

Israel Part 1

Genesis 35:10; Deut 32:8-13

INTRO: There are 2301 references to Israel in the Word of God. That God loves Israel is without question.

Ezekiel 20:6 calls Israel a land, “flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands.”

The land of Israel has been called the Fifth Gospel since the fourth century. It is important that we understand to topography of the land to have a better understanding of the Bible.

1. Israel is smaller than the state of Mississippi. Israel is a land measuring roughly 350 miles long and 70 miles wide. That is even smaller than our smallest US state, New Jersey.
2. The costal plain runs along the Mediterranean Sea from the Lebanese border in the north to Gaza in the South, broken only by Cape Carmel at Haifer Bay. There were times in our journey through northern Israel that we were only yards from the Lebanese border.
3. The central hill country lies east of the central highland region. The mountains and hills of upper Galilee and lower Galilee are here. Further south are the Samaritan Hills with numerous fertile valleys. South of Jerusalem are the barren hills of Judea. Several valleys cut across the highland, the largest is the Jezreel Valley.
4. The Jordan Rift Valley– this valley is dominated by the Jordan River, Sea of Galilee, and the Dead Sea.
5. The Neger or Neger Desert comprises more than half of Israel’s total land mass. Geographically, it is an extension of the Sinai Desert.
6. Most of Israel is basalt or one of two types of limestone.
7. Israel is arid with few perennial rivers. Dry-farming has been developed to maximize moisture usage.

Over the next few weeks, I want to share some observations about my journey to and through the land of the Bible.

I. GRACE

- A. On my flight from Little rock to Cincinnati, I met a couple of very interesting young ladies. One had the seat next to me; the other in front of me.

- B. The young lady sitting beside we was named Jessica (Jessie). She is a student at Grace College in Nebraska.
 - 1. Jessie was raised in the home of a scientist father and an atheist mother.
 - 2. When Jessie by grace came to Christ, she was kicked out of her home. Her father says that faith is not good; that everything has to be proven. Her mother just could not tolerate a Christian living under her roof. Those of you young people who have Christian parents should bow on your knees and thank God for being gracious to you.
- C. The young lady sitting in front of me is from El Dorado, Arkansas and is black. God put it in her heart, after saving her, that she needed to get a Bible education.
 - 1. God led her to enroll at Philadelphia School of the Bible.
 - 2. Her parents said she wouldn't last a month. She is about to finish her first year, and she is as happy as can be.
- D. Dear ones, the grace of God is very real. It is real to me and is real to every true believer.
 - 1. The grace of God is a gift from Him. Grace is His gracious favor to undeserving sinners (Eph 1:7-12).
 - 2. If you are born again, it is by grace and not of works (Eph 2:8-9).

II. DEPRAVITY

- A. On the trans-Atlantic flight from New York's JFK Airport to Tel Aviv, I sat by a Jew named John Weiss. John is thirty years old and is the founder of the ISO, akin to the USO. The ISO stands for the Israel Service Organization. About every four months, John flies to Israel with his band and plays at Israeli Air Force and Army bases. He gets no salary and has to raise the funds for the trips that he and his band make.
- B. I asked John why he would put all of this effort into such a project. He told me that it is because he loves Israel and because he does not want to see another Holocaust.
- C. While in Israel, I visited the Holocaust Memorial.
 - 1. Here as with my conversation with John Weiss, I was reminded of the total depravity of man.
 - a. At Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial, they had one of the rail cars from Poland in which Jews were transported to the death camps. There were pictures

of the bodies stacked like cord wood and of the oven in which bodies were incinerated. Pictures and mementoes of those who died were displayed. Six million Jews died in the Holocaust.

- b. The heart of man is desperately wicked indeed.
- 2. The scriptures remind us of man's wicked heart (Rm 3:9-17; Ex 1:15-22).

III. SECURITY

- A. One of the things that I have been asked often about is whether or not I felt safe and secure. The answer is yes!
 - 1. First of all, I feel safe in Jesus; and secondly, the Israeli government is very protective of visitors.
 - 2. Even when in Palestinian areas such as Bethlehem and Bethany, we felt safe.
- B. When Israeli school children go on field trips an armed guard goes with them . Automatic weapons on the shoulder of the military and security people is a common sight. Check points are not uncommon.
- C. The greatest security that can be known is the security of the believer (I Pet 1:4-6; Jn 10:27-29; Eph 1:13-14).

CONCLUSION: To know about the land of the Bible is one thing, to know the Christ of the Bible is the best thing.

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