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SIX LESSONS TO UNLOCKING THE TRUTH  
TO GOD'S HOLY LAND



## LESSON 2

# I.S.R.A.E.L. — State of Israel

### INTRODUCTION

Have you ever received an inheritance?  
If so, what did it mean to you?

If you haven't received an inheritance,  
try to think of what it might mean to you  
if someone left you an inheritance?

**Describe what an inheritance usually says  
about a person's relationship with the receiver.  
Write down your thoughts.**

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### KEY VERSE:

*“But I said to you, ‘You will possess  
their land; I will give it to you as  
an inheritance, a land flowing with  
milk and honey.’ I am the LORD  
your God, who has set you apart from  
the nations.” — LEVITICUS 20:24*

### MAIN TEACHING POINT

While the modern State of Israel is only 70 years old, its spiritual and historical roots go back thousands of years to when God first promised this land to Abraham.

God gave the land of Israel to the Jewish people as their inheritance, which makes the land a special place even today.

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

**What are some material possessions you would like to pass on to members of your family or close friends? Why?**

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**What are some spiritual messages or life lessons you would like to pass on to people close to you? How can you share those messages now?**

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**An inheritance is something special, usually cherished,** that is given to a loved one or close friend upon the death of the giver. The inheritance reminds the receiver of the person who passed it on.

**While God didn't have to leave Israel as an inheritance to His children,** the land of Israel still serves as a reminder of the promise God made to Abraham in Genesis 12:7. It serves as an inheritance from God, a special gift to the Jewish people.

## Going Deeper

The Bible is filled with accounts about the Israelites' journey to the Promised Land, their fight to protect their land, their exile from the land, and their return to Israel.

### READ LEVITICUS 20:24

**How is Israel described?**

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**What do you think it meant for the land to flow with milk and honey?**

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**What does this verse say to remind us that Israel was special to God?**

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### READ DEUTERONOMY 9:1, 3; PSALM 78:55

**How is Israel described?**

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**How did God assure the Israelites that the land was theirs to possess?**

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## The Battle of Jericho

### READ JOSHUA 6:1–20

**The Battle of Jericho marks Israel's entry into the Promised Land** after a long journey through the wilderness. The battle takes place about 40 years after God used Moses to rescue the Israelites from Egypt. Through their journey in the wilderness, God spoke through Moses to remind the people of their covenant with Him. Now that Moses has died, and Joshua is the heir apparent to lead the people, they are poised to take over the city of Jericho, which is in Israel.

**Jericho was an old city that had been built thousands of years before this battle.**

It was known for its towering walls, which soldiers stood upon to see when the city was in danger. The soldiers could spot enemies from miles away as they approached Jericho.

**But God had already told Joshua of His plans to deliver the city to Israel.** Joshua and the people just needed to be obedient and proceed courageously. God gave specific orders on how the Israelite troops were to take the city, and Joshua and the people followed those orders.

The troops were to march around the towering walls of Jericho once a day for six days. Then, on the seventh day, the troops were to march seven times along with the priests, who were instructed to carry trumpets made of rams' horns. When the people heard the horns blow, they were to shout. And that's when the walls came tumbling down. They were able to enter Jericho and take the land promised to them by God.

### ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

**Why do you think God gave such specific instructions for conquering Jericho?**

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**Why do you think it was important for the Israelites to follow these instructions exactly as God told Joshua?**

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**Why do you think this was important for the Israelites' very first battle upon entering the Promised Land? What effect, if any, do you think the fall of Jericho had on other nations?**

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**Israel is God's Holy Land**, which is why it brought out the best in the people who lived there and even now evokes distinct emotions not only from Jews returning home, but also from visitors.

**Read the following Scriptures and write down how this land is described in the Bible.**

| Scripture         | Description |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Deuteronomy 1:25  |             |
| Deuteronomy 8:7-9 |             |
| Jeremiah 3:19     |             |
| Ezekiel 20:6      |             |
| Malachi 3:12      |             |

**Based on the verses above, how would you describe the Holy Land to someone else.**

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**If you have been to Israel, what are your impressions of God's Holy Land? If you haven't been, based on what you've read and what you know, what are your expectations for visiting?**

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**Throughout the history of the Jewish people, Israel has been special** and important because it is a promised inheritance from God. Even though scattered, Israel has remained central to the Jewish nation. The people have been exiled from the land twice and the nation was re-established as the State of Israel only 70 years ago. Yet Israel is still a reminder of the special inheritance from God and the special relationship God has with the Jewish people.

