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MINISTRIES

## Israel's Current Conflict & God's Eternal Plan

"I am for peace, but when I speak, they are for war!" (Psalm 120:7) On October 7, Hamas launched a surprise attack against Israel by land, sea, and air—infiltrating and overtaking towns and villages near the Gaza border and brutally murdering innocent civilians. More Jewish lives were lost on this day than on any other day since the Holocaust. As Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced, "Citizens of Israel, we are at war. Not an operation [a round of fighting], at war!"

### 1. Why is Israel special to God?

- A. The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable (Rom 11:28-32)
- B. Israel was chosen for special blessings including the bringing of the Messiah (Rom 9:3-5)
- C. God chose Jerusalem as His capital and David as king (2 Chron 6:5-6)
- D. Israel is the apple of his eye, and He chose Zion/Jerusalem as His dwelling place (Zech 2:7-10)

### 2. Who are the Palestinians?

- A. The origin of the term "Palestine" c. 132 AD
- B. All residents (Jewish and Arab) before 1948 were considered Palestinians
- C. Claims of indigenous culture
- D. Most do not recognize Israel
- E. Have no elected consensus

### 3. Are the Jews occupiers of Palestinian land?

- A. The Bible and history show an enduring Jewish presence
- B. There never was a "Palestinian State"
- C. The aftermath of the Holocaust
- D. The Jewish state
- E. Arab Knesset representation
- F. Claims of Apartheid

**What about the Arabs?** (see Rafat Amari, *Islam in Light of History*)

- 1. Arabs = desert dwellers
- 2. Western (from Africa); Eastern (from India)
- 3. The family of Mohammed from Yemen/Africa (non-Semitic, not from Abraham)
- 4. Modern Arabs include many conquered peoples

"The evidence indicates that Ishmael was not the father of the Arabs, and neither was Abraham. The Ishmaelites were probably Canaanites, speaking, not an early form of Arabic, but a dialect similar to Hebrew. In time they disappeared or were absorbed into other groups, like so many other ancient peoples. Much later Josephus invoked Ishmael's name to conjure up a genealogy for the Arabs." Mark Durie

### G. Common anti-Semitic tropes (Gen 3:15)

- 1. Israelis aren't real Jews
- 2. Jews of today are Khazars
- 3. The Jews killed Jesus
- 4. Many Christians overlook Jesus' Jewish identity and His connection to the Jewish people as a whole

#### 4. Who is Hamas? Why are they terrorists?

- A. Founded in 1987 as the Islamic Resistance Movement
- B. The Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine
- C. A 2018 attempt to condemn Hamas for “acts of terror” at the United Nations failed
- D. On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched “Operation Al-Aqsa Flood” and its fighters broke through the Gaza barrier, attacked Israeli military bases and homes, massacred civilians, and took over 200 hostages back to Gaza

#### Read the Hamas Charter!

The most relevant of the document’s 36 articles can be summarized as falling within four main themes:

- 1. Complete destruction of Israel for the liberation of Palestine and the establishment of a theocratic state based on Sharia law,
- 2. Unrestrained and unceasing holy war (jihad) to attain the above objective,
- 3. Deliberate disdain for, and dismissal of, any negotiated resolution or political settlement of claims to the Holy Land, and
- 4. Reinforcement of anti-Semitic tropes and conspiracy theories.

—Adapted from Bruce Hoffman, “Understanding Hamas’s Genocidal Ideology,” *The Atlantic* (October 10, 2023)

#### 5. Is the current conflict the fulfillment of Bible prophecy? Is this Ezekiel 38 unfolding before our very eyes?

- A. “Ezekiel 38:1-39:16 describes an invasion of Israel from the north and the subsequent destruction of the invading forces once they reach the area of the mountains of Israel.” p. 106
- B. “The most controversial question in the context of Ezekiel 38 and 39 is *when*: when in the chronology of prophecy will the Russian invasion occur?” p. 118
- C. “The Russian invasion is another birth pang that will occur before the tribulation begins.” p. 126  
—Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *The Footsteps of the Messiah* (Ariel, 2022)
  - 1. We always understand prophecy better after the fact.
  - 2. We should live today like the time is now.

#### How to Pray for Israel:

*First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)*

*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! “May they be secure who love you! (Psalm 122:6)*

- Pray the safe release of hostages
- Pray for the safety of Jewish people globally
- Pray for the success of the IDF as they defend Israel
- Pray the terrorists will turn to Jesus and do right
- Pray for Gaza’s liberation from Hamas
- Pray this crisis will draw many in Israel and Gaza to saving faith in Messiah Jesus