

What's So Special About Israel? Part 1

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[0 : 00] Good morning once again. Before I get into today's sermon, I thought I would share with you a quick update in regards to one of our missionaries.

Kind of don't always talk that much about missionaries, mainly because we're so selfish. We tend to think about ourselves and we forget that sometimes we've got some really great guys.

And I get these letters letting me know the updates. We obviously have the local ministries that we support, Young Life, Youth for Christ. But we also have some other guys that are out there doing some pretty incredible work.

As you remember, we've got Kyle down in South Africa who essentially travels all the world. And his updates usually aren't as exciting. You know, I translated the New Testament into some language that we've never heard of.

It was really fun, you know. But he's doing some really good works. But I would say best bang for our buck on any missionary that I've ever seen at any church that I've ever been involved with is Daniel Henderson.

[1 : 09] And if you don't know Daniel Henderson, he is with Publication Christian. He came from a drug culture in the Toronto area. He got saved.

He ended up at a church in Oakville. And he just really felt a passion for the French-speaking people of the world. So he picked up his family, moved to Quebec as an Anglophone, learned the language.

And his heart's desire is to see Bibles, not only Bibles, but Christian books written for pastors in their own language.

So he just noticed when he was in Quebec, libraries are pretty sparse. And if you've spent any time in Quebec, we kind of think everybody speaks English. And for the most part, they do.

But there's a lot of people who don't. Or it's not their first heart language. So the English resources are often difficult. So Daniel's on this one-man crusade to see every single French-speaking pastor have resources in their own language.

[2 : 18] It's just earlier this year, he just sent me a video and pictures. He went to Madagascar. And what Daniel does is he works with a church.

He finds a church. And what they do is, in order to get the resources in some countries where gospel, the Bible's not allowed, they create blog posts.

So they take a Christian book, divide it into short little blog posts, and put it on the internet. And a lot of the foreign governments don't pick up that it's Christian teaching or whatever.

So he does it that way. And then a lot of, as we just heard even in King's Road Church, just because there's one racial group doesn't mean that's the only language that's spoken.

So they help these organizations set up translators. So they'll read the book in their own language, just kind of on the fly. And then they start broadcasting and podcasting.

[3 : 16] So it's starting to go over all the regions. Well, anyways, so Daniel works with just about every major Christian publisher. And one of the publishers he works with is John Piper's ministry called Desiring God.

So Desiring God ended up making a video featuring our missionary, Daniel Henderson. So I thought I would show you that video this morning. In Quebec, only 0.5% of people know Jesus Christ as their greatest joy.

Similarly to hockey, the church is able to bring together people who wouldn't normally be together. When we become a Christian and the church is new to us, we haven't been there before, it's so easy to really enjoy the music, to really enjoy the fellowship, the friendship.

And unfortunately, it's really easy to focus on those things as the end. Going to church for some can be like going to a concert once a week.

To just focus on the great friendships, the great relationships, the great Sunday morning experience that happens week after week that we don't even pay for. And we can very easily fall into the trap of enjoying the experience of church and forget what the experience is pointing us to, the worship of Jesus Christ.

[4 : 53] Hello. My name is Daniel Henderson, and I live in Chewinigan, Quebec, in Canada.

I'm married with Judith, and we have two kids, Isabella and Martin. I am the vice president of strategy for Publication Chrétienne, and we exist to serve the French-speaking church with resources to help make disciples, train leaders, and share the gospel.

When I became a Christian, I wasn't very popular at school. So now to all of a sudden be welcomed into a community of people who loved me and welcomed me and gave me friendship, just that in itself was amazing.

The weekly rhythm of being at church every week, amazing music, yeah, it was all about the experience of church. I always had loved Christ.

I had always personally spent a lot of time in the Bible, but the Sunday morning experience was constantly pointing me back to the experience. The youth group was pointing me back to the experience.

[6 : 18] When we settle with the experience of church to find joy, unfortunately, our souls remain restless. That's why reading the book, God is the Gospel, was so helpful.

It was a correction. Even though the gospel purchased and promises many good gifts, from the most spiritual to the most material, yet God himself is the ultimate good promised in the gospel. I've been saddened with a lot of people I see in the church who seemingly have moved on from Jesus. They focus on leadership. They focus on Christian ethics.

They focus on all sorts of things. And you hear people, and you hear them talk, and you're like, man, that will not satisfy you. And then you read this book that helps point you to Jesus so clearly and easily.

Man, how could you not want to share that with everyone around you? I wanted everyone in Quebec to read the book, God is the Gospel.

[7 : 26] And since the book was written by John Piper, I decided to reach out to Desiring God. And when I shared Josh the project, I was surprised because he was excited about it.

Josh got back to me and said one word, approved. Can you imagine my surprise? I'm like, I submit this \$70,000 project to Josh for Quebec, and he writes approved.

I'm like, wow. I'm like, wow. It's crazy. Okay, this is going to happen. We're going to be able to share this message that had such an impact in my life with every Christian in Quebec potentially.

We are here in Quebec City at a print shop where they are in the process of printing 12,000 copies of God is the Gospel. We're excited to see these 12,000 copies being prepared for distribution and available for the French-speaking church in Quebec.

