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### **What's This All About?**

#### **Series: The Biblical Roots of the Middle East Crisis**

#### **The Village Church at Shell Point**

#### **Evening Service**

**April 21, 2024**

#### **I. Extraordinary time**

- A. Every time has an extraordinary character
  - 1. Grew up during early part of the cold war
    - a. In elementary school during Cuban missile crisis
    - b. Remember drills to prepare for nuclear war
    - c. As child didn't realize the true nature of the danger
  - 2. Vietnam war
    - a. Teenager during those years
    - b. One of the great quagmires in American history
      - (1) Probably never since the Civil War has the country been so divided
    - c. Its legacy continues to leave its mark on governmental decisions
      - (1) Any time we have a prospect of doing anything militarily overseas we wonder whether we are about to become involved in another Vietnam
    - d. Even now, we have recently finished operations in Iraq, have left Afghanistan, in a manner that was highly controversial
      - (1) Motivation to get troops home, don't get involved in another military quagmire
      - (2) That's the Vietnam legacy
- B. This time is extraordinary for other reasons – especially as it concerns Israel
  - 1. It all began with 9/11/2001
    - a. World Trade Center
    - b. Pentagon
    - c. Shanksville, PA
    - d. An attack launched within our own borders
    - e. An attack by Al Qaeda – an Islamic Terrorist organization
  - 2. Extraordinary because we were no longer concerned with nuclear holocaust
    - a. We weren't one of two superpowers whose doctrine of mutually assured destruction prevented nuclear devastation
    - b. Instead we were the only superpower but nevertheless vulnerable to yet another danger
      - (1) A much more insidious danger
      - (2) Attacks launched by terrorist cells all over the world
      - (3) By terrorists who would willingly die for the cause

- (4) Terrorists whose religion gave them the psychological foundations and the moral imperative for their sacrifice
    - c. That led us into fighting in the Middle East because of an attack on Americans in America
      - (1) By terrorists who hail from the Middle East
        - (a) And who are concerned for the Middle East
- C. Other reasons why this is an extraordinary time, especially if you are a Christian
  - 1. Middle East contains a land called Palestine
    - a. Anglicized name based on the biblical Philistines, the people who populated the coastal regions of the eastern Mediterranean Sea
  - 2. Palestine is the location of the modern state of Israel
    - a. Restored as a functioning nation in 1948 after more than 2,000 years of exclusion from that land
    - b. Site of the return of hundreds of thousands of Jews whose families had been dispersed all over the world in the intervening millennia
    - c. A return sanctioned by the United Nations due to the outpouring of support for Jews following the Nazi holocaust in WWII
- D. That return of Jews to Israel-Palestine has been fraught with conflict ever since
  - 1. 1948 Arab-Israeli War
    - a. Started as Civil War as the British Mandate period was ending
    - b. Full fledged war after the establishment of Israel
    - c. Ended with armistice agreements in 1949 between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria
  - 2. 1950's and 1960's – various Palestinian insurgencies
    - a. Attacks by Palestinians, reprisals by Israel through IDF
    - b. Arab guerillas from Syria, Egypt and Jordan
  - 3. Suez Crisis – 1956
    - a. Britain, France and Israel attacked Egypt after Egypt decided to nationalize the Suez Canal
    - b. Resulted in re-opening Straits of Tiran
  - 4. Six Day War – 1967
    - a. Continued tensions as Egypt decided to close the Straits of Tiran and massed military assets along the border
    - b. Israel countered, destroying Egyptian assets
    - c. Result – Israel gained extensive territory, including the Golan Heights, the West Bank (and East Jerusalem), Gaza, and the Sinai
  - 5. Yom Kippur War – 1973
    - a. Arab states v. Israel seeking to recapture lost territory in Six Day War
    - b. Surprise attack on Jewish Holiday
    - c. Israel repelled the attack, retained the territory
  - 6. More conflicts between Palestinians in Southern Lebanon, Gaza
    - a. Various intifadas in the 80's, 90's, and 2000's
    - b. PLO, Hezbollah, Hamas all key players
  - 7. Leading to the most recent war with Hamas in Gaza

