

## ***Israel: The Apple (Pupil) of God's Eye?***

Recently, I sat captivated as the new Prime Minister of Israel addressed the Knesset (Israel's national legislature) on CSPAN in Hebrew followed by a halting English translation. As I listened to Ehud Olmert drone on about the state of Israel *vis a vis* the Palestinian question and terrorism etc., I was reminded of the Scriptures that speak of Israel as 'the apple of God's eye' (Deut. 32:10 KJV). While the term '*ishon*' may be best translated 'pupil' versus 'apple', it still represents the nation of Israel as the focus of His covenant care and promise (the reflection in His eye).

While I watched the address, I realized I was witnessing a marvelous testimony to the fact that Israel was still the shining apple of God's eye and a confirmatory witness to His continued activity in the world today. What other country has been reborn after nearly 2,000 years of national dissolution, exile, and persecution? Further, what ancient nation has arisen from the ashes of history with their ancient tongue and religion restored?

None of the empires of antiquity that vied for control of the land bridge and trade routes through Israel exist today! Egypt, the land of the Pharaohs continues today as an Islamic Arabic speaking state. Its ancient gods and language are now the peculiar province of Egyptologists and curious tourists. Likewise the empires of Assyria, Babylon, and Persia in modern day Iraq and Iran have long since buried their gods and ancient languages in the silent mounds of entombed cities.

In the light of Israel's rise from the ashheap of nations who are no more, how does modern man miss this unimpeachable evidence that God is still at work in the world today; raising up and throwing down nations according to His sovereign will? I am at a loss to explain such skepticism, but mindful of the prophet's frustration against ancient Israel herself for failing to heed God's warnings of judgment. Indeed, Isaiah cries out about his own people 'hearing but not understanding and seeing but not perceiving' (Isa. 6:9). And the apostle Paul relates the blinding power of the god of this age on people who have rejected Christ's gospel of forgiveness (2 Cor. 4:3-4).

Unto those of us being saved, however, the miraculous reality and centrality of the modern day state of Israel on the international stage testifies to a God who is alive and well on planet Earth and still engaged in fulfilling His covenant promises to His chosen people Israel--the apple (reflection) of His eye--and I might add to His Church as well!!

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