

Zionism

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The very existence of the small democratic Jewish nation of Israel thriving amidst a sea of Islamic dictatorships is truly a modern day miracle. Emerging from the ashes of the Shoah¹ this ragtag group of people was to ascend to the heights in every area of expertise and professionalism ranging from entertainment to cosmetology to science. In the inspiring words of Mark Twain as recorded in Harper's magazine in September 1899 he said "If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one quarter of one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of stardust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly, the Jew ought hardly to be heard of; but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallest of his bulk. His contributions to the world list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine and abstruse learning are also way out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvellous fight in this world, in all ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him" (Silbiger 2000). The intention of this discourse was to explore the role of the miraculous in the founding and formation of the modern State of Israel through the vehicle known as Zionism².

¹ Hebrew word for holocaust

² A word denoting the movement dedicated to the establishment of a Jewish home land

Origin

Zionism as defined by Merriam-Webster is “an international movement originally for the establishment of a Jewish national or religious community in Palestine and later for the support of modern Israel” (Merriam-Webster 2010). Accepting the above definition as being correct one must conclude then that the very origin of Zionism finds itself embedded in the very essence of God Himself – the first true Zionist. Found within the pages of Scripture long before there was a problem in the Middle East we encounter the plan of God for both His land and its people “For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land“ (Ezek. 36:24, Gen. 17:8).

Human Equation

The method by which God has always chosen to complete His plan upon planet Earth has always been to use supernaturally aided human endeavour. The human equation in God’s Zionist agenda throughout the scriptures has been seen with well known characters such as Abraham, to whom God promised the land (Gen 17.), then to Moses, Joshua and to Caleb who were to cause the people to inherit the Zionist dream (Duet. 1:38), and on to the prophets who foretold both Israel’s banishment and re-gathering to Zionism’s hope. The scriptural personalities are myriad through whom God would work His miracles to bring about a promised land for a scattered people. Moving this idea to extra biblical sources one cannot over look the adventures of the Maccabean odyssey of victory over Syrian Empire and the rededication of Ha Shem’s dwelling place in Jerusalem – the Temple.

Although first and second Maccabees are not included in the Hebrew canon of scripture the assistance of the Divine combined with the human endeavour of the Hasmonian family brought about a foretaste of the Zionist passion. Indeed the amazing success of the Hasmonian Zionist movement and the miraculous way that G-d involved Himself gave birth to the annual non-biblical feast known the world over today as Hanukkah or the feast of Dedication. Yeshua Himself acknowledge's the validity of this ancient manifestation of Zionism by attending the celebration of this feast Himself as indicated in John's gospel (Jn. 10:10).

Fast Forward

Fast forwarding into modern time and for the purpose of this essay we find many new personalities of God's choosing whose express purpose is to fulfil the Divine agenda. The genesis of modern Zionism begins in 1890's with a man named Theodore Herzl³. Herzl was a Jewish lawyer from Vienna who maintained the view that Jews should assimilate into the countries that they were living in. This view was destined to change however, as he witnessed the anti-Semitic violence of the Dreyfus Affair⁴ and a realization of purpose overtook his life. He wrote: "I feel that with the publication of this pamphlet my task is done...Am I stating what is not yet the case? Am I before my time? Are the sufferings of the Jews not yet grave enough? We shall see. It depends on the Jews themselves whether this political pamphlet remains for the present a political romance. If the present generation is too dull to understand it rightly,

³ Founder of Zionist movement leading the creation of the modern State of Israel

⁴ French political scandal between 1890 – 1900 that involved a Jewish officer being falsely accused of treason and imprisoned on Devils Island.

a future, finer and better generation will arise to understand it. The Jews who wish for a State shall have it, and they will deserve to have it” (Herzl 1988). The road that would lead to creation of the modern State of Israel would prove to be a very difficult road indeed. However, there seemed to be a knowing among those who were caught up in Herzl’s Zionist movement that this was an important time not just for the scattered offspring of Abraham but for the entire population of the world itself.

