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The Origin and Destiny of the Palestinians

One of the many problems facing the world today is the Palestinian question:

Who has a right to the land called the State of Israel? Land we've known in the past as Canaan, Judea, Samaria, Palestine, the Holy Land. What about the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and Jerusalem? WHO is entitled to that land?

by Lawrence Gregory

The Palestinians want self-determination, the right to their own state in Israel. In fact, they want all of Israel and they want to call it Palestine.

Let us consider **THE ORIGIN AND DESTINY OF THE PALESTINIANS** in three parts: *First*, their origin, from a historical and scriptural point of view. *Second*, their concerns. *Third*, their immediate and future destiny.

Before we look at these three points, let's consider several scriptures; the first one is in the 24th Psalm verse 1. It says, *"The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."* The second is from Jeremiah 27:5 *"I have made the earth, the man, and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me."* These scriptures tell us that everything on this earth and everyone in it belongs to GOD. Unfortunately, the nations of this world and their leaders don't believe this or understand it. If they did, a lot of our problems would begin to be solved, just by knowing that the land is GOD's and we belong to Him and that His determination of ownership should be the final solution to all our problems.

Another scripture is in the book of Deuteronomy the 32nd Chapter and verse 8. It says, *"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of*

Israel." So GOD initially set the nations on this earth where He wanted them to be. He has given mankind the earth, according to how He decided, that the children of Israel would be distributed. How then are the lands of this earth divided among the nations? How do we acquire land and claim it for our own, saying, "This belongs to us"? What are some of the steps in the way men do this?

They do it by an outright gift from GOD; He owns the land and can give it to whoever He wants to. By lawful purchase; that is, individuals or nations buy the land from each other. By migration; as men spread over the earth they develop settlements as their first possessors, and claim by right of possession, and priority, that it is their land. By treaty; border settlements are made between different nations. By conquest of war; right or wrong, nations settle their border squabbles by these means. By illegal occupation, annexation, etc., this causes all kinds of problems with the person or the nation who is the titleholder of that land.

Now, specifically, who are the Palestinians? Where do they come from, and what is their destiny? We need to understand this from a Biblical and a historical perspective. When we do, then we will realize what is happening today between the Palestinians and the Jews, what is going to happen to that land, how it is going to be settled, and what is going to happen to the Palestinian people.

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We need to go back to the book of Genesis, to the 13th Chapter and verse 15 to see something about this land that GOD said. (It will be very helpful to read the full bible references, which are quoted, along with this article.) GOD gave that land to Abraham by a covenant agreement forever. Abraham, in turn, gave that land to Isaac. Isaac, in turn, gave that land to Jacob. All of these were confirmed by GOD in the scriptures. In Chapter 25 verse 5, Abraham gave it to Isaac. In Chapter 26, verse 1-6, GOD confirmed that gift that Abraham gave to Isaac. In Chapter 28:1-4, Isaac gave that land to Jacob, not to Esau, but to Jacob. In Chapter 28, verse 13-14, GOD said that He gave that land to Jacob. And then in Chapter 48 verse 49 of Genesis, Jacob gave that land to Israel. And in Numbers the 34th Chapter, verse 1-4, GOD confirmed that He gave that land to Israel.

The Palestinians today are called Arabs; they live in the Arab area, they live in Arab lands, they belong to the Arab league, but they are not Arabs. They are in fact the descendants of the ancient Philistines.

From the Collier's Encyclopedia, under the title Philistines, "An ancient people who occupied the coastal plain of Palestine, known principally through the Bible, but also through Egyptian and Assyrian records. The name Palestine itself is derived from the Greek name for Philistia. The Bible describes the Philistine territory as extending from 'Sihon, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward' (Josh. 13:2-3). Its eastern border reached Beth-Shemesh. Its principal political centers were the cities known as the Pentapolis -- Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath and Ekron." Those are familiar Bible names for those cities that were occupied by the Philistines.

Continuing with Collier's, "The Philistines were not indigenous to Canaan. They were said in the Bible to have come, under the same circumstances as accompanied the Israelites Exodus from Egypt, from Caphtor, which has been variously identified by scholars as Crete, Cyprus or portions of Asia Minor."

"In religion they followed Canaanite practices; they worshipped Dagon as their chief deity. Apparently they adopted a Semitic language at an early date. At the end of the 8th century B.C. Philistia, like Israel, was conquered by Assyria and disappeared from history as a nation." They disappeared from history as a nation of Philistines, but the scriptures show they have continued in that area today as descendants of the ancient Philistines and are known today as

Palestinians.

Now, for scriptural record; in Genesis the 10th Chapter, verse 6. "*By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.*" Verse 5 and 6, "*And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan.*" And verse 13 and 14, "*And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Ananim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came Philistim,) and Caphtorim.*" These are the generations identified as the descendants of Noah on this side of the flood. And then if we go to I Chronicles the 1st Chapter, verse 11, "*And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Ananim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,*" and verse 12, "*and Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (of whom came the Philistines,) and Caphtorim.*" And then in Amos, the 9th Chapter, verse 7, it says, "*Are you not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? Says the LORD. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? And the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?*" And then back in Deuteronomy the 2nd Chapter and verse 23, beginning in verse 22, "*As he did to the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, when he destroyed the Horims from before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead even unto this day: And the Avims which dwelt in Hazerim, even unto Azzah, the Caphtorims, which came forth out of Caphtor, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.*" You will notice the word "Caphtor" from history is the Island of Crete. History and the Bible show the Philistines came from Mizraim, out of Crete into Palestine. **Question:** Those Philistines that came in and drove the Avims and other Canaanites out of the land, shouldn't they give that land back to them? That's unlikely, since all of their effort has been to develop their own Palestinian State. This is a very emotional problem affecting millions of Palestinians and Israelis, as well as some of the surrounding countries and, in fact, even the rest of the world.

