

~ Israel's Jubilee ~

Israel's Jubilee celebration will witness a year of gala festivities. What a 50 years! To start with – the rebirth of the State of Israel in 1948 was a miracle of history. (Ezekiel 37: 1-11; Luke 21: 29, 30) Never before has a nation been destroyed, its people dispersed to the ends of the earth, and, then, nearly two thousand years later, regathered to their homeland and re-established as a nation.

When Israel declared itself an independent state on May 14, 1948, another miracle occurred. The armies of seven Arab nations marched on the newborn State, boasting that they would push the Jews into the sea. Outnumbered 100 to 1, Israel not only repelled the invaders but also acquired more of Palestine than was granted in the UN partition plan. Yigael Yadin, Israel's commander of operations in that war had a terse explanation of Israel's victory. **“It was a miracle!”**

Three Examples of Miracles

A Syrian column of 200 armored vehicles, including 45 tanks, attacked Degania, the oldest kibbutz in Israel. What a psychological blow this defeat would be! Without artillery, Jewish forces were helpless to block the Syrian advance. Until then, the only heavy weapons available to Israel were four howitzers of the type used by the French army in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. Two of these ancient fieldpieces were promptly dismantled and rushed to Degania. The local commander, Lieutenant Colonel Moshe Dayan, had them reassembled at the very moment the first Syrian tanks rumbled through the kibbutz's perimeter, and they scored a hit on the advance tank. Had the Syrians known that these two obsolete weapons represented half of the arsenal of field guns in all Israel, they would have pressed the attack. Instead, the armored vehicles swung around in their tracks and clattered back up the mountain road.

In December 1948, the Egyptians were harassing Israeli settlements in the Negev. Yadin used the Bible for strategy. It mentioned an ancient road, forgotten for centuries, which ran almost directly to

Mushrafa, the Egyptian's central garrison. Heavy boulders were pushed aside with bulldozers and soldiers in armored vehicles, jeeps, and supply trucks sped under cover of darkness along the ancient road and surprised the Egyptians. Taking this garrison destroyed the Egyptian defense system and ended the war 14 days later.

The Syrian army had regrouped east of the Galilee. A Jewish column of 24 homemade armored trucks and cars, on the way to relieve a besieged kibbutz, took the wrong road and crossed the border into Lebanon. Before they discovered their mistake, they ran head on into a column of supplies for the Syrian army in Galilee – dozens of trucks of ammunition, a string of light artillery and twenty new armored cars. The Israelis fired point blank at the first truck, which was a tanker loaded with gasoline. It exploded and set on fire the following truckload of hand grenades. Rapid repeating explosions were heard for miles around. Terrified, the Syrians abandoned their cargo and the Israelis scarcely had enough men to drive the captured supply train back into Galilee. Finally, they reached the beleaguered kibbutz, only to learn that the Arab besiegers heard rumors that the Jewish army had invaded Lebanon, and they fled Israel.

The Bible Helped Build Israel

David Ben Gurion, Israel's dynamic first Prime Minister, was an ardent student of the Bible as an accurate history of Israel and its land. He dispatched engineers, horticulturists, botanists, etc., with the Bible in one hand and research tools in the other. Miracles happened!

Following Bible clues, copper and iron mines were established. One mining engineer, Abraham Dor, observed that at the richest veins of copper "we come upon the slag and furnaces of ancient Israel. We often get the feeling that someone has just left". Deuteronomy 8: 7-9 was often framed on the walls of mining offices: "For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land;... a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper."

Reclaiming the Wasteland

Barren land transformed to the fertility of ancient Israel is a miracle predicted in Scripture. (Amos 9: 14, 15; Ezekiel 36: 34, 35) It was long assumed that most of Palestine was wasteland, irreclaimable for

agriculture. But archaeologists discovered the presence of more than seventy settlement sites in one sixty-five mile stretch of the Jordan Valley alone, each with its own well for water. Lot, then, was not exaggerating when he “lifted up his eyes, and he saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, even as the garden of the LORD”. (Genesis 13: 10)

New agricultural settlements, from Dan to Beersheba, have risen beside ancient sites re-identified by Biblical archaeologists. Concrete pumping stations were set over ancient springs or wells. A well from Abraham’s day now supplies water for residents on the outskirts of Beersheba.

