on one of his teaching walk-about, came across a fig tree which was of a wild variety (*Mark 11 : 12*). It was not even the season for it to bear any fruit yet he cursed the tree and it died. This, on the face of things, seemed a needless and even vindictive exercise on his part unless one realises the reason for it.

Yeshua was a prophet as well as a teacher and here he was showing what was going to happen to the Jewish State he was living in. The fig tree represented the *State of Judah* which was wild and untamed. It was not cultured according to God's ways as was its nature. It died because, not only did it not produce fruit (the reason for its existence), it was not even the time for it to do so.

Some 40 years later from this event the Jewish State was destroyed by the Roman legions, to exist no more until 1948 when it again came into being in the form we witness today and called mistakenly *Israel* (should be *Judah*). Is this significant ? Well Yes !

Mark 11 : 20 records how *Kefa (Peter,)* one of *Yeshua's* students, remarked, on observing the same fig tree the following day, how it had died from its roots. This is indicative of the condition of the *House of Judah* – that it could not take up nourishment in the form of *Torah* (God's instruction) and therefore the State was to die.

In verse 22 of the same chapter *Yeshua* tells his students to have trust (faith) in their Creator. These men, who were to be the custodians of *Yeshua's* teaching, were here being told :

"I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain 'Go throw yourself into the sea' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours."

Most who read this encouragement from *Yeshua* to trust in prayer usually come out as feeling inadequate, as mountains and the like do not move around at ones command, so they assume they lack trust, which of course they may. The object of the lesson here is to convey that the students would become the movers and shakers as far as the Creator's purposes were concerned and that authority would dwell with them and not with those on the mountain (*Jerusalem*) - the religious leaders and like who erroneously professed to represent the God of *Israel*.

The mountain being cast into the sea is the prophetic insight that the Jewish State that was the remnant of Israelite community in *Canaan*, was to be cast into the world of the Gentiles. 'Mountain' and 'Sea' mean 'Nation' or 'State' - Gentile civilisation in biblical prophetic language.

In *Matthew 24* there is an account of the students asking when the end of the age (the present order of things) would come and the new order of *Israel's* restoration would come - a golden age for *Israel* and the whole world, basking in the blessings God had promised to the patriarchs, that had not been fully realised.

After telling of a lot of unpleasant world events *Yeshua* tells his students to learn the lesson from the fig tree :

Matthew 24 : 32

"As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out you know summer is near, even so when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door."

Here, *Yeshua* is saying "Learn the lesson from the fig tree." Well, why not any tree ? They all mostly sprout leaves in spring. No, *Yeshua* is talking about the fig tree – the one he had cursed representing the *State of Judah*. Here is the importance of the *State of Israel* to us all whether we recognise it or not. Whether we like it or not. It is there because from it will emanate the

promised new *Kingdom of Israel* as promised by God to the patriarchs - a nucleus of blessing to the whole world.

Yeshua went on to say in *Matthew 24 : 34* :

"I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things happen. Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will never pass away."

If *Yeshua* here is referring to the sprouting of the fig tree and that his kingdom will be established no longer than a generation's span, and if 1948 is when it started to sprout, we do not seem to have much time.

The fig tree had been cursed and it died, no longer to function under the sun. But miraculously God, the giver of life, breathed his life back into this tree that was dead for 1900 years. Now would begin a re-run of events that took place up to 70 AD when Roman armies, under Titus, crushed and devastated *Jerusalem* and brought an end to the Jewish State which was, in itself, a remnant or a last vestige of the people of *Israel* in the Land of *Canaan*.

In the book of *Zechariah 12 : 1* we read :

"This is the word of the Lord concerning Israel (meaning the restoration of the whole of Israel to the Golden Age). The Lord who stretches out the heavens, who lays the foundation of the earth, and who forms the spirit of man within him declares 'I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all surrounding peoples reeling. Judah (the Jewish State) will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. On that day when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all nations. All who try to move it will be injured'."

The siege as spoken of here of the Jewish *State of Israel* is already with us. For they are being as now pressured and hemmed in on every side. This condition will grow steadily more severe until major powers will take a direct action against the *State of Israel*.

Again, I would like to emphasise that this condition could not have existed as described by *Zechariah* until recently, for Jews have not dwelt in the region of *Jerusalem* in any significant number for over a millenia.

In *Zechariah 12 : 10* we read of the Creator's pouring out his spirit on Jews in and around *Jerusalem*, causing them to recognise *Yeshua* as their Messiah. The Jewish people, for the most part, have not accepted *Yeshua (Jesus)* as their Messiah. The distorted and gentilised 'Jesus' of the last two millenia of

European culture hasn't helped. But to be fair they were having trouble before that got going.

Here a change takes place and the realisation that *Yeshua* is the Messiah restores hope in them. He is the Messiah and is going to rescue them.

The situation is that the *State of Israel* is almost finished. The number of Jews surviving are few. European armies, the modern Romans, are gathered around it. Other nations are also crowding into the area for one final push to solve the world's problems their way. And the Jews in *Jerusalem*, in their minds, have become the cause and solution to the problem.

In 70AD the God of *Israel* allowed Titus and cruel pagan Rome to destroy *Jerusalem*. This time however it will not be allowed.

Zechariah 12 : 9 says :

"On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem."

The *House of Judah* in the Land of *Canaan* will be saved by the intervention of the Messiah, and a new age for *Israel* and for man will begin.

Those of the *House of Judah* and the *House of Israel* scattered among the nations of the world will now gradually return to join the remnant of Jews residing in *Canaan*.

Israel will at last be receiving in full the blessings given to the patriarchs of the people of *Israel*. A Golden Age for *Israel* and ultimately the world begins.

Isaiah 11 : 6 –9 speaks of a time of genuine peace and harmony :

"The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion will feed together and a little child shall lead them. The cow will feed with the bear and their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the land will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as waters cover the sea."

An allegory, or perhaps not, of a wonderful peace on the people of *Israel*.
Either way, allegorical or literal, we look to wonderful times ahead.

I hope from all that has been written here we can see how important the
Jewish *State of Israel* is and how it will play a part in all our futures.

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