- E. Significance for Christians
1. Reason why that's significant to Christians is because many Bible believing Christians believe that the return of Israel to the land of Palestine is one of the key events leading to the return of Christ and the end of time as we know it
    - a. John Walvoord: Of the many peculiar phenomena which characterize the present generation, few events can claim equal significance as far as biblical prophecy is concerned with that of the return of Israel to their land. It constitutes a preparation for the end of the age, the setting for the coming of the Lord for His church, and the fulfillment of Israel's prophetic destiny.
  2. Wars fought in the Middle East by Americans are simply more significant to Christians (and Jews) than wars fought in Granada, for instance
- F. Israel is the nation most often mentioned in the Bible.
1. But, do you know which nation is second?
    - a. It is Iraq!
  2. Iraq is not the name that is used in the Bible.
    - a. The names used in the Bible are Babylon, Land of Shinar, Chaldea, and Mesopotamia.
  3. The word Mesopotamia means between the two rivers
    - a. Between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.
  4. The name Iraq means country with deep roots
  5. Indeed, Iraq is a country with deep roots and is a very significant country in the Bible
    - a. Eden was in Iraq – Genesis 2:10-14
    - b. Adam and Eve were created in Iraq – Genesis 2:7-8
    - c. Satan made his first recorded appearance in Iraq – Genesis 3:1-6
    - d. Cradle of civilization was in Iraq – Genesis 4:16-24
    - e. Nimrod established Babylon and the Tower of Babel was built in Iraq – Genesis 10: 8-9 and 11:1-4
    - f. The confusion of the languages took place in Iraq – Genesis 11:5-11
    - g. Abraham came from a city in Iraq – Genesis 11:31 and Acts 7:2-4
    - h. Isaac's bride came from Iraq – Genesis 24:3-4 and 10
    - i. Jacob Spent 20 years in Iraq – Genesis 27:42-45 and 31:38
    - j. The first world empire was in Iraq – Daniel 1:1-2 and 2:36-38
    - k. The greatest revival in history was in a city in Iraq – Jonah 3
    - l. The events of the book of Esther took place in Iraq – Esther
    - m. The book of Nahum was a prophecy against a city in Iraq – Nahum
    - n. The book of Revelation has prophecies against Babylon, which was the old name for the nation of Iraq – Revelation 17 and 18
  6. No other nation, except Israel, has more history and prophecy associated with it than Iraq.
- G. We find ourselves in an extraordinary time

1. The location of current fighting – Gaza – has roots among peoples displaced by Israel following the Exodus
2. Canaanites
3. Philistines
4. Assyrians
5. Greeks
6. Romans
7. Seleucids of Syria
8. Ptolemies of Egypt
9. Hasmoneans

II. **Complex, yet simple**

- A. Seems to us to be incredibly complex
  1. At many levels, it is complex
    - a. Military
    - b. Governmental
    - c. Historical
    - d. Religious
    - e. Personal
    - f. Psychological
- B. At another level, it is exceedingly simple
  1. What's it really all about?
    - a. What's the bottom line in the whole crisis?
  2. It's about the Land
    - a. Not our land, not the US
    - b. Not even Iraq or Afghanistan
  3. It's about the Land of Palestine
    - a. At least that's what the Arab world calls it
    - b. But, if you're a Jew, it's about the Land of Israel
    - c. And if you want to be objective about it, you'll call it Israel/Palestine
  4. Whatever you call it, that's what it's about
- C. It's about something else as well
  1. This something else is related to the land
    - a. Comes from the land
    - b. Is important in the land
    - c. It's a resource
  2. This something else may surprise you
    - a. You actually don't hear much about it over here
  3. You may think you know what that is
    - a. It's about oil
    - b. Lot's of people accused President Bush of prosecuting the war in order to get the oil
      - (1) This was a war about oil
    - c. But the conflict has little to do with oil
      - (1) Although oil money has certainly supported terrorism

4. The second thing that this is about is water
    - a. Water is extraordinarily important to this land
    - b. The crisis concerning the land has a lot to do with water
  5. But water is part of the land
    - a. This crisis is all about land
- D. Remarkable – The crisis is about land
1. A day doesn't go by when we don't think about what's happening over there in the land
  2. We have opinions about it
    - a. Sometimes very strong convictions about it
    - b. Convictions that many Christians believe are driven by biblical concerns