One of the basic necessities in that arid country is reforestation. Ever since Jews began returning, they have been planting forests, naming them in honor of such leaders and friends of Israel as Chaim Weizmann, Lord Balfour, George V, and scores of others. The Bible has helped them decide what kind of trees to plant and where to plant them. Debating whether a certain barren hillside would be a suitable location for Israel’s immense “Forest of Martyrs”, Israelis found the answer in the book of Joshua, which proved that a forest had existed there. “Knowing that trees grow more easily where trees have flourished before,” explained Professor Zohary of Hebrew University, “we rely on the Good Book.”

“The first tree Abraham put in the soil of Beersheba was tamarisk,” said Israel’s outstanding authority on reforestation, Dr. Joseph Weitz. “Following his lead, we put out two million in the same area. Abraham was right. The tamarisk is one of the few trees we have found that thrives in the south where yearly rainfall is less than six inches.”

The writer personally knew the Boyko Family who pioneered in developing Biblical principles of agriculture that helped the Arava and the Negev blossom as a rose. The Bible made Israel the agricultural giant it is today, exporting its products worldwide. It took another miracle to make this possible. In Bible times there were two copious rainy seasons in Palestine – the “early and the latter rain”. But for the past many centuries, the “early rain” has been minimal while the “latter rain” and dew have disappeared completely. Since

1878, the “latter rain” is falling again. The precipitation of both has spiraled over the decades. (Joel 2: 23, 24)

The Miracle of Immigration

Jews from the four points of the compass heard the call to come home. (Isaiah 43: 5, 6) Israel’s Declaration of Independence stated that Israel “will be open to the immigration of Jews from all countries of their dispersion”.

Even as war still raged and the little State faced possible destruction or bankruptcy, the newcomers poured in. During the first three years of statehood, the average reached 18,000 a month and in some months the figure exceeded 30,000. Between May 15, 1948, and June 30, 1953, the Jewish population of the country doubled. By the end of 1956, Israel’s population had nearly tripled, reaching 1,667,000. Imagine the economic shock!

Jews kept pouring into Israel over the decades. In 1984-1985 and again in 1991, harrowing airlifts brought Ethiopian Jews from utter despair to a Land of Hope. Finally, the long-expected prophetic fulfillment of Jews from Russia began in 1991. By 1998, over 800,000 returned from the former Soviet Republics (CIS) and they are still coming; over a million are expected. Israel’s population increased from 650,000 in 1948 to more than 6,000,000 Jews in 1998. The miracle of absorption continues.

The Miracle of the '67 War

The Arabs boasted that they would destroy Israel. However, in six days Israel overran the combined forces of Syrian, Jordan, Egypt, and took the Golan Heights, east Jerusalem, the “West Bank” (Samaria and Judea), and the Sinai – one of the greatest military feats in history. To many Orthodox Jews worldwide, especially in the United States, it was a wake-up call from God. Thousands poured into Israel and settled in Samaria and Judea to stake Israel’s eternal claim to the so-called “West Bank”, the heartland of Israel. They are certain the Messianic Age is near at hand. As Biblical Zionists, they oppose any give-away of land in the peace process.

A High Tech Leader

Ezekiel 38 predicts that Israel will become an economic envy of the nations. The immigration of Russian Jews is literally paying off. The year 1998 witnessed an explosion in both high tech developments and the number of contracts Israeli high tech companies have signed with manufacturers worldwide. Prime Minister Netanyahu said, "The failure of Soviet communism to capitalize on the outstanding R & D [Research and Development] skills of the Russian Jews was a stroke of good fortune for Israel. We now have the highest per capita of scientists in the world. This has put Israel on the cutting edge of technology." The New York Stock Exchange lists more high-tech companies from Israel than from any other nation.

Room for Expansion

A six-year study by over 250 scientists and experts predicts that by the year 2020 the population of Israel will exceed 8,100,000, making Israel by far the most densely populated developed country in the world. Israel will be more than 2.5 times more densely populated than Japan and the Netherlands, and there will be serious shortage of land for residential construction.

Actually, Scriptures (Isaiah 11 and Zechariah 10) indicate another large immigration of Jews from the CIS and a massive exodus from the U.S. before 2020. But there will be *no land shortage*. A final Arab-Israeli war will precede this massive immigration. Israel's borders will be expanded to include all of the Golan Heights, much or all of the sparsely inhabited nation of Jordan and southern Lebanon. (Isaiah 11: 14; Zephaniah 2: 8, 9; Micah 7: 11, 14; Obadiah 18-20) All of this territory was promised Israel in the Balfour Declaration back in 1917. God will finally give to Israel even more than the nations promised.

The God of Israel is a God of miracles – and He has only begun His miracles in achieving Israel's ultimate destiny...

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