Herzl continues in his writing and exclaims: “The Jewish State is essential to the world and it will therefore be created” (ibid). Although the father of modern Zionism saw that Israel was “essential to the world” little did anyone realise just too just what extent this “essential” nation would become. Dr. Ron Moseley is correct when he argues: “Although many Christians have been taught that the Jews as a whole killed Jesus and as a result are eternally cursed, the truth is that they have been more successful under worse conditions than any one race” (Moseley 1999). Myriads are the people who have admitted and albeit some reluctantly that the world could not exist without the Jewish people living within the family of nations. From Presidents to philosophers, they line up to heap praise upon the sons of Jacob. Even the anti-Semitic Voltaire⁵ said “If I were an atheist, and believed in blind eternal fate, I should still believe that fate had ordained the Jews to be the most essential instrument for the civilizing of nations. If I were an atheist of the other sect, who believed or pretended to believe, that all is ordained by chance, I should still believe that chance has ordered the Jews to preserve and propagate to all mankind that doctrine of a supreme, intelligent, wise,

⁵ Anti-Semitic French philosopher of the 1800’s

almighty Sovereign of the Universe, which I believe to be the great essential principle of all morality and consequently of all civilization “(Brooke 2006). The second president of the United States John Adams agrees with Voltaire with respect to Israel if nothing else we he insist “I will insist that the Hebrews have done more to civilize man than any other nation” (Koleate 2000). Comments such as those quoted above give way to the idea that whether you are an unwilling philosopher or a president in waiting the presence of the Jewish people is an ever present reminder that the G-d is Israel is still at work among the affairs of men.

Foundation Laying

Both Herzl and Voltaire use the word “essential” when describing the importance of bene Israel⁶ in a global economy. The foundation upon which this essential nation would be born was an unforgiving and hostile place. But it is from this empty expanse that greatness would arise and success would flourish fulfilling the words of the prophets of old (Isaiah 66:8, 35:1). The landscape at this time in history had not changed much from the environment found by Samuel Clemons⁷ when he wrote these words after touring the country in 1867 “...A desolate country whose soil is rich enough, but is given over wholly to weeds...a silent mournful expanse...a desolation...we never saw a human being on the whole route...hardly a tree or shrub anywhere. Even the olive tree and the cactus, those fast friends of the worthless soil, had almost deserted the country” (Twain 1867). Yet, it would be upon this deserted stage that G-d would redeposit the Jewish nation and from its dust build Herzl’s “essential” country.

⁶ Hebrew for children of Israel

⁷ Real name of author Mark Twain

Fulfilment

If indeed the establishment of a Jewish homeland in the ancient land of Israel was the task of the Zionist movement then it has found its fulfilment. On May 14, 1948 the modern State of Israel was born completing the prophetic words of the prophet Isaiah that the nation would be born in a day (Isaiah 66:8). Given that G-d Himself, according to the testimony of Isaiah is involved with the establishment of the nation, one could expect that the produce and substance of such a happening, given its divine partnership with Ha Shem⁸, would indeed impact the world and prove to be the most “essential” element in nation building ever seen. This divine spark is without a doubt the force behind the creation of the modern State of Israel and has become the fuel of the Zionist movement.

Chaim Weizmann⁹, speaking to the United Nations in 1947, one year prior to Isaiah’s prophetic fulfilment of Israel’s reconstitution, describes his view of the divine spark when he said; “Palestine¹⁰, for reasons which I need not labour, releases energies, activities in the Jewish people which are not released anywhere else. I shall not say that every Jew feels it. I am not going to say he feels it all at once. But there are sentiments which grow, in everyone of us, and the rocks, marshes, and sands of Palestine became a precious possession into which we pour our sweat, our blood, our effort and ingenuity to make it what it is” (Weizmann 1947).

Chaim Weizmann, a secular Jew, who was not given to supernatural explanations. What this secular Jew, describes as “energies” may be described by others as an “anointing” even as “supernatural influence” and

⁸ Literally means “the name” but is used as a synonym for G-d

⁹ Israel’s first president

¹⁰ Pre 1948 name used for Israel

there are others would invoke the very moving of the Ruach HaKodesh¹¹ Himself. Indeed, most of the battles fought by the modern State of Israel have been proclaimed as supernatural or miraculous by many who witnessed their unfolding.