### III. Introduction to the Land

#### A. Biblical characterizations of the Land

1. **Ezekiel 20:6** (ESV) — 6 On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, **a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands.**
  - a. NIV – “the most beautiful of all lands”
2. **Deuteronomy 8:7–9** (ESV) — 7 For the LORD your God is bringing you into **a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, 8 a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey,** 9 a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper.
3. **Daniel 8:9, 11:16 – The Beautiful Land**
  - a. NKJV – The Glorious Land
  - b. KJV – The Pleasant Land
4. **Malachi 3:12** (ESV) — 12 Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be **a land of delight**, says the LORD of hosts.
5. **Jeremiah 3:19** (ESV) — 19 “I said, How I would set you among my sons, and give you **a pleasant land, a heritage most beautiful of all nations.** And I thought you would call me, My Father, and would not turn from following me.

#### B. General impression

1. How small it is
  - a. 150 miles long
  - b. 50 miles wide
  - c. About the size of NJ
2. How diverse it is
  - a. Mountains nearly twice as high as any in WV
  - b. Depression which is the lowest place on earth
  - c. Mediterranean beaches on west
  - d. Arabian desert on east
  - e. Lush valleys in the north

- f. Dry, mountainous wilderness in the south
- C. Section by section, beginning north
  - 1. Zone 4 – **The Galilee**
    - a. Centered around a large lake, the Sea of Galilee
      - (1) 13 m. wide, 8 m. long
      - (2) Seems small, but surrounded by ridge of mountains that create a unique bowl; mountains can be some 1,000 feet above sea level, with the lake about 650 feet below sea level
      - (3) When winds sweep down from these mountains they can create turbulent storms on the sea; change from glass-like placid waters to waves that can capsize fishing boats
    - b. From the Sea to the west, mountains rise and continue to the Mediterranean Sea, terminating at Haifa
    - c. To the north rise even greater mountains, eventually rising to Mount Hermon
      - (1) 9,200 feet above sea level
      - (2) Incredible ascent from 650 below sea level to Hermon in something less than 50 miles
      - (3) Mount Hermon is snow covered all year long; shared by Israel, Syria and Lebanon
      - (4) Legendary in the Bible; **Psalm 133:3** (ESV) — 3 It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.
      - (5) Produces the headwaters of the Jordan River which flow into and out of the Sea of Galilee
      - (6) These waters flow into the Huleh Valley; rich, well-watered farmland, able to grow any crop
    - d. East of Hermon is the Golan Heights plateau
      - (1) Receives enough rainfall to produce cereal crops
      - (2) Before the 1967 War, belonged to Syria
      - (3) Strategically important, as it looks over the valley below
        - (a) Syrians would use it to terrorize farmers in the Kibbutz below by lobbing mortars into their farms
        - (b) One of the main points of contention as Israel holds onto the Golan for security reasons; settled many villages there, especially with Russian Jews
    - e. Important trade route has existed since the ancient world through this region
      - (1) From the Golan, down into the valley below, to the Sea at Capernaum
      - (2) OT fortress of Hazor is located near the head of this valley; current site of a large archaeological dig

- (3) Capernaum was extremely important in Jesus' ministry; some NT elements testify of its role on this trade route
    - (a) Station for taxation – explains why Matthew, the tax collector was found at Capernaum
    - (b) Roman garrison with its Centurion where stationed there (**Matthew 8:5**)
  - (4) Trade route made Galilee the place of contact with many nations and peoples as they passed through the region
  - (5) **Matthew 4:12–16** (ESV) — 12 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: 15 “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— 16 the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.”
    - (a) Even from the beginning of Jesus' ministry, He was putting himself in a place where the nations would pass by, foreshadowing His ultimate mission that He would give to the church, taking the gospel to the ends of the earth
  - f. Also important strategically in the region is the Sea of Galilee as the source of much of Palestine's water supply
    - (1) National water carrier begins here and runs the length of the country; even supplies cities like Tel Aviv on the Mediterranean coast
    - (2) Water from Galilee is heavily protected and regulated by the Israelis, both its outflow as well as the waters that feed it
    - (3) Another source of contention with the Palestinians
  - g. Now Israel has developed one of the most extensive desalinization operations
    - (1) So now a lot of water is supplied by the Mediterranean
- D. Zone 3 – **The Jezreel**
- 1. Galilee is bordered on the south by the Jezreel Valley; runs all the way from the Jordan to the Mediterranean
  - 2. Site of many wars; Judges and early kingdom periods
    - a. An army with chariots could control the valley they could cut Israel in half
      - (1) Why Deborah chose to confront the chariots of Jabin, King of Hazor, in Galilee, from Mount Tabor
    - b. Saul fought many battles there, and lost his life there, along with Jonathan

