

There is No Salvation in the Land!

Written by [Don Preston](#)

In our local Bible class, we were discussing the ongoing tragic events in Israel. The suffering on both sides is so sad, and there seems to be no solution in sight.

I stated that the problem in Israel is a theological issue. You can talk about politics all you want, but until you realize that the issue is *religion*, you are ignoring the fundamental issues. Both the Israelis and the Palestinians believe the Land is theirs by Divine right. As we have noted before, American politics is heavily influenced by the dispensational movement that supports Israel's claims. As I noted in another article, one of our own Senators gave a speech recently stating his convictions that the land belongs to Israel by Divine right.

The fact is that the Land no longer belongs to either the Arabs or the Israeli's by Divine right. God is no longer concerned with geography. "There is no salvation in real estate, salvation is in Christ," as one of the members of our congregation succinctly stated.

Most people do not seem to realize that Israel's right to the land was *conditioned upon their obedience to the Mosaic Law*. In Deuteronomy 28-30 we find the Law of Blessings and Cursings. Simply stated, that Law said that if Israel obeyed the Mosaic Covenant they would remain in the land in peace. However, if they violated the Covenant, Jehovah would remove them. He even said that in the last days they would become utterly corrupt, and that He would destroy them (Deuteronomy 31:29; 32:20-24).

Here is a point of tremendous significance. The promises of Israel's return and restoration to the Land, are grounded in the Mosaic Covenant. For Israel to return to the Land, as God's chosen people, *they had to obey the Law of Moses*. In Deuteronomy 30:1-10, one of the favorite texts utilized by those who believe that 1948 was a fulfillment of Divine prophecy, Moses emphatically gave as the condition for return, *obedience to the Mosaic Covenant* (see vss. 2,6,8,10). There are two points to ponder here.

First, would anyone seriously argue that Israel had repented and returned to a humble observance of the Mosaic Covenant, and that that obedience led to their "restoration" in 1948? I know of *not one* dispensational scholar that argues that Israel was in a state of obedience to the Mosaic Law in 1948! As a matter of fact, Thomas Ice and Tim LaHaye argue just the opposite! In their book *Charting the End Times*, they maintain that the restoration of Israel in 1948 was the "super sign" that we are in the end of the Christian Age, and that event "began an actual fulfillment of specific Bible prophecies about an international regathering of the Jews *in unbelief*." (My emphasis) Let that sink in for a moment. In spite of the emphatic declaration of Deuteronomy 30, that the condition for restoration to the Land was obedience to the Mosaic Law, LaHaye and Ice deny this, and insist that in reality, the condition for Israel's "first" restoration to the land was to be *disobedience!!* This concept of two regatherings, one in unbelief and the other in belief is a total fabrication of the dispensational world. I expose this fallacious theory in my upcoming book, *Jesus' Coming: In the Glory of the Father*.

Second, God has forever removed the Mosaic Covenant. That Covenant was in the process of passing away when Hebrews was written (Hebrews 8:13), and passed with the fulfillment of Israel's cultic system (Hebrews 9:10). Even dispensationalist Thomas Ice, with whom I have had two debates, [ii] agrees that the Mosaic Law, "has forever been fulfilled and discontinued through Christ." Well, if the Mosaic Covenant, that was the ground of the restoration promises have been removed, *then the promises of restoration have been forever removed*.

The land of Israel was given to that nation by Jehovah (Genesis 15:16f; Joshua 21:43-45). However, her retention of that land was conditioned on her obedience to the Law of Moses (Deuteronomy 28-32). Further, as we have seen, Jehovah has now forever removed that Covenant. This means that the land promises are no longer valid.

The main argument that the land will always belong to Israel, no matter what, is based on the fact that Jehovah gave them the land "forever" (Psalms 105). The problem is that the word *forever*, (Hebrew, *Olam*), does not automatically denote "without end." For instance, Jehovah not only promised to give the land to Israel "forever," He also promised to make them "a perpetual shame," and to make Jerusalem a "desolation forever" (See Jeremiah 23:40; 25:9). He said this concerning the fall of Jerusalem in B. C. 586. Was Israel restored after God made their land a "perpetual desolation"? Yes! The point is that the word "forever" does not mean *unending*. Thus, the fact that Jehovah promised the land to Abraham "forever" does not mean that Israel could not forfeit the land.

The covenant sign of Israel's right to the land was circumcision (Genesis 17:10f) Stated simply, *no circumcision, no land!* Consider then the doctrine of circumcision. No one knew the importance of circumcision more than Paul. Yet, Paul said that if a person practiced circumcision for religious reasons then *Christ would profit them nothing* (Galatians 5:1-4)! He said circumcision avails *nothing*. It must be understood that the religious reasons of circumcision had always been two fold. *First, to identify Israel as the chosen people, i.e. as Abraham's seed. And, as the covenant sign of Israel's right to the Land.*

The only way that Paul could say that circumcision avails nothing is for him to realize that God had completely fulfilled the promises to Abraham and therefore, the purpose of that covenant--to bring in the Messiah- had been fulfilled. There was therefore, no longer any purpose for that distinctive covenant sign, because that covenant was on the point of passing away (see Hebrews 8:13).

Our premillennial friends say that in the millennium, Israel's Old System, including *circumcision* will be restored. According to this theory, any man not circumcised will not be able to worship God in Jerusalem, and yet, those who do not worship there are condemned, according to the millennial interpretation of Zechariah 14.

However, if Jehovah restores circumcision, then Paul's gospel--the gospel that Jesus died to establish — *must be set aside*. Paul emphatically repudiated the religious significance of circumcision. He totally rejected physical circumcision as any longer the identifying mark of the seed of Abraham, insisting instead that the children of Abraham are now only *those of faith* (Galatians 3:6f). In fact, he went so far as to say that those who practice circumcision to maintain their tradition identity as Abraham's seed forfeit the blessings of Jesus. They fall from grace (Galatians 5:4)! Salvation is not in the land of Israel. It is in Jesus Christ.

The New Testament doctrine of circumcision is extremely relevant in light of the current conflict in Israel. The Jews maintain that the land is theirs by Divine Right. However, to claim that Israel still has a Divine Right to the land based on the Abrahamic Covenant fails to consider that God fulfilled those promises, and then, due to Israel's continuing recalcitrance, terminated that Covenant. The New Testament doctrine of circumcision proves conclusively that Israel no longer has title deed to the land. In reality, to argue that she does is a repudiation of the *circumcision free gospel of Jesus Christ*.