One thing I realized was that distributing this book would be an opportunity for me to connect with pastors all over the province. Let's have about 30 minutes, 45 minutes at each church to just spend time, to listen, to see how it's going in the church, to pray with them, and to just encourage them.

[8 : 45] My name is Yannick Etienne.

I'm serving as lead pastor of l'Eglise de l'Espoir on the south shore of Montreal, Quebec. If you don't find God in the Gospel but only find the gifts of the Gospel, you'll miss the best part of it.

Often times, you give the book and the Spirit is preparing something, a meeting there in that book.

So to our church, to our church of 300, just giving those books was a wonderful blessing.

But when the Gospel of Jesus Christ frees us to see and savor the glory of God above all things, the way is open for us to experience seamless joy in God and His gifts.

We are able to see every gift as a beam from the Son of God's glory. Every joy in the beam runs up to the fountain of light and ends there.

[9 : 57] No created thing becomes a rival but only a revelation of God. And one more reason why we must preach the Gospel and make plain what we mean when we say, God is the Gospel.

Well done, Daniel, eh?

So it was kind of interesting with him because I shared with him, as just I've been jumping into Romans, I've been really moved by the fact that it's God's Gospel that we've been looking at just the

last couple of weeks in Romans 1.

I kind of mentioned it to him. So all of a sudden, they're desiring God is sending us 100 copies. So we're going to have English copies of the book.

I made sure it was in English, but they just wanted to make sure we as a church and just supporting Daniel, and this is kind of what we're dealing with just even in our own study of God's Word that we will each have a copy of this book for each and every one of the families here.

[11:01] So this morning, I'm kind of taking an excursus. A little bit of a deviation from the book of Romans. It does involve the book of Romans, but I wanted to deal with some of the current events that we see before us.

And so I've entitled this sermon, What About Israel? What About Israel? So hopefully I'm able to give you guys somewhat of a commentary on the events of Israel and the theological significance of the events that we see, we read, we watch on TV.

So there's a lot here. I know many people have been asking different questions, different emails. So what I thought I would do is for the next two weeks, we're going to deal with this.

So I hope to inform you biblically on the events that are going on in this world. And I want to accomplish two goals. B, the first goal being that you would be able to respond to the events that we see in Israel in a Christ-like fashion without worrying about, you know, well, is it Israel God's people or not?

Should we be cheering for Israel and not for Arabs or any of those type of dynamics that happen? And two, more theologically driven, I want you to understand God through this whole process.

[12:30] So in the early mornings of October 7th, a Palestinian group of men named Hamas, they're either a militant group or a terrorist group, depending on your politics, launched a sneak attack by air, land, and sea into Israeli territory.

For several hours, they indiscriminately murdered over 1,200 Israelis, the majority of whom are civilians, mothers, children, grandmothers.

Of those injured, there are more than double, and there are dozens, if not hundreds, kidnapped, depending on the sources that you might have for your information.

One commentator simply stated that for its sheer brutality, this event has surpassed the atrocities of the Holocaust.

To what has not been surprising is that the attacks have been universally condemned by worldwide governments. This is not surprising.

[13:42] What I have found particularly surprising in these events that have transpired is the great support for anti-Jewish sentiment which has arisen in our day.

What has been equally shocking is that many of these same governments that condemn the attacks have not condemned the open displays and hatred towards Jews.

Although I believe the amelments of the attacks on Israel are of world importance, I believe the world's response to these events is of greater significance to us.

And I really believe it will be interesting to see not only how our country moves forward, but how other countries around the world move forward when there are open displays of hatred towards another group.

we're supposed to live in a liberal democracy where everybody's point of view is to be considered as equally valued and even though you disagree, you act in a respectful manner.

[14:56] To be honest, I find it interesting that in our country, the mainstream media led by CBC struggle to even call Hamas terrorists, although the Canadian and other worldwide governments do.

Yet at the same time, last year, there was a truckers' protest and no matter what side you take on it, the media openly declared them as terrorists and accused them of holding an illegal occupation.

Right now, we have a liberal government that is indecisive on how to respond. Do we support Israel or do we support Hamas?

And even more perplexing, you have this head of the Canadian Union of Public Employees who is a practicing homosexual lending all his support towards Hamas, seeming to misunderstand that if he were to be in Palestine and Hamas, they would behead them because that's what they do to people who practice homosexuality.

There are groups that are making public declarations about death to Jews. That number in the thousands, there seems to be no open condemnation from media, governments, or universities.

[16 : 19] And this is quite amazing considering the day and age of tolerance that we live in. There was one particular article. One of the universities backed down because one of their benefactors was a Jewish billionaire and he simply wrote, if you do not condemn Hamas, you will only get a dollar a year from me.

The church, or the university changed their position. Probably one of the saddest, heartbreaking videos as I've seen in this mishap, it just happens to be an American.

It's a young Jewish girl crying and she's asking the police to stop the chanting death to Jews, death to Jews. And you hear her say, they really want to kill me, never really understanding that people actually hated her.

And if you turn to social media, you will find liberal progressives in Hollywood, groups that were fast friends, and they can't not believe that their Jewish liberal progressive friends are supporting Israel. So you will see that there will be some actors, actresses, that will be blacklisted for their support of Israel. And you find some articles online saying, did you know that Israeli students are being paid to support Israel?