Dr. Ron Moseley is even more specific by listing a plethora of battles starting with the crusades¹² of 1096 through the Poland massacres of 1648-1656 ending with the Shoah of the Second World War, and referring to the survival of the Jewish people as “miracles” (Moseley 1999). Moseley’s miracle perspective follows in the footsteps of David Ben-Gurion¹³ who said “The Jewish people, returned to its own land, has been the greatest miracle of world history” (Kolatch 1996). Indeed, it is true that there are no other people or nation of people upon the planet who have been conquered scattered and returned to their original land twice as the nation of Israel has been. Barbara Tuchman once wrote that Israel is “the only nation in the world that is governing itself in the same territory, under the same name, and with the same religion and same language as it did 3,000 years ago” (Krauthammer 2007). Again Ben-Gurion goes on to state “In Israel, in order to be a realist you must believe in miracles” (Kolatch 1996). It would be because of Herzl’s Zionist movement, Weismann’s “energies” and through Ben-Gurion’s “miracles” that the State of Israel would be born. It is this group of people, which stood in the face of insurmountable odds that survived Nazism¹⁴ and Fascism¹⁵ that would eventually become in the words of Herzl the “finer and

¹¹ Hebrew word for Holy Spirit

¹² Catholic military program to liberate the Holy Land from the heathen

¹³ Israel’s first Prime Minister

¹⁴ Nationalistic party of Germany during the 1930’s and 40’s

¹⁵ Italian style of rule during second world war

better generation” that would achieve his goal of national statehood and experience the fulfilment of the Zionist cause.

Success

Building the modern nation of Israel started with a bang in a very literal way. After just twelve short hours of national life the entire Arab world was to declare war on the infant Jewish nation. This declaration of war was to draw the entire region into what was to be called “The War of Independence”¹⁶.

Staring down the gun of the entire Arab world infant Israel with her pitiful hand full of weapons was about to write a modern day version of the miracle battle of David¹⁷ and Goliath¹⁸. John Westwood writes in his book on Middle East Wars “But they were to attack from several directions against Jewish forces that were tiny, and not so much ill-equipped as non-equipped.” He continues by describing the state of the Palmach¹⁹ containing only 3000 soldiers of both sexes. They possessed less than a thousand rifles and perhaps a similar number of machine guns and even for the guns that they had their ammunition supply was enough to last only a few days. They commanded no armoured units and only 11 civilian light aircraft, single or twin seaters, with about 20 pilots to fly them (Westwood 1984).

The result was again a manifestation of Ben-Gurion’s “realist miracles” as the combined Arab forces were routed and a victory that was to become the substance of dreams became a reality. In the musings of Charles Krauthammer with regards to Israel and the war he said “They weren’t. They aren’t anywhere. Their disappearance into the mists of history since the time

¹⁶ Israel’s first war

¹⁷ Israel’s second King

¹⁸ Champion of the Philistine forces during the reign of King Saul

¹⁹ Hebrew word meaning “strike company”

of the exile from Israel in 722 B.C. is not mystery. It is the norm, the rule for every ancient people defeated, destroyed, scattered and exiled, with one exception, a miraculous story of redemption and return, after not a century or two, but 2,000 years. Remarkably, that miracle occurred in our time” (Krauthammer 2008).

The Six Day War

As June of 1967 approached the turbines of Weismann’s “energies” began to turn once again. Not since the days of Jericho²⁰ had the world witnessed they type of victory that was about to unfold. Daniel Pinner writes “It is appropriate, therefore, to address the question: What was the single greatest miracle of the entire Six Day War? Not an easy question, for there are so many miracles, both hidden and revealed. There is no end to the stories that have been documented from the battles: of the Egyptian tank commander in the Sinai Desert who surrendered to a vastly inferior Israeli force on the second day of the war, because a desert mirage made him see hundreds of Israeli tanks where there were no more than a dozen; of the Jordanian forces who welcomed the Israeli tanks under the command of Colonel Uri Ram into Shechem on the third day of the war, because faulty communications misled the Arabs into thinking that these were Iraqi tanks come to reinforce them; of the battle of Ammunition Hill on the northern outskirts of Jerusalem, which was captured by an Israeli scout by mistake when he fell into a Jordanian trench in the moonless night at 2:00 o’clock on Tuesday morning and started shooting form the hip (and the fall of

²⁰ City that fell to Joshua by marching around them

Ammunition Hill was the necessary prelude to the capture of the Old City 30 hours later)” (Pinner 2007).

