

Editorial Reflections

What No One Is Saying about the Palestine Gridlock

Frequently our news media brings us nose to nose with problems and we find it hard to stand back and get to the bottom of it all. The following thoughts will probably be considered utterly idealistic or unthinkable, although I would hope that might not be the case.

First of all, how in the world did four million Jews get into Palestine? (The other two million in Israel are Arabs.) European and American powers simply decided that they could have that land. This was the first huge mistake. There is not the slightest possibility of validating that seizure of land in the eyes of their neighbors, is there? What if the Senate decided to give Long Island to New Jersey? No, what if the Alabama state legislature decided to give Long Island to New Jersey? Or give Cuba to the USA?

The second huge mistake—but much more understandable under the immediate post-WWII circumstances—was for a group of Jews to unwisely accept the “gift.” If a bank robber gives you \$10,000 you do not become owner of it, and better not start spending it.

What is bizarre about this huge acceptance on the part of the Jews—of what to many seems to be stolen goods—is that very few of today’s Israelis take the Bible seriously anyway. Even if they did, the Bible does not guarantee the Jews that God will not take away their land under any circumstances. In any case, even if there were no conflict, the Jews will soon lose control since the one-third Arab population in Israel will shortly outvote the more slowly growing Jewish population.

One solution would be to allow all to vote, not just those who live in the specifically Israeli portion. This would mean that the Jewish people would be a minority in a Muslim country of Palestine. I can see that they would not like that. But that, as mentioned, is where demographic trends are irresistably taking them anyhow.

Thus, however hypothetical it may seem, the best solution would seem to have been, and may still be now, *to find a different home for Jewish refugees*. They were once offered space in Uganda. I can see how they might object to that. Why wouldn’t they want to run their own country? But many countries have room to spare for four million Jews. The USA has room for 11 million illegals, apparently. Australia has a land area 375 times as large as the area Israel occupies. Surely Australia could give or sell 1/375 of their land to the Jewish element in Israel today.

To be practical, four million Jews could not all take the same flight out. But four million Palestinians have successfully fled. Why can’t four million Jews leave in planned stages, selling their properties and houses to Arabs and buying and building in, say, Australia.

Obviously, if you add up all the costs of conflict since 1948 it would readily resettle four million Jews elsewhere.

But you say, *there is no other Holy Land*. However, Israel is a secular state and it is likely that there are five times as many U.S. Evangelicals who want to see Jews in Palestine, as there are Jews in Israel today who would not readily opt for a new land of peace and quiet.

What I am saying in no way suggests that godly Jews will never inherit the land, just that a lot of secular Jews didn’t get there in the best way. The Japanese tried to take Pearl Harbor by force. They failed. But now they own most of Hawaii. The Mormons were forced out of the largest city on the Mississippi River, Nauvoo. But in 2001 they moved back in simply by buying back the property they left behind. The British “repatriated” thousands into North Ireland. That has not worked out well—they did not buy their way in. We now live in a world wanting to settle boundaries. The lands the Nazis seized and the Russians seized have mainly been returned. Why should the Middle East be different?

Destroying “the Dividing Wall of Hostility”

The final paragraph of Dr. Tennent’s article invokes the Pauline statement in Ephesians 2:14 to say that Muslims who follow Christ may reasonably be expected eventually to identify with the Christian cultural tradition, now that they have achieved a spiritual bond in Christ. That is, now that a Muslim becomes a believer in Christ he can become one in culture with Christians who are the others who are “one in Christ.”

I must be misunderstanding. It seems to me to mean the very opposite. Once Greek believers became one with Jewish believers in Christ, the dividing wall of hostility was destroyed *without any tearing down of cultural differences*. The result was definitely not the gradual *Jewification* of the Greek believers. This was not a minor point. It was THE MAJOR point, that, namely, Greeks within their culture did not have to give that up to follow Christ. Just as, say, neither Muslims or Hindus today have to embrace Christian culture and give up theirs eventually due to their spiritual unity with all believers of whatever culture. **IJFM**