[17 : 41] At the same time, we know that there's liberal Hamas students being paid to support Hamas. If you look on the videos and you're hoping to get truth from what you see on TV, it's very difficult.

AI, an advanced technology, technology has grown to the point that we can't even tell what is true or real anymore. So for the next two Sundays, I was actually hoping it would be one Sunday, but as I started to get into the information that I wanted to provide for you, there was so much information. But I want to specifically focus in on this subject of Israel. This morning, I want to provide you with the required background, information about Israel, about the people in the land, and then following this, I want to look at what the Bible has to say about Israel, what the Bible has to say about God's people.

And I find what is so interesting about this topic is that many of our positions on Israel are built on faulty knowledge, and faulty knowledge brings about faulty understanding and faulty understanding brings about faulty opinions.

I think most of us admit it's a complicated matter, both politically and biblically. But more importantly, I really want us to understand so that we can respond in the best way in a Christ-like fashion.

[19 : 19] Pretty simple, right? Easy going? Here's a simple question. Do the events in the Middle East matter more than the events, equally horrible events that happen in other parts of the world?

This is one of the first things when I was asked to talk on this subject. What do I say about this? We have a family here from Eritrea. Most of us do not know about the war that has been raging on between Somalia, Eritrea, and all those groups that has been going on for years.

That is horribly evil and despicable. Many of us know about the events that have happened in Rwanda, Yugoslavia, and other parts of the world that are horrible as well.

And many pastors don't preach about those things. These questions don't happen in church.

I believe that it's not that we don't think they're as evil. It's just that sadly in North America we tend to be picky about what we care about.

[20 : 38] We're picky about what we get emotional about. And that is usually driven by what the media tells us to care about. If it doesn't appear on the news or written about, we don't know.

We are dependent upon the media and politicians and how much they care for these events. So my first response, do the events of the Middle East matter more than other events of the world?

I say no. But then I have a second response. I say yes. Christians, for the most part, believe that the events occurring in the Middle East are significant.

To what degree? Well, it all depends. Some people will say, well, now that we have the new covenant ushered in by the Lord Jesus Christ, do Jews really matter?

Does it really have anything to do with us? Well, what's interesting, we're in a book of Romans. And one of the key questions that the Apostle Paul will be addressing, and we're going to be looking at multiple chapters where he's answering the questions, yes, the Jews in Israel matter.

[21 : 55] Now, it also matters by what is your theological position on end times. If you happen to come from a, perhaps a Plymouth Brethren background or a Pentecostal background or a church that had what is known as dispensational theology, you're all about Israel.

If you go to any of those churches, there's usually a talk every year about God's people and the events that are going on in Israel. If you happen to come from a Presbyterian, an Anglican, or even a Catholic background, that subject doesn't come up very much because they have a different view of end times.

If we are now the covenantal people that the church has replaced Israel, which would be called replacement theology, does it really matter?

Some would say yes, but not as much as others. If you're asking, what about Baptists? Well, they're kind of in both camps, but for the most part, Baptists do care what's going on in the end times.

A caveat that I would have for you this morning is that this is one of the biggest issues when dealing with this topic is that it is a politically loaded topic.

[23 : 12] People argue about words, meanings, motivations. They argue about dates, ownerships. There is deceptions on both sides of the stories.

And it is very difficult to talk about in any sort of sensible way. One of the most difficult things in doing research and looking for information on the subject is that it's either slanted one way or another.

It's either pro-Israel or pro-Palestinian, and it makes it tough. What I'm hoping to do is to be as objective as possible when presenting this information.

Now, some of you might be asking what would give me an ability to do that. I would simply state my background. In case you didn't know, I've been a pastor, a mild-mannered pastor here in the majority of my time in B.C., but previous to this, I had another life.

I worked for the Canadian government with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, and most of my life was, or my speciality, was investigating what is called state-sponsored terrorism.

[24 : 26] terrorism. And all that state-sponsored terrorism was terrorism that was target at Israel.

So this is a subject I'm indelibly up-to-date on, but also out-of-date with much of what I experienced and know.

And as we go through, you'll understand that there is much debate, and as one man coined, one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. Sometimes means those things.

Before I get into anything a little bit more, I'm going to describe for you the biggest difference that is going on in the Middle East that I want you to understand. One, an Arab does not always mean Islamic.

Are you with me on that one? Sometimes they kind of get put together. There is secular Arabs. There are Christian Arabs. There are Islamic Arabs.

Now Islamic Arabs are divided into two camps. They're either Shia or Sunni. So when we talk about state-sponsored terrorists, Shia terrorism is sponsored by Iran.

[25 : 41] Iran is a Shia theocracy. You guys know in 1979, the Shah, their version of the king, was overthrown, and they created an Islamic state there.

So the Shiites tend to support terrorism in other places. Do you guys remember the name Hezbollah? It's a very popular name.

They, at the time, they had killed more Americans than any other terrorists at the time. They are Shia. Their support, their money, comes from Iran. The other group, Sunni, their money comes from Saudi Arabia.

All right? Now, Saudi Arabia and Shia are not kind of the same way in how they do stuff. Iran, as we know publicly, desires the complete destruction of Jews and Israel.

