



Herzl, Hebrew and Holy Cows

10 REMARKABLE PROPHECIES COMING TRUE IN ISRAEL TODAY

The tiny State of Israel has become world-famous for its extraordinary achievements in so many fields. Jewish immigrants from all over the world returned to their Homeland, rebuilt its ruins, revived its barren wilderness and revitalized its ancient language, creating an economic, military, social, cultural and technological power of global renown. Amazingly, these achievements were all clearly foretold by our Prophets.

Let us look briefly at the fulfillment of just 10 of those prophecies:

1. The Ingathering of the Exiles

וְקִבְצָךְ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר
הִפְיָצָךְ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ שָׁמָּה

"...and He will gather you in from all the nations to which He the L-rd (your G-d) has scattered you (there)..." (Devarim 30:3)

Perhaps the greatest miracle of all!

In 1840, there were 6,000 Jews living in the Land of Israel. By 1917, that number grew to 60,000. When the State was declared in 1948, there were 600,000. And today there are over 6.7 million Jews living in Israel! The Jewish population in the Land of Israel climbed from being of 1% of world Jewry to 6% in 1948, to almost half of all Jews in the world today.

The Ingathering of the Exiles is perhaps a greater miracle than the Exodus from Egypt! Firstly, the Exodus came after

210 years of slavery, whereas the return to modern Israel happened after almost 2,000 years. Secondly, all the Israelites came out of one country whereas in the modern era Jews came from over 100 countries. Thirdly, in Egypt all Jews lived in one confined, culturally segregated ghetto in Goshen, speaking only Hebrew, whereas Israel has seen the return of Jews from every cultural, political and ideological background, speaking over 80 different languages somehow forged into one functional society.¹

2. The Spiritual Alchemy between a Land and a People

וְהִשְׁמַתִּי אֲנִי אֶת הָאָרֶץ וְשָׁמְמוּ עָלֶיהָ אֲיִבִיכֶם

"I will make the Land desolate, and your adversaries will be desolate on it..." (Vayikra 26:32)

Following the Roman conquest in 70CE, the Land of Israel was conquered by 14 different empires over 1,900 years. As G-d had foretold, the Land remained barren to its conquerors despite repeated attempts to make it flourish – as if the Land itself was pledging fidelity to her children, awaiting their return.²

In 1867, Mark Twain famously described the land he saw as 'a desolation... repulsive and dreary...with hardly a tree or shrub anywhere... a land covered in sackcloth and ashes.'

Until of course, the return of the Jews.

3. Land Blossomed Only Once Its Children Returned

וְאַתֶּם הָרִי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲנַפְכֶם תִּתְּנוּ
וּפְרִיכֶם תִּשְׂאוּ לְעַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל

"But you, O mountains of Israel, sprout your branches and give forth your fruits for My people Israel" (Yechezkel 36:8).³

As the Jewish people returned to the Land, the Land responded in return. The desert has become an oasis and the desolation a blessing. Israel quickly started developing innovative agricultural expertise and water conservation technologies. The returning Jews have now planted over 250 million trees and Israel is the only nation on earth that entered the 21st century with more trees than a century earlier. It boasts more than 300 wineries and its wine, fruits and other products are exported all over the world.

4. Renewal of the Hebrew Language

כִּי אֲנִי אֶהְפֵּךְ אֶל עַמִּים שְׂפָה בְרוּרָה

"For then I will change the nations [to speak] one clear language..." (Zephania 3:9)⁴

When the first pioneers returned to Israel, Hebrew was not a spoken language. No Jewish community and not one Jewish family spoke to their children in Hebrew. Hebrew was a language of prayer, Torah and scholarship. Herzl,

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despite his broad vision for a return to Zion, did not believe Hebrew could be revived. Miraculously, Hebrew has become the lingua franca in Israel and is the only language in recorded history ever to have been revived by a people as their spoken language!

5. Revival of the Torah World

כי מציון תצא תורה ודבר ה' מירושלים
 "...For out of Zion shall go forth Torah
 and the word of G-d from Jerusalem"
 (Yeshayahu 2:3)

In the early years of the State, you could have put all yeshiva students into a small hall. At the zenith of Lithuanian Jewry, no more than 3,000 people were studying Torah full time. In Israel today, there are close to 200,000 men and women engaged fully in Torah learning in traditional *yeshivot*, *hesder yeshivot*, *midrashot*, *mechinot*, and more. Arguably, there are more people learning Torah in Israel today than at any other time in Jewish history.