The sentiments are the same whether one is reading from secular or religious sources on the formation of Zionism’s modern State of Israel. Time would fail us to mention all the recorded “miracles” and “energies” experience through out the birthing of the nation, the War of Independence and the Six Day War; but it is sufficient to say that without the handiwork of the Almighty nothing would remain of the sons and daughters of Abraham. Dr. Ron Moseley argues “Even a casual look at the “War of Independence” in 1948, the “Suez Affair” against the Egypt in 1956, the “Six Day War” miracle of 1967, and the “Yom Kippur War” victory of 1973 ought to convince anyone that God has His eye on modern Israel” (Moseley 1999).

Yom Kippur 1973

With the borders firmly established by the “Six Day War” and aliyah on the rise the foundation of the Zionism’s aspirations of a modern State of Israel could be considered complete. According to Dr. Moseley’s “eye” of G-d would find itself once again trained on the nation of Israel at the feast of Yom Kippur²¹ 1973. The Golan Heights was to become the latest in the list of convincing miracles would confirm G-d’s intent for a Jewish homeland. Michael Greenspan, documentary film maker accounts the story of a group of soldiers in the Golan stealth fully making their way to a nearby village on a cloudless October night. Suddenly the soldiers find themselves in the middle of a mine field, as the soldiers begin to poke around with their bayonets trying to locate the mines a strange wind suddenly appears. This wind was so strong

²¹ Hebrew word meaning “Day of Atonement”

that it blew away 18 inches of topsoil from the minefield exposing over a thousand mines. As soon as the mines were exposed, the wind ceased and the men walked out of the field to a moonlit night (Against all odds 2007). The examples of such miracles in the founding of Israel should prove convincingly to the open minded that The Lord of Host commands the armies of Israel.

And so it happens time and again in the face of insurmountable odds the tiny forces Westwood describes defeated the giant of the combined Arab world. David had once again defeated Goliath in a battle not fought on some distant Judean hilltop but on a world-wide stage that was to command attention from the entire world. Truly it can be said that the birth of G-d's nation started with a bang and Herzl's finer generation had finally taken center stage among the family of nations. The official ministry of foreign affairs office of Israel declares of the deliverance of the Jewish people during the War of Independence "a miracle occurred at a moment of desperation" (MFA 2008). Miracles are what defined the existence of ancient Israel and it is the miraculous that once again was to define the story of the reconstitution of the modern State of the nation of Israel and the realization of the Zionist vision.

Failure

If one is to paint Zionism with a broad brush as a progressive movement beyond the mere creation of a modern State – as an expansionist view of total Davidic land recovery then truly Herzl's finer generation has yet to manifest. Only with this view in mind could the Zionist dream be deemed unfulfilled and labelled a failure. It is the prospective of this writer that failure has not occurred within the Zionist agenda. The purposes of God have indeed

be accomplished through His chosen vessels throughout the ages and that the modern State of Israel is in fact the re-gathered seed of Abraham. Are these re-gathered seeds living in the fullness of God's promise? No, not anymore than most Christians are not living in the fullness of the Kingdom we have been re-born into. However, the Christian lack of total Kingdom occupation i.e. the promises, does not mean that the Kingdom does not reside within us. In like manner, the lack of full territorial possession on the part of Israel does not take away from the glorious return of Jacob to the land of promise and the fulfilment of the Zionist dream of Statehood.

Future

Zionism's future lies in its past. Some 4,000 years ago prophetic words were spoken that would seal the fate of Zionism's future aspirations (Gen. 17). The standard has been firmly planted in the soil of promise and cannot be removed...never again will Jacob be plucked out of his land (Amos 9:15). We now await Messiah's triumphal return to the recaptured land of Israel to secure the foretold boundaries given to Abraham so long ago. Until Messiah's time shall present itself the responsibility of Zion's future fall's to all of us. Zion's future has become our future; our destinies are bound together in the responsibilities communicated through G-d's Word. We long for the day when all the land of Canaan is called Israel, when peace reigns supreme and when Jerusalem is praise in the earth. Until the manifested reality of Zionism's Messianic future is upon us, everyone who find themselves under Ha Shem's watchful eye should hold as their anthem "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof

go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth” (Ish. 62:1).

Conclusion

- 1.) Israel was divinely declared to be re-gathered as a people and a country by the very first Zionist – G-d.
- 2.) G-d moved upon selected people to put his Zionist plan into action.
- 3.) To bring about His plan to found and to form the new modern nation of Israel G-d used notable “energies” and “miracles”.
- 4.) Given the involvement of the Divine in both the founding and forming of the modern State of Israel, it can be concluded, that it will remain at the expense of those who would try to oppose her.

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