Boom, they want it off the map. Sunnis, a little bit different. In fact, although the Sunni Saudi Arabia doesn't have an official peace treaty with Israel, they've actually been trading together for decades.

[26 : 54] If the true Muslims knew how much trade was going on, they'd feel that they're being sold out. But they have been very much affected. They're really not on that idea of they'll give mouth, lip service to, yeah, we really don't want Israel there, but they're kind of okay with it too.

They're not actively seeking to destroy Israel. So you're with me on that one? You have a Shia, Sunni, money coming from Iran, money coming from Saudi Arabia.

But before I get into that, now that we know a little bit about background, I thought I would share with you the story of Israel. Please turn in your Bibles to the book of Genesis.

I'm going to briefly go through these chapters, but we're going to look at the stories that happened and I hope to share with you some of the details that are going to have a significant effect in the theology, in the understanding of how we are to look at the events.

Genesis 11, so this is after the flood. There's this man named Abram or Abraham who's living in what is known as the Mesopotamian Valley.

[28 : 08] That would be modern day Iraq. That would be between the Tigris and Euphrates River. It's called the Fertile Crescent. That's where most life happened back in that day.

It was along the rivers, easy gardening and that's where he's living. He actually lived south of probably Baghdad and God calls him in about 17, 1800 and he basically tells him come to Canaan. Go to the land that we now know as Israel and bring your family with you. So he leaves there. He actually settles in Syria for a time and then he finally comes to Israel or Canaan.

In Genesis 12, God makes a covenant with Abraham and this covenant is a one-way covenant. It's a one-way promise and it's basically God saying, I'm going to show the world who I am through you and your people.

And there's certain promises that are made in Genesis 12 and Genesis 15. So there's this special relationship that begins and it happens that out of your line many people will come and it will lead to the blessing of man.

[29 : 27] We know the blessings come through his son Isaac, whose mother is Sarah. But in case you did not know, Abraham had eight sons.

A lot of people know he had two. He had Ishmael. So God had this promise to Abraham that he was to bear a son who would be the father of God's people.

But in man's sin, they started to doubt the promises of God. So his wife Sarah said, I have an Egyptian handmaiden. Her name is Sarah.

Take her and have a son with her. So he did. And Ishmael lived with Abraham for 13 years. Then God spoke to Abraham again and we read this in Genesis 15.

And God revealed to him that the promises that I gave you are actually going to come through Sarah, not Hagar. So what happens is now you got this problem in the house.

[30 : 34] There's this one woman thinking that her son Ishmael is going to be the promised son, but it's actually going to come through Sarah.

So 13 years, Abraham's son, firstborn to Sarah is born, which we know as Isaac. There's tension in the camp and Abraham is forced to send Ishmael and his mother out.

There's a beautiful picture of God's wonderful mercy, even in the story of Ishmael and Hagar. Even before Ishmael was born, the Lord had told Hagar that her son would be a wild man, as untamed as a wild donkey.

He will raise his fist against everyone and everyone will be against him. Yes, he will live in open hostility against all his relatives. But there's also a blessing in that.

He will never be a slave. His mother was a slave. He will be free. In Genesis 17 and 21, it tells us the story that this child promised there will be blessings to Ishmael as well.

[31 : 57] Ishmael went on to father princes who end up becoming the father of the Arab nation. And God tells Abraham that Ishmael will be blessed, he will be fruitful, and his descendants will multiply.

And he will be a great nation as well. Now, remember at this time, it's not like these are big nations. these are tribes.

These are just big, large groups of people that travel area to area where the water is, where the fertile lands are. So that's how they are living.

When they're having battles, it's not like these big wars. It's like, you know, the Winstanley clan got upset at the land the Wilson clan has, and they go over and steal some of their sheep, and so they now have something to eat.

That was basically what kind of happened, right? They just went over, took their camels, and that would be the kind of battles that happen. So Abraham bears Isaac, who bears Jacob.

[33 : 06] Jacob's got a great interesting story, but Jacob has 12 sons. And his sons will each represent the 12 tribes of Israel. So this is when the term Israel starts to come, because God tells Jacob, your son shall no longer be Jacob, but will be Israel.

But there's still a tribal family. What's going to happen? As you all know, there's Joseph, right? The story of Joseph. We're all acquainted. They throw his brother out, and he goes to Egypt, and while he's in Egypt, he rises to prominence, and he's essentially a prince, a prime minister.

And there's a great famine in the land, and God's people all move to Egypt. And that's where they live, and they prosper. For about 400 years, they live in the land of Egypt.

But they grow. They're no longer a tribe. Exodus 12 tells us that there are now over 600 male Jews living in Egypt.

If you count women and children, scholars will tell you, there's at least 2 million, some would say 6 million Jews. There were so many Jews in Egypt at the time that Egyptians started to fear, like we're having a problem.

[34 : 31] We've got to start killing these first male-born babies, which is the beautiful story of Moses. God's hand protects Moses, the mother, in fear, puts him in the river.

Pharaoh, the king, God, in his favor, gets into the king's household, and Moses learns how to lead. And what's interesting is they really don't know much about their heritage, about God, right?

