

# **BIBLICAL BACKGROUNDS OF THE TROUBLED MIDDLE EAST (Part 1)**

## Introduction

- 1) Many of the modern problems and tensions in the Middle East have their root in ancient peoples and events, some of which is revealed in the Bible
- 2) Ancient peoples and events have influenced the world in which we live, both physically and spiritually – we should be aware of these backgrounds and that God continues to work His will as we strive to know and please Him today (Dan. 4:17; Acts 17:26)

## **I) The Family of Man Before and After the Flood**

- A) Growth from initial beginning with Adam and Eve (Gen. 4-5)
- B) Eight souls survived the Flood: Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives (Gen. 8:18)
  - 1) Earth repopulated from three sons of Noah: *Shem, Ham, Japheth* (Gen. 9:18-19; 10:1-32)
  - 2) People scattered over the face of the earth after the confusion of languages at Babel (Gen. 11:1-9)
- C) Descendants of Shem traced to Abram of Ur of Chaldees (Gen. 11:10-26)

## **II) ABRAHAM – Father of Many Nations**

- A) God's call to Abram to leave his country; given promises (Gen. 12:1-4; Heb. 11:8)
- B) The promise of many descendants (Gen. 15:1-6)
- C) Ishmael is born to Abram by Hagar (Gen. 16:1-16)
- D) Abram's name changed to Abraham = "father of many nations" (Gen. 17:1-6)
- E) Promise of a child to be born of Sarah (Gen. 17:15-19)
- F) Isaac is born to Abraham by Sarah and chosen by God (Gen. 21:1-5, 9-13; Rom. 9:7-9)
- G) Abraham remarried after Sarah's death and had more children (Gen. 25:1-6)

## **III) NATION OF ISRAEL to JESUS THE MESSIAH – Physical to Spiritual**

- A) Promises of a chosen nation and seed given to Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 26:3-4; 28:13-14)
- B) Nation of Israel came through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Ex. 2:23-25)
- C) Became special nation (Ex. 19:5) and received fulfillment of land promise (Josh. 21:43-45; Neh. 9:7-8)
  - 1) Divine right to the land of Canaan is limited to the fulfilled promise given to the nation of Israel under the Mosaic covenant
- D) Though physical lineage made one a Jew outwardly, God's true Jews were those who were faithful and obedient (Lk. 3:7-9; Jn. 8:31-40; Rom. 2:25, 28-29)
  - 1) Jews had great advantages (Rom. 3:1-2; 9:4-5)
- E) But many Jews would find themselves cast out of the kingdom of God to come (Matt. 8:10-12; Rom. 11:17)
  - 1) Rejected gospel message and killed the Messiah (Psa. 22:6; Isa. 53:3; Jn. 1:11; Matt. 27:25; Acts 2:23; 3:14-15; 4:18; 5:28; Rom. 10:2-3)
- F) A change in the arrangement of God's kingdom did take place (Matt. 21:43)
  - 1) God makes His own sovereign choices as to His plan and judges all men impartially according to His will – this is historically true and, therefore, man cannot fault God for his own disobedience and rejection by God (Rom. 9:1-13)
  - 2) The Mosaic covenant for the physical nation of Israel ended at the cross of Christ and a new covenant was established (Heb. 8:1-2, 6-13; 10:9-10)
  - 3) Now a spiritual nation exists made up of saved people from all nations – the church/kingdom of Christ (Isa. 2:2-3; Gal. 3:26-29; 6:16)

- 4) Change from a physical kingdom and covenant [Moses] to a spiritual kingdom and covenant [Christ] (Jn. 3:3-6; 4:19-24; 18:36; Rom. 12:1; 1 Pet. 2:9)

#### IV) JEWS and the Nation of ISRAEL from AD 70 to Modern Times

- A) Jesus prophesied of the destruction of Jerusalem (Lk. 21:20-24; Matt. 24:1-2; Mk. 13:1-2)  
1) AD 70 – destruction of Jerusalem by Romans (described by Josephus in *The Jewish War*)
- B) Jews lost their hold on land of Palestine – scattered, oppressed, terrorized, attempted genocides for over 1950 years
- C) Modern Jewish state of Israel established in 1948; tensions, battles, and wars with the Palestinian and Arabic populations in Israel and neighboring nations over territory, borders, and antisemitic terrorism  
1) The modern state of Israel was not granted by divine promise, but by human declarations and maintained/expanded by military might  
2) Has become a focal point of dispensational premillennial theology that believes the modern state of Israel is a fulfillment of OT prophecy and will be the harbinger of the return of Jesus to win the battle of Armageddon and reign 1000 years over His kingdom in Jerusalem  
a) False teaching that contradicts the teaching of OT prophecy and NT fulfillment
- D) The gospel is the only means of salvation now for all men, Jew and Gentile (Rom. 1:16-17)  
1) The one true hope of the Jewish person today is found in Christ Jesus and His kingdom (Rom. 10:1-4, 9-13)

#### Conclusion

True lasting **peace** now and eternally is found in Christ (Eph. 2:14-18). Are you at peace and in fellowship with God today?

#### **Part 2:** Ishmael and the Arab peoples

God's plan for all men today – Abraham, the father of all those who believe in Christ