6. Economic Prosperity

והביאה ה' אֵלֶיךָ אֶל הָאָרֶץ...
 והיטבה והרבה מאבותיך
 "And the L-rd your G-d will bring you
 to the Land... and will benefit you and
 make you more numerous than your
 forefathers" (Devarim 30:5)

The Jewish population in Israel has increased 10 times since 1948 and its economy has doubled 40 times! According to "The Economist," Israel has doubled its GDP in the past decade alone, a world record. According to Bloomberg, Israel's economic stability ranks third in the world! But when it comes to cows – we rank number one!

7. A Land Flowing with Milk and Honey

ויתן לנו את הארץ הזאת ארץ זבת חלב ודבש
 "...And He gave us this Land, a Land
 flowing with milk and honey" (Devarim
 26:9)

The average Israeli cow produces 12,000 liters of milk per year. That is the highest in the world, more than countries such as the United States and Holland, which are renowned for their dairy production. Even the cows in Israel are holy!

"Honey" refers to date honey, and the large, sweet dates from the Jordan Valley are among the finest in the world.⁵

8. The Building of Jerusalem

פְּרוֹזוֹת תִּשָּׁב יְרוּשָׁלַיִם מֵרַב אָדָם
 "...Jerusalem will be settled beyond
 its walls, because of the multitude of
 people..." (Zecharia 2:8)

Jerusalem is the beating heart of Israel. For centuries, Jerusalem was off limits for Jews. Zecharia envisioned Jerusalem's population growing so large that its walls would not accommodate its inhabitants. Until 150 years ago, this seemed impossible. In 1860, Jews began moving beyond the walls and Jerusalem today is home to over 900,000 inhabitants and 600,000 Jews!

9. A Source of Global Blessing and Wisdom

וּנְבָרְכוּ בְךָ כָּל מִשְׁפְּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה
 "...And all nations on earth will be
 blessed through you" (Bereishit 12:3)

Global advancements in the sciences, medicine, agriculture and high tech have Israel's fingerprints all over them. Jews the world over have won a disproportionate number of Nobel Prizes in an array of fields, and Israelis have won more than the Chinese, despite China having more than 150 times Israel population. Israel has the largest concentration of start-ups per capita anywhere in the world, ensuring its innovations are a source of blessing to all humanity.

10. Standing Proud Among the Nations and the Abraham Accords

וְרָאוּ גוֹיִם צְדָקָה וְכָל מְלָכִים כְּבוֹדָךָ
 וְקָרָא לְךָ שֵׁם חָדָשׁ

"Nations will see your righteousness, and
 all the kings your honor, and you will
 be called by a new name..." (Yeshayahu
 62:2)

The development of Israel's foreign relations during the last 30 years is staggering. The number of countries that have diplomatic relations with Israel has doubled from 80 to 160. Recently, the Abraham Accords have demolished barriers which previously seemed impenetrable, and Israel has been able to turn foes into friends.

Israel's achievements are astounding, whether in science or study, technology or Torah, nation-building or universal blessing. What is even more astounding is that the destiny of this country seems less about politics and more about prophecy. Israel is not a new 73-year-old phenomenon but a reincarnation of an ancient one. A modern saga clearly foretold by our Biblical seers, who saw Jewish history and Israel as a pivotal piece in the fulfillment of Jewish destiny and the progress of human civilization.

- 1 Based on an insight of Rav Tzvi Hirsch Chajes (Maharatz Chayot, Writings, 1:74), regarding the nature of the future Redemption.
- 2 See Ramban, Vayikra 26:15.
- 3 Rabbi Abba sees the fulfillment of this verse as the greatest single sign of the Redemption (Sanhedrin 98a).
- 4 The Ibn Ezra says the language is Hebrew.
- 5 There is a debate amongst our Sages as to what חלב and דבש refer to. In short, חלב is either cow /goat milk or fruit juice and דבש is either date honey (silan) or bee honey.

This article forms the basis of the script for Mizrachi's specially produced video for this Yom HaAtzmaut, 'Israel, A Living Prophecy'. Thank you to Rav Hillel Van-Leeuwen for his assistance.

Rabbi Doron Perez is Executive Chairman of the Mizrachi World Movement.