They didn't have the scrolls. They didn't have anything. They're just passing down stories for about 400 years about this guy named Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

They don't know, but then God raises Moses, and now Israel is a nation. And God needs to appear to him and say, hey, I made a promise to this man named Abraham that you would have in your land.

You are now going to take this nation of millions of people, and you're going to go back to the land that I promised your forefathers. So they move there, and then Moses' successor, Joshua, they actually get right to the land, and we know that a generation needed to die off, including Moses for their unbelief and sin before God, and then God took a new generation under the leadership of Joshua.

[35 : 50] So when we read the stories of Joshua, Judges, and even Ruth, we hear about the stories of them moving in, and there's people there. They're called Canaanites, and there are all these other different tribes, and we know even the DNA testing of today reveals there's Turkish blood, there's Assyrian blood, Persian blood, there's people from all over the world who've lived in this incredible part of the world.

So Moses goes in as they tend to grow, and about 1000 BC, they finally declare a king. It's actually 1050 BC. It's King Saul, King David, and then finally Solomon.

Now this is very important that I say that they finally have a king, because one of the rights that the world has granted Israel, the right to go back to the land, I say the world, the UN, and the arguments that went back and forth, is there was historical proof that they functioned as a nation in the land of Israel.

Are you with me? They had trade, there's archaeological evidence, they had an army, so they functioned as a nation state independent of anything else.

Like they were their own people. They lived there, they were prosperous. But we know the story. Although they were prosperous, they had a great army, they sinned against God.

[37 : 28] In 720 BC, God sends the Assyrian nation into Israel, and they capture 10 tribes and remove them and scattered them to the lands of the world.

The only two tribes remaining are Judah and Benjamin and some of the Levite priests in the south of Israel, which we know today as near Jerusalem.

God's people do not repent. God then sends in the Babylonians in 600 BC. God uses Babylon to wipe out Jerusalem and the temple, the source of their pride and joy.

One of the people who is captured by the Babylonians is a man named Daniel. Daniel and his friends we read about in the book of Daniel.

If you turn with me to Daniel 9. Daniel 9. Daniel has this wonderful, incredible prayer. And in this prayer, he's demonstrating that 70 years have gone by, and he's starting to understand there was a prophet by the name of Jeremiah.

[38 : 47] And this Jeremiah told him that this was how long Israel was going to be punished by God for those 70 years. Now, Daniel isn't young anymore.

He's an older man. We believe he's about 80 years old. And he's looking back. What do we have going forward? What's to be our future?

And he prays this prayer. Notice in Daniel 9, 4 to 6, he says, Oh, Lord, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments.

We have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled. Turning aside from your commandments and rules, we have not listened to your servants, the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers and to all the people of the land.

And then Daniel provides a vision, a sort of prophecy to Daniel. What hope do we have? And he gives them this prophecy and it tells them that not only were you ruled by the Babylonians, but Persians will come.

[40 : 13] And it was the Persian people that allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the temple. There would be Greeks that would rule in the land.

And there would be Romans that would live in the land. So from about 500, we're now at about 430. As you all know, we have what's called the intertestamental period of the Bible.

God goes silent. For 400 years, the Jewish people hear nothing. There's no prophets. There's no news. And then, of course, we have the great and glorious story of Jesus Christ.

The true answer, the true Messiah for the Jew. But as we all know, the Jews reject Jesus.

He does not become their spiritual king. So finally, in about 70 A.D., Rome destroys their temple again, which had been rebuilt by Herod.

[41 : 19] There is a massive slaughter of hundreds and hundreds of thousands of Jews in 130 A.D. And there's a scattering around the world of Jewish people.

Jerusalem. There was a remnant left in Jerusalem. And Jerusalem becomes the center point of activity around the world. In 640, Muslim forces capture Jerusalem.

Around 700 A.D., the Dome of the Rock is built in the place of Solomon's Temple. And Jerusalem begins to be seen as a meeting place between Jew, Christian, and Islam.

And, of course, we have the great crusades, which happened around 1000 A.D. The crusades that come from England and France. And they march to free Jerusalem from Muslim control.

And this goes on for a couple hundred years until finally Saladin, the Sultan of Egypt, captures. And his army is massive. And the kings, Christian kings, recognize they no longer have the money to fight this battle anymore.

[42 : 38] And then finally, in 1500 A.D., the great Ottoman Empire takes control, which is modern day Turkey, and rules Israel for over 400 years.

Or I say Israel, it's Jerusalem. Now, this is where it gets interesting. And this is where the events happen that affect us today.

You remember, there's a thing called World War I and World War II that happened. Well, in World War I, we had this war.

And obviously, the British overthrew the Ottoman Empire. So now, Britain controls all of Palestine. If you know your world history, remember, those are the days of they still colonized countries, right?

And we need to understand, they didn't work like we do today. There was colonization. Lebanon was controlled by France. Egypt, controlled by England. So they all had these parcels of land.

[43 : 42] And England was given the power over what was known as Palestine. In 1917, an agreement was signed called the Balfour Agreement.

And it was done to help the Jews to, it was basically a gift to them for helping them in their support over the Ottoman Empire.

And the British agreed to help the Jews establish a national home in Israel. You with me on this? So this is where it first starts to begin to happen.

But here's the catch. There was a caveat. We will help you establish your own nation, but you cannot be prejudiced against the people who already live there.