In 1948 there were less than a million Palestinians, but today there are over 5 million in the world, with the majority of them living in Israel. Palestinians live in Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, United States and several other countries. After the Israel statehood in 1948, the United Nations set up refugee camps for the Palestinians. They were supported by the United Nations and the United States, sending billions of dollars into this project, but in spite of all of this, there have been numerous problems concerning the Palestinians and the Israelis.

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Among those problems has been the population increase. Past experiences in other countries, as well as Israel has shown what happens when you put a lot of people in a close area.

Billions of dollars have been contributed to the Palestinian organization by the United States, Great Britain, and other nations, with only very slim records of their enormous expenditures.

The second and third generations of the Palestinians are told that much of the beautiful homeland they see today, such as orchards and other developments the Israelis made, were taken from them illegally over the years.

When some of the land occupied by the Palestinians was abandoned, then Israel after three years, by law, claimed the land was abandoned and would issue permits for the Palestinians to occupy that land or to return to it. The Palestinians couldn't go back to their, "**home land**" without those permits, which were hard to obtain.

Israel annexed and condemned certain portions of land because of strategic and other purposes. Then because the Israelis developed their own settlements, they would not let the Palestinians return to those villages and land areas, which they had occupied originally.

After 1917 and 1948, Israel bought many acres of their own land back, at five to six times the value, from the Palestinians. Israel developed the barren, uninhabited land of marshes, swamps, rock fields, and planted orchards, farms, and settlements developing the land. Now the second generation Palestinians are told by their own leaders, that many of these lands were developed by and belonged to them.

The PLO is an umbrella organization for all of the Palestinian resistance movements, under the leadership of Yasir Arafat. They want a Palestinian flag flying over Jerusalem. They want a liberated Palestinian area. They train and support many terrorists that are operating throughout that area and the world. Witness the violence going on in that area today.

The Palestinians live in many areas of Israel, but only as resident strangers, without many important national rights. How would you like to live in a nation divided like that, and be a second-class citizen in your own country?

You have heard over the years about the UN resolutions 242 and 338. The United Nations resolution 242 was designed to serve as a basis for a peaceable settlement. It concerned the territory Israel occupied in the June '67 war, which was between Israel, Egypt, Syria and Jordan, in exchange for their peace. It called for, Number **ONE**, Israel to return all territories captured to the pre-1967 status. **Two**, the Arabs to recognize the right of Israel to exist. **Three**, that all the nations had to recognize the peaceful borders of their neighboring states.

The United Nations resolution 338 was created after the Yom Kippur war in October 1973. It called for an immediate cease-fire and opening negotiations aimed at implementing resolution 242. It requested that future talks be conducted between the parties concerned; that is, the Arabs and Israel.

Now, the Israelis want to keep all of their land, or only return a very minimum, because of their settlement, purchase, annexation, or which they won in war. They feel GOD gave them that land and there is no way they will give up their statehood.

The Palestinians won't accept Israel's right to exist. They want the Gaza strip, they want the West Bank, and they want Jerusalem as their national Capitol. In fact, they want a state of Palestine with their flag flying over Jerusalem and over that area that we call Israel. And America is caught in the middle of this very difficult situation. World Leaders really don't have the answer. They don't know how to solve this problem. What would you do? What would you recommend? What do you think will be the future history and the destiny of the Palestinians and the Israelis in that area that we know as Israel today?

Let's consider some scriptures concerning the future destiny of the Palestinians. In Ezekiel 25, verse 15, "*Thus saith the LORD GOD; Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred; Therefore thus saith the LORD GOD; Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims and destroy the remnant of the sea coast. And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.*"

Psalm 83 describes the future coalition of Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and several other countries

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joining in with Germany and the Palestinians in a confederation against Israel.

In Jeremiah, the 47th Chapter, the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah against the Philistines, describing an army coming from the north, bringing great terror and war, strong horses, and the rushing of chariots against the land. Showing that GOD has determined to bring his own discipline, judgment, and war against the area that is largely occupied now by the Palestinians, in order to ultimately bring lasting peace.

In the book of Zephaniah, the prophet describes in the 2nd Chapter beginning in verse 4, that there is coming a time when GOD's judgment will be upon those Philistines and the Cherathites, which are the same families. GOD will send judgment upon that land and return it once again to the remnant of the house of Judah, the Jews. And they will occupy that land as Judah is brought out from under a state of military occupation and war, which they will experience in the future. That land will be opened up for their habitation once again. We see that in other scriptures.

Zechariah prophesied in the 9th Chapter, describing an end time period when all of the nations of Israel are looking for the LORD to come to help them out of their great national captivity. A time describing the near future when the violence of the rock throwing and wars of the Palestinians will cease, when they will be converted to the worship and way of the true GOD.

Ezekiel 47th Chapter vs. 22-23, prophesied of the time ahead when the Palestinians will share the land with Israel in peaceful cooperation.

These scriptures describe the time shortly to occur when Jesus Christ will come to set up His Kingdom on this earth, and finally bring peace to that land between the Palestinians and the Israelis. At that time the remnant of the Palestinians will be converted to the worship of the true GOD and share the land in which they have dwelt in for so many generations, with Israel.

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Published by:
The Churches of God Outreach Ministries
PO Box 54621
Tulsa, OK 74155-0621
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