3. Number of wars here make it legendary for the location of the final conflict, which, depending on your theology, could be the site of the actual final battle preceding the return of Christ
  - a. **Valley of Armageddon**
  - b. Megiddo is a fortress in the mountainous area in the southwest of the valley; Har means “mountains of”
    - (1) **Armageddon = mountains of Megiddo**
    - (2) Valley is the valley below the mountains of Megiddo
4. Currently, the valley is a rich agricultural asset
  - a. Generous rainfall
  - b. Unsurpassed fertility
  - c. Israelis take advantage of it
- E. Zone 2 – **The Central Mountains and Jordan Valley**
  1. Central mountains range from north to south parallel to the Jordan River
    - a. 2,600 feet near Jerusalem
    - b. 3,000 feet near Shechem and Hebron
  2. To the Jews: North – Samaria; South – Judea
  3. To the Palestinians – West Bank
  4. Cities like Jerusalem – relatively remote from the trade routes, routes of the Egyptian and Mesopotamia armies which would stay along the coast
  5. West side of the range – low rolling hills, called the **Shephelah**
    - a. Fertile, generous rainfall
    - b. Highly valued region
      - (1) Conflicts between Israel and Philistines was usually over this land
      - (2) Tendency of Israel was to move west to acquire these lands
        - (a) Tendency of the Philistines was to resist
      - (3) Since 1948-1967 many Arab villages were destroyed in this region; new Israeli towns have appeared in their place
    - c. Shephelah gradually descends to a coastal plain until reaching the Mediterranean Sea
      - (1) Cities like Caesarea, Joppa, modern Tel Aviv
  6. Eastern side of the range – severe descent into Jordan Valley and Dead Sea
    - a. Desert – 5-10 inches of rain each year
    - b. Judean wilderness – site of Jesus temptation
    - c. Joshua’s entrance near Jericho
      - (1) Climbed 3,700 feet in 15 miles to get from Jericho to the area around Jerusalem and Hebron
  7. Jordan Valley – lowest place on earth
    - a. River ends in the Dead Sea
      - (1) 1,275 feet below sea level
      - (2) No outflow; accumulates salt; no life
        - (a) Has become a productive outlet for cosmetic industry
    - b. North end of Dead Sea – Oasis of Jericho



- (1) Herod the Great built winter palace here
        - (a) Only time of the year anyone would want to go there
      - c. Important archeological sites in this region
        - (1) **Qumran** – site of finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls
        - (2) **Masada** – fortress built by Romans, eventually defended by Jews and their last struggle against Rome at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century
    - 8. East of Jordan Valley – mountains of Moab and Edom
      - a. Climbs quickly to a plateau of 3,000 feet
      - b. Location of desert highway used by Moses and Israelites in the journey to the Promised Land
      - c. Belongs to Jordan today
  - F. Zone 1 – **The Negev Deserts**
    - 1. Jordan Valley is now waterless
      - a. Actually a geological rift which extends all the way to the Nile Valley
    - 2. Anyone living here needs natural springs
      - a. **Beersheba = Be'er Sheva = Seven Springs**
    - 3. Natives are Bedouins who wander with livestock who eat rocks ???
      - a. What else is there?
  - G. Neighbors must be mentioned
    - 1. North – Lebanon
    - 2. Northeast – Syria
    - 3. West – Jordan
    - 4. All have precarious relations with Israel
      - a. Much depends on who is in power
    - 5. All have received numerous refugees; Arabs who have fled from Palestine since 1948 as a result of the wars
    - 6. Now – refugees fleeing from Syria as a result of their troubles – into Jordan and Lebanon and Iraq
  - H. That's a little about the geography of the land
    - 1. Certainly much more to tell
      - a. Can't understand the issues without at least that much introduction
- IV. **Question – why did God choose this land?**
  - A. Certainly much beauty in this land
    - 1. While certain agricultural regions are prosperous, there are other fertile regions around the world
    - 2. While the climate in many respects is appealing, there are other more appealing climates
    - 3. Certainly there are some extremely desolate, forbidding areas as well
  - B. Did God just pick this region out of a hat to place His chosen people?
    - 1. This is one of the most neglected questions regarding the history and geography of this place
  - C. Answer – go all the way back to God's covenant with Abraham