And at that time, there was probably around maybe a million Canaanites, Palestinians, that's what they're called now. But there was about a million still in that land, different tribes.

[44 : 44] Now, they weren't a nation. You have to understand. You guys ever see Lawrence of Arabia? Watch it. That actually describes a lot of what modern, or I don't want to say modern, but what life was like post-1800s, early 1900s.

Arabs really didn't become a big deal to the world until they found oil. No one really cared about the land. It was just a desert. They were ruled by tribes.

And a lot of people thought they were barbaric in how they functioned and whatnot. So they kind of weren't even in on anything at that time. So then in 1922, the League of Nations, which is a precursor to the UN, stated that they will help Israel become a nation or a land of nation.

And then this mass migration began to happen. In 1922, there was 84,000 Jews in Palestine. By the time we get to 1946, there's over 600,000 Jews living in Palestine.

In fact, by 1930, there was so many Jews moving back to Palestine, the Arabs started to get frightened that there was more Jews than Arabs, and they started to resist what was going on.

[46 : 10] In the 30s, there was skirmishes over water and land and territory between Arabs and Jewish people. And like I said, remember, these aren't big buildings or cities.

They live in settlements and villages, and they're usually around water or fertile land, that type of thing. And what's interesting, the first people who went to Israel, and you've heard the term kibbutz, they were really a bunch of socialist commies.

That's really how they, you know, we get this idea that they're this right-wing somewhat group. Group, that's not who the original Jews, they wanted their own place, their own farm. They wanted to live in peace with one another.

And then finally, in 1936, the British restricted Jewish settlement to Palestine. So what the Jews do at that time is then they then turn to the United States for support.

We know what happens, World War II. Holocaust. Holocaust. And Canada has some great blemishes as well. There was a boatload of Jews that were coming to settle in Canada, and we turned them away.

[47 : 24] And they had to go back. This was going all over the world because there was these Jewish pockets, but nobody really spoke for them. There was huge Jewish population in Paris, parts of England, and of course, Russia.

So there was people, groups that kind of had amalgamated, but they had kept their faith and elements of their faith. But people started to dislike them. So they started getting thrown out. They started to experience this prejudice. And they caught the ear of President Franklin Roosevelt, who was sympathetic to the Jewish cause. And it was his position that the Jewish people were oppressed and they needed a homeland.

And England had come to the conclusion that Palestine should not be dominated by Arab or Jew. And this is going back to the 20s. Any attempts, I was reading the article, it said, any attempts to establish a nationhood or independence would result in civil strife.

[48 : 30] How right they were. So the world favored a two-state nation. So I'm going to have Ryan post you a map.

The blue was a part of Israel that they were going to give to Jews. And the yellow part is to the Palestinians at the time.

And like I said, I'll say to them they're Palestinians. They're Canaanites. They're not a separate ethnic entity like any other group. But they were a mixture of different people living in the lands. We meet them in the Bible over and over and over. Hittites, Philistines, a whole bunch of different groups that were coming through that land. And so this was how the UN said, hey, this is how we're going to do it.

The Jews, okay, they begrudgingly accepted this. Arabs said, no way. Don't want it. Don't want anything to do with it.

[49 : 40] We do not want them here. On May 14th, 1948, the provisional government of Israel proclaimed a new state of Israel.

And the U.S. supported them. So they said on 1948, May 14th, we are a nation. On May 15th, 1948, the day after, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon all attacked Israel.

For one year, there was fighting. And at the end of that year, Israel was able to fight back. So I'm going to have Ryan show a second map.

And the map's divided to do different things. So I'm showing you this map. And it's actually from someone who's pro-Palestinian.

So I'm kind of going from information. So the yellow was where they knew all the Jews had pretty much had settled. So they say, hey, 1947, this is kind of what was really going on or pre-1947.

[50 : 54] The Jews really only lived in this area. But we got this map. Like, we got kind of the raw deal here, right? Like, they're only up here. Well, one of the things is this is really empty desert.

And as much as we have these settlements, it's not like this was fully lived in by Palestinians. There was just tribes near water and towns and all that type of thing.

So it's not like it was this fully settled country. It's kind of like Canada. Hey, we like to talk about Canada. But 90% of Canadians are within 30 miles of the U.S. border, right?

If we're really realistic about what the Canadian border is or what Canada is, it's a lot smaller. So, you know, we might be fighting. Well, we really wanted that land up in Yukon that we really don't want to go spend time in, you know?

It was just this kind of thing. So, they gave them. This was the agreement. The war in 1947 led to this. So what you had is what's called the Gaza Strip.

[51 : 57] And as we all know, this is where Hamas is. And then we have what's called the West Bank. And right here we have Jordan. So this is kind of how it was divided.

Now, why did it shrink? A lot of people. Did the Jews just go and steal the land? That's actually not the thinking. Basically, the thought process is how do we defend ourselves in a way that's safe? So that's why there's all these dots. So a lot of times they're in there. These are militarized, occupational people. They had to go in to stop the people. So it's not like Jews were able to go and enjoy the land.

There were these demilitarized zones. There was fighting. And also the big issue comes up. So they never show it. It's the Sinai Peninsula. Another war breaks out in 1956 because Israel wants to take boats into the Suez Canal.

