



Welcome

....to Celebration Church!

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving
and His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His Name.
For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting
and His truth endures to all generations. Psalm 100:4-5.

March 2017

Sunday congregational services, all at 11am:

5 th : (communion)	John Lavric;	19 th :	Dr Annang;
12 th : (Purim)	Andy King;	26 th :	Andy King;
2 nd April: (communion)	Andy King.		

Ashgrove Nursing Home service: Tuesday 21st at 2.30pm

Bible study home groups:

Every Wednesday 7.30pm at
Glen & Debbie's

Every Thursday 10.30am at
Margaret's

Friday 10th, 17th & 31st at Andy
& Karen's

Prayer meetings:

Sundays 7pm: All at Jill's

Prayer for Israel meetings:

Thursday 2nd, 16th & 30th
7.15pm at Ruth & Tony's

Mens Prayer Breakfast:

7am, 4th at Paul's
7am, 18th at Glen's

AGM (see back page)

Tuesday 21st at 7.30pm

In the Bible calendar, this month sees the events of Esther's story take place. It is known as Purim (Esther 3:7), which in Hebrew means the 'lots' that were drawn to determine the date of the destruction of the Jewish people in the kingdom of the Medes & Persians, present day Iran.

Today we see multiple attacks on Biblical truth, both the subtle and the not so subtle, and attacks on the legitimacy of Israel and Jews, continuing. They both come from the same root. Though the following article contains some political comment, I believe its message is extremely relevant for us as Bible-believing Christians in a society which has turned its back on God.

[Time for another reformation](#)

Prophecy Today UK, 10 Feb 2017.

From reports of Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu's meeting with his British counterpart Theresa May, it seems that the UK government doesn't really believe Iran is a threat to world peace or, for that matter, that God's chosen people are worth supporting to the hilt.

In defying a call for fresh sanctions against Iran, Mrs May indicated her continued commitment to the nuclear deal which Mr Netanyahu believes to be highly dangerous, saying: "Iran seeks to annihilate Israel, it seeks to conquer the Middle East, it threatens Europe, it threatens the West, it threatens the world."¹

I am reminded of the indelible link between Bible-believing Christians and comfort for Israel (Isaiah 40) – and where this is lacking, it is through ignorance.

In a year that we are celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, sparked off by Martin Luther, we should be thankful that it opened the way to an understanding of the Bible that had a hugely civilising effect on the West, the heart of his rediscovery being that salvation in Christ comes through faith alone, not by good deeds.

Sadly, however, there was a major flaw in Luther's understanding in that he failed to grasp that God had not forsaken the Jews despite their overall rejection of Christ. And it is widely reckoned that his anti-Semitic statements sowed the seeds of the Holocaust. Indeed, Anglican clergyman Simon Ponsonby has said that Nazism was a legacy of Luther, who had called for the urgent expulsion of Jewish people from Germany in his last sermon.²

But a 20th Century hero named after him, Martin Luther King Jr, had a very different view which certainly does not chime with current political correctness. *When people criticize Zionists, they mean Jews. You're talking anti-Semitism!* Those with a different agenda try to re-write history by claiming, for example, that this quote is a hoax. But it comes through unscathed on closer examination.³

“Peace for Israel means security,” said King, “and we must stand with all of our might to protect its right to exist, its territorial integrity. I see Israel as one of the great outposts of democracy in the world, and a marvelous example of what can be done, how desert land can almost be transformed into an oasis of brotherhood and democracy. Peace for Israel means security and that security must be a reality.”⁴

Judging by the strong Christian content of his inaugural speech along with the make-up of his cabinet including several Bible-believing Christians as well as Jews, I am most encouraged by the new US President Donald Trump.

On important matters of politics, as in society as a whole, the Bible trumps all other agendas. And we are much nearer to being on the right track in world affairs when its ethos and principles begin to dictate policy once more – as it did 100 years ago when the (mostly) evangelical Christian members of David Lloyd George’s War Cabinet understood the importance of a re-born Israel. That led to the Balfour Declaration, promising that the British Government would do all in its power to facilitate the re-creation of a Jewish state in the Holy Land.

That it happened was clearly part of God’s plan, and the Bible’s agenda, but now the world condemns Israel for stealing land from the Palestinians. Yet, in addressing Israel’s restoration, a recurring theme of the Bible, the prophet Amos writes: *“I will bring my people Israel back from exile... and will plant them in their own land, never again to be uprooted...”* (Amos 9:14).

I’m told that, earlier this week, Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson took the trouble to show Mr Netanyahu the very desk at which Balfour wrote and signed the declaration. That both Balfour and Trump have come under ferocious fire is because they have challenged the fashionable so-called ‘anti-fascists’ of the anti-God brigade.

Canon Andrew White – the clerical equivalent of Trump when it comes to plain-speaking – put it perfectly when he said that *“the world is anti-Semitic because it is anti-God. This land (Israel) is God’s land...”*⁵

Also known as the Vicar of Baghdad, the Anglican clergyman has stood up to brutal terrorists while negotiating the release of hostages and has become the voice of reconciliation amidst the hatred and bitterness of Middle East conflict. In an interview with this month’s issue of the *Israel Today* magazine, he added: *“The conflict exists because Israel’s opponents are fundamentally anti-Jewish. One cannot merely say that they are only opposed to Israel; after all, Israel represents the essence of Judaism. No Judaism, no Israel. No Judaism, no God!”*

Speaking of his experience in Baghdad, where he built up a church of over 6,000, he said: *“At first the Iraqi Christians were against Israel, as were the Muslims. I was shocked by this and decided to enlighten them...about the*

Jewish roots of their faith.” And it was as a result of this that they developed a love for Israel.

Hatred of Israel is due in large part to biblical illiteracy. So it is surely time for a new reformation which sees the word of God restored to its rightful place as the sure foundation for all who claim to be followers of Jesus.

It is revealing that among Christian denominations that have taken issue with Israel are the Presbyterians and Methodists, who are in serious decline both spiritually and numerically.

Israel also needs to restore their relationship with God, as they did in Jehoshaphat’s day. But Christians are called to help with this process by praying for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6) and by sharing the gospel with them both in word and deed (Rom.1:16).

(For references, click the article title link)

AGM Our annual general meeting takes place on Tuesday 21st March at 7.30pm at Paul and Jane’s. All welcome. As well as discussing all things financial, we will take the opportunity to look at how we, as a fellowship, can go forward with our giving into the work of God.

Church magazine John is looking to produce a new church magazine every quarter or so. So if you have any items that may be suitable (jokes, Bible quiz questions, testimonies etc), please let him have them.

T-shirts for South Africa Please continue to look for children’s football shirts for the poverty-stricken township children of Capetown. They can be 2nd or 3rd hand & from any club (even Chelsea!). Please pass any donations to Steve by the end of March, as they will be collected early April.

News on the building Still no further news on the sale of St John Fisher building. Please continue to pray regarding the Lord’s will in all this, as we begin to actively look for a suitable new meeting place in Scartho.

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