1. Covenant that we need to keep clearly in mind as we seek to understand the biblical roots of the crisis today
- D. **Genesis 12:1–3** (ESV) — 1 Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and **in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**”
1. Not only will Abram be a great nation
    - a. He will be a blessing
    - b. In him all the families of the earth will be blessed; NIV – all the peoples
      - (1) Strange statement to make to someone who was to be given a specific strip of land the size of NJ
      - (2) How would all the families of the earth be blessed by God establishing a nation in NJ, or Palestine?
- E. Covenant the God established would make Abraham and his descendants a blessing to all peoples, all nations
1. How can this be?
- F. When you back up and see the land for how it relates to the rest of the world the answer is clear
1. Already mentioned the trade routes that passed through the area
    - a. The routes of conquering armies
  2. The routes were called the **Via Maris, the “Way of the Sea”**
- G. Israel/Palestine is actually a land bridge which connects the three major continents
1. Abraham could be a blessing to many nations because this was the most fortuitous location for the spread of the gospel all across the world
  2. As the apostles were dispersed, they carried the gospel to the south, to Egypt (Cush), and even farther south
    - a. Christian churches there today that date from the first century
  3. They carried it east through central Asia all the way to India
  4. They carried it north and west to Europe
    - a. From Europe it spread to North America
    - b. From Europe and North America, then to South America
    - c. From North America to Africa
    - d. From North America even to East Asia in the last two hundred years
  5. There was no greater location in all of the earth to facilitate the blessing of God to all nations
- V. **Christians and the Land?**
- A. **Israel and the Covenant**
1. Question – Is Israel functioning in fulfillment of that covenant?
  2. Land is part of the covenant
  3. So is the blessing
  4. Is the blessing of God flowing through Israel to all peoples?

- a. We'll be coming back to that question again
- B. **Approaches to the Land**
- 1. **Crusader Approach**
    - a. Over the course of several hundred years, from the fall of the Roman Empire, various armies have sought to conquer and control the land; the land fell under the growing influence of Islam
    - b. Yet in Europe, the Land was regarded as The Holy Land
    - c. As such, Christians in those days, who regarded themselves as true spiritual Israel, could hardly bare the thought that the area would remain under Muslim control
    - d. That was the motivation for the Crusades
      - (1) Which, to oversimplify, was an attempt by human means and the power of the sword to establish a godly kingdom
      - (2) A misguided effort if there ever was one
    - e. The Land still bears the evidences of the Crusader conflicts
      - (1) Even though those days are a millennium behind us, the Arab Muslim mind still recalls them as if it were yesterday
    - f. You can rest assured that the ministry to the Middle East of Campus Crusade for Christ is not called Campus Crusade
      - (1) It's not even called CRU
      - (2) It's called Agape
  - 2. **The Pilgrim Approach**
    - a. The failure of the Crusades has not diminished our thinking of the Land as the Holy Land
    - b. Even though Christians haven't controlled the area for centuries, many have at least ventured to go there seeking the blessing of walking where Jesus walked
      - (1) There was supposed to be something about the Land that was necessary as a spiritual experience
      - (2) Can still see the pilgrims today, entering various holy sites, with extraordinary veneration
    - c. Also been a misguided approach
      - (1) Jesus himself taught the woman at the well that there was no special virtue in a place of worship as there had been in the past
      - (2) Worship could and would take place in every corner of the globe "in spirit and in truth"
      - (3) The Bible offers no specific blessing for Christians tied to place
    - d. I think we all ought to go to Israel/Palestine
      - (1) Fascinating to visit
      - (2) Much learning can take place where we can see the geography and artifacts of the early church
      - (3) But not as pilgrims who venerate sites
  - 3. **The Zionist Approach**