Now, there's a battle. They beat Egypt. And Egypt now has a treaty with Israel that they have to allow the free shipping of their goods through the Suez Canal.

[53 : 07] You with me on that one? All right. Then there was another war, the Six Day War. And, yeah, big fighting and they lost more land.

But it's not just the Jews or Israel that took the land. Egypt took some of the land. And Jordan took some of the land.

Although some of that land is in their borders, it's controlled by Israel in order to prevent further attacks.

When Israel was settled, there was not a single Arab nation that accepted Israel's right to a nation. None of them would not accept them. So the question that Israel has always faced is, how do we negotiate with people whose main mantra is death to the Jews?

[54 : 39] So politics starts to happen. Some of you might remember, there was a guy by the name of Yasser Arafat. He was part of what was called the PLO, the Palestinian Labor, Liberation Movement.

And their goal was to destroy Israel, terrorist attacks, all that kind of stuff, wanting their land. And it was difficult to negotiate with them because they would not say that Israel had a right to exist.

Eventually, in 1993, if you were around back then, this was really big news, they signed a peace treaty. And in that treaty, it allowed them to establish a self-determinative government.

So in these areas, they were now allowed to rule on their own. And it all began with, so they're subsidized by their nation, Saudi Arabia, United States, as you know, if you will come and do this. Now, if you know anything about politics, it is the most corrupt industry in the whole wide world. And the PLO and the Israeli government, they're just as corrupt.

[55 : 58] So I don't think I'm favoring anyone. If there's money to be made, they're taking money and all these kind of things. So what happens is the Jews start pressing in on this land with the settlements.

Have you heard the stories about the Jewish settlements that are being built? That's the biggest thing. And this is the Jews breaking the treaty the other way. They're building on areas that are not meant for them to build settlements.

And so anyway, what happens? Where are we today? Okay. 2006. And back in 1987, terrorist group Hamas is created.

They have a vote. Most of those guys are here. The rest of the Palestinian liberation is out here. And now there's a division between the two.

Hamas controls this area. And these guys control that area. So there's a split already within that Palestinian group.

[57 : 04] And Hamas' position is death to all Jews. You don't have a right to exist. So that's why we have this situation. So to bring you up to speed to today, the way a just war is fought.

And I'll be honest with you. I have friends who, how do I say this? They're all secular nations, right? Like they do not follow Jesus Christ.

They're not Christian. Some say they're Arab or that's the religion or Islamic, sorry. And even within Jews, there's secular Jews that do not believe in anything that Judaism.

There's some that are very Jewish that would probably fit right at home in first century Judaism.

There's others that have no thoughts. I have many friends that are Jewish and they're from all over the spectrum of belief.

And I have Arab friends that are all from spectrum. Well, not if they're friends. Most of them are Christian background or guys that I went to university, kind of on the non-political side.

[58 : 16] They just don't get into it. Most of them live in different countries now. But the biggest issue that Israel faces today is the question they ask is how do we stop Hamas from killing us?

And their answer is we have to kill everybody in Hamas. That means they have to go into this part of the land and kill them. Now, a lot of the world looks at that and say, wow, by doing that, you're killing a whole bunch of civilians.

There's other people. So a lot of people in the world will say, well, there was 1,500 Jews died. Isn't it enough that 1,500 Arabs died?

Now, it's actually not because Israel won't stop until the threat is done. And what is complicating the matter is nobody likes the Palestinians.

Egyptians don't want Palestinians. Jordanians took them in. And they found out that they were committing 80% of the crime. So they stopped taking in Palestinians.

[59 : 27] The countries up here, Lebanon and Syria. Syria is really a non-functioning state right now. And Lebanon is Shia.

And it's not like they're rich. But none of the other nations want to take them. So you've got close to like 6 million people bunched up.

And when you see the videos, it is. It's horrific how they live. And how is a Christian to respond?

So currently, Israel has treaties with Egypt and Jordan, which are considered the two most stable countries in the region. Like I said, Syria is in disarray.

They're controlled by Iran. Lebanon, which is controlled by Hezbollah and funded by Iran. We read that the U.S. put an aircraft carrier in that region.

[60 : 25] And that was to deter Hezbollah. Like if you guys are going to get on this because you think there's an opportunity. If you do, we will go in and we're going to take care of things. So that's kind of where that's going. Saudi Arabia funds Palestine.

But like I said, they hate Iran. So there's all these moving parts are there, right? So the question is, how are we to think about it?

I believe we are to pray for both groups. I have a friend that went over to be a missionary in Israel. And she is now anti-Semitic.

When she went over there and she saw what was going on in the Arab cities and towns, absolutely crushed her heart.

So the question is, how do we come to grips? Are the Jews still God's people? Do they deserve special favor? How do these events focus us to act differently about God and his prophecy?

[61 : 40] How do we make sense of these events that are occurring? How do we make sense of people purposely targeting civilians all in the name of freedom? Or how do we continue wars where we know that there's civilians that are dying?

Because often Hamas uses people as human shields. They, you guys heard the story about the hospital? There was a hospital that apparently got blown up, but then it came out later.

It didn't get blown up, but the parking lot did. And it wasn't by Israel. It was by an errant missile by Hamas. Their technology is really Stone Age technology to a degree.