## Think About it

**Israel is a tangible example** of how God has kept His promise to the Israelites throughout human history.

**What does this say about God's faithfulness? How is knowing this an encouragement to you?**

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**Even after many battles, conquests, and exiles, Israel exists. What does this say about the land and its special meaning?**

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**Why should Christians support leaders who are pro-Israel?**

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**What other ways can Christians support Israel?**

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**In your mind, what is the most convincing argument you can make for supporting Israel?**

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**For more teaching about the State of Israel**, watch the video featuring *The Fellowship* founder and President Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, and his daughter, Yael Eckstein, Executive Vice President.



## Hebrew Words for Lesson 2

| Hebrew Word | English Spelling | English Meaning |
|-------------|------------------|-----------------|
| ארץ         | <i>Eretz</i>     | Land            |
| מדינה       | <i>Medina</i>    | State           |
| ישראל       | <i>Yisrael</i>   | Israel          |
| ירושה       | <i>Yerusha</i>   | Inheritance     |
| חלב         | <i>Chalav</i>    | Milk            |
| דבש         | <i>D'vash</i>    | Honey           |

## Devotional Reflection — The Miracle of Israel

*“and I will bring my people Israel back from exile.  
They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them.  
They will plant vineyards and drink their wine;  
they will make gardens and eat their fruit.  
I will plant Israel in their own land,  
never again to be uprooted  
from the land I have given them,  
says the LORD your God.” — AMOS 9:14-15*



Israel is a tiny country, just about the same size as the state of New Jersey! Israel is in the region of the world called the Middle East, and is surrounded by many bigger countries that want to destroy her.

By any normal standards, Israel should not exist. Israel should have disappeared before she even declared independence in 1948! How is it possible for such a tiny nation to survive when surrounded by so many enemies? It's like Daniel in the lion's den!

**The truth is that Israel should have disappeared long, long ago.** No other nation on earth has been expelled from its own homeland and then return to live there again. Israel did it not just once, but twice! The first time the Israelites returned to their homeland was in the year 538 BCE (Before the Common Era), 70 years after they had been exiled to Babylon. Then after being kicked out of their land by the Romans in 70 CE, they returned to live in Israel nearly 2,000 years later in 1948.

No wonder David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, said: “In Israel . . . you have to believe in miracles.” Israel is one big miracle!

**In 1867, the famous American writer Mark Twain visited the Holy Land.** This is how he described it:

“A desolate country . . . given over wholly to weeds . . . a silent mournful expanse . . . a desolation . . . we never saw a human being on the whole route . . . hardly a tree or shrub anywhere. Even the olive tree and the cactus, those fast friends of a worthless soil, had almost deserted the country.”

The land that Mark Twain saw was the way that the land looked for two thousand years. While the children of Israel were exiled by the Romans in 70 CE, the land stopped producing trees and fruit. It was as if the land itself was in mourning for her lost people. That's what Mark Twain saw in 1867.

**But things changed after that.** While God had exiled his people from the land He had given them, He was about to bring them back home, as He promised in the Book of Amos: “*I will bring my people Israel back from exile. They will rebuild the ruined cities . . .*” God promised to return the people of Israel to their land. And, indeed, He has.

**Reading the rest of the verses from Amos**, it's hard to believe that the prophet is talking about the same land that Mark Twain had seen. Amos described cities with vineyards, plentiful wine, abundant vegetation, and fruit. Yet, this is a perfect description of Israel today. Miraculously, the “silent mournful expanse” has been transformed into an abundant garden!

**Whenever we need some inspiration or encouragement to believe** that anything is possible with God, we need not look any further than Israel. If Israel can beat the odds, so can we. If Israel can receive miracles, so can we. The God of Israel can do anything, so we should never lose hope. The God of Israel keeps His promises, so we can expect God to keep His promises to us.



## THE STORY OF ISRAEL IS OUR STORY.

**The lesson of Israel is our lesson.** If we trust in God, like His people have done for centuries, He will never let us down.