- a. Always been a desire of the Jew to return to the Land
  - (1) Prophets spoke frequently about such a return, particularly in the context of the Babylonian exile
  - (2) And the Jews did return, under Cyrus, to the Land following a generation in Babylon
  - (3) But only about 50,000 returned
    - (a) Far cry from the million or so that Moses led out of Egypt
  - (4) When they returned they found Jerusalem destroyed; the temple ruined
  - (5) They engaged in rebuilding both under Ezra and Nehemiah
  - (6) The rebuilding never approached the glory of the city under Solomon
  - (7) Even under their return, the Jews were constantly under the oppressive arm of other nations
    - (a) Persians under Cyrus
    - (b) Greeks under Alexander
    - (c) Romans
  - (8) Cause for great distress
    - (a) Also caused a hope for something more
  - (9) What did the prophets mean by their predictions of experiencing the glory of the Promised Land once again?
    - (a) Was it merely a figure of heaven, drawing on the glories of the earthly to teach what might await the true believer in the glories of heaven?
    - (b) Or did their predictions actually have in mind the establishment of another earthly Israel, a restoration of the Land and its pleasures and delights to God's chosen people?
- b. The Zionist approach adopts the latter view
  - (1) Following WWII, in the aftermath of the Nazi holocaust, powerful support for a homeland for the Jew was evident in Europe and America
  - (2) Under the sanction of the UN, the modern state of Israel was established
  - (3) Jews, who had already had started to return little by little since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, came back in droves
  - (4) It took more than a UN declaration to establish the state
    - (a) It took war
    - (b) War which the Zionist Israelis had been training for in Palestine since the 1930's
- c. The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 fueled these Zionist hopes
  - (1) Hopes which are very evident in Israel today, and in Jews around the world

- (2) Hopes which hinge on the land promises in the covenant
  - (3) Hopes which assume the right of ownership of the Land by Jews, in spite of who has occupied the land in the last 2,000 years
  - (4) Does Zionism truly represent the biblical approach to the Land?
    - (a) We'll explore that question in subsequent sessions
4. **The Millennial approach**
- a. The Christian version of Zionism
  - b. Based on dispensational theology
    - (1) Regards God's program for Israel as different and distinct from God's program for the church
    - (2) Allows Christians to compartmentalize what God is doing in Israel/Palestine from what God has called the church to do
    - (3) Israel and the church are separate entities
  - c. According to that theology, Christians see the return of Jews to the Land, in spite of their rejection of their Messiah, as fulfillment of the prophetic promises regarding the Land
    - (1) Allows Christians to politically support Israel, whether or not Israel cares about Messiah, or whether or not Israel would act the way Jesus, the Messiah, taught that the church should act
  - d. Driven by a theology that sees the church being removed from the earth prior to a Jewish tribulation in the Land, in preparation for the battle to end all battles, just before the return of Christ to establish His earthly millennial kingdom as seems to be described in Revelation 20
  - e. Millennial perspective – majority report among evangelicals in the US
    - (1) Especially in the last 150 years
  - f. Not the majority report among Christians almost everywhere else in the world
    - (1) Certainly not among Christian Arabs living in Palestine
  - g. This course will try to examine some of the legitimacy of this approach
5. **Renewal approach**
- a. The Land in the height of its glory is seen as a taste and foreshadow of the restoration, not of an earthly kingdom, but of the New Heavens and the New Earth
  - b. There is the hope of a return to a land
    - (1) But a land that far surpasses whatever could be experienced in Israel/Palestine
    - (2) A Land much larger, far more glorious than anything Solomon could have had in his wildest imaginations

- (3) And a Land which includes believers of every race, people, and tongue; Jew and Gentile, together in one body
- c. Was the majority understanding of the church for most of the 2,000 years since Christ's resurrection

VI. Summary

- A. That's our introduction
  - 1. We'll not answer every question; solve every problem
  - 2. We may raise more questions than we'll answer
  - 3. But we'll try understand what underlies the current crisis
- B. Certainly, it's complicated
  - 1. But in one sense, quite simple
    - a. It's about the Land
- C. More than anything else, we want to seek to understand what our responsibilities ought to be
  - 1. We can't avoid dealing with that issue
  - 2. We're already involved
    - a. Billions of dollars of your money goes to Israel today
    - b. The US has been known to militarily support nations on both sides of the conflict
    - c. If you're an American citizen, you're involved