Like their missiles that they send into Israel. And this is how desperate they are. They were given water pipes to bring water to all their people. They dug up those tight pipes and built missile launchers out of them.

So they would rather use them for missiles. And those missiles aren't like guided. They're just like lighting a fire cracker. And hopefully that rocket lands and causes harm.

[62 : 48] So when you read that there's 5,000, they're just like shooting off bottle rockets, hoping something's going to hit, something's going to cause some tragedy. And the reality is there's desperation there.

There's hatred there. There's generations of hurt there. They've seen their grandmothers, their grandfathers die and suffer, brothers, sisters. And it's horrible.

The Bible does give us two reasons why this happens. I'll read you the rest of what Daniel says in Daniel 9.

He says, To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness. For we have rebelled against him. And have not obeyed the voice of our Lord our God by walking in his laws.

Which he set before us by his servants, the prophets. All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice.

[63 : 50] The curse and oath that are written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, has been poured out upon us. Because we have sinned against him. He's confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us.

By bringing upon us a great calamity. That great calamity exists in this day. There is judgment. Because Israel is not repentant.

Next week I'll talk a little bit about, well, what is true Israel? What is faith Israel? What isn't faith Israel? So my point is, the Jews just being as corrupt as any other person who walks in this world, who does not know Jesus Christ as Savior, will never, ever give them any peace or love.

Like right now, no one trusts the current prime minister of Israel Netanyahu, because he's gone against his word many times. He continues to build settlements. And none of the Arabs trust him. And you can't blame them. Well, what about the Gentiles? What about the Arabs? How do we make sense of their offenses, their reasons, their excuses?

[65 : 14] Well, let me read to you what, when we get back in Romans, what verse we're looking at. Romans 1, 18 and 20.

It says, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, has been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world and the things that have been made so they are without excuse. Is there hope for the Jew? Is there hope for the Arabs? We're going to answer that question next week.

But truly, to the Lord Jesus Christ comes again, there is going to be no righteousness that is done there.

[66 : 35] And I think as believers in Jesus Christ, we're supposed to be to have the hearts of God, right? Our hearts are to break for the things that hurt God.

And I think that needs to carry us when we understand conversations with people who feel so strongly and they see unrighteousness and they can understand unrighteousness, unrighteousness, but they really don't understand God's righteousness.

So my hope and prayer is that today, and listen, I know this is a little bit of a sermon, it's more of a talk, which I would rather preach, but I really believe we really needed to cover these things for the amount of questions that I was getting.

If you have any more questions, email them to me if there's any questions that I can cover next sermon. But next sermon, I'm going to look at what God's plan is for Israel and how God's plan is how to use Israel to bring peace to the world.

That there is no more wars, there is no more crying, there is no more tears. And that they are the avenue that God will use, but God will use them in His way where His name is glorified and not any one group of people are glorified.

[67 : 55] Let's pray. Dear Holy Heavenly Father, it's hard to understand these events that are going on in the world.

It's hard to understand how hatred could live. In one way, we give thanks that we have not experienced that.

levels of prejudice because of our skin color or tribal ethnicity or our religious faith to the degree that we need to fight for our lives to depend on it.

Father, it's easy to do get carried up in the events of this world and have an opinion and think we're on God's side. when I really believe that you're on nobody's side.

I believe the destruction, the death, the hatred. I think there's a special weeping for your people who have had your prophets, your scriptures, and still continue to curse you, curse and attack missionaries who want to bring them the good news.

[69 : 31] But, Father, we know that your Son, Jesus Christ, was the first, I don't know, the first shot to bring peace. It was the rescue mission that brought hope first to the Jew and then the Gentile.

it is what Paul speaks so passionately about in Romans that this gospel message that we need a redeemer does not just get introduced to us in the book of the, or the books of the gospels of Jesus Christ, but that this has been your heart for your people all through time.

Even at the very beginning with Adam and Eve when they sinned against you, you gave them a promise of the Messiah would come from Eve. And even within the Abrahamic covenant, we know and understand that there will be a son, a part of his seed that would come to redeem the world. We learn later with David as he sits on this throne and the throne is shaky, God brings him a prophecy that from your seed, one whose monarchy, his rule, will never end will come to this world. Father, I pray for my family here, these beloved, I pray that they would understand these events of the world as they seem through your eyes.

[70 : 53] I hope I've been able to give them at least some ounce of understanding to help them recapture a vision of your faith. May you give them an understanding of clarity that you would remove hatred from their hearts.

I know it's easy to want to support Israel in such a way that we excuse horrible evil. Father, I pray that the big part of this whole Christian life is not seeing the world as enemies, but seeing people who are in desperate need of you.

and Father, do we truly see you as the great glory? Do we come to this church just as Daniel Hederson has been dealing with just for a sense of community?

Or do we come here because we're in majestic awe of you? that this God of the universe in his great glory called us to him and he made us his children so that we may walk in light, that we may point others to your great glory and to your great faith and to great worship.

So, Father, on this day, I pray that perhaps that this message would help and create conversations where we can share your love in a part of the world which seems to be more broken than anywhere else.

[72 : 37] In your holy, just, and righteous name, you will reign again. God's people said, Amen. Amen. Amen.