Zionist movement is based on some historical and religious myths. They propagate that Palestine is their ancestor's home and the entire Holy Land was promised to them as a covenant between Abraham and God and they are the sole legitimate heirs of Abraham. They say that this covenant was unconditional and the Holy Land would be given to them whatever they may do. But when we examine their claims in the light of sacred texts we find that not only the Jews are offsprings of Abraham but also Muslims are the legitimate heirs of Abraham. A lot of verses also show that the covenant was conditional and because of their crimes Jews were expelled from that covenant.

**Key words:** God made the promise to Abraham, God renewed His promise to Isaac, Jacob and Moses, Terms and Conditions of the 'Promised Land', Do the Jews Fulfill the Conditions of the Covenant?, The Covenant of God and the Prophet of Ismael, The Exodus from the Egypt and the Entry into the Promised-Land, Does the Promise Still Await Fulfillment?

**Introduction**

Zionism is related to Zion, which is popularly known as 'Mount Zion of Jerusalem'. Mount Zion is the highest point of Jerusalem approximately at 2558 feet. This mount is very significant due to some reasons. When Prophet David conquered Jerusalem, he established a city of David on this 'Mount Zion'. In the time line of Jesus Christ Herod's palace was located in this part of city. It is also considered that the last resting place of King David and his descendants was Mount Zion. The word Zion is also significant because of appearing no less than 192 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. The verses which contain the word 'Zion' is frequently recited and memorized by the Jews. Apart from the importance of the word 'Zion' it refers to Zionism and it has become a symbol of return of Jews to the promised-land. Alan Hart, a foreign correspondent for ITN and BBC's Panorama Programs writes in his book, 'Zionism-the Real Enemy of Jews':

"I should point out that Zion of Zionism is Mount Zion in Jerusalem. As invoked by Zionism's founding-fathers it is the symbol of the return of Jews to land occupied and ruled for a relatively short time by their 'alleged ancestors.....'" (Hart, 2005).

Abraham settled in Palestine in 1800 BC but later his descendants migrated to Egypt. Under the leadership of Moses they came out from Egypt but not entered into the promised-land. Joshua led them to the promised-land.
The first temple in Jerusalem was built by Solomon in tenth century BC. The United Kingdom was also established but ended in less than two hundred years and dissolved into the kingdom of Judah and Israel. The kingdom of Israel conquered by Assyrians in 721 BC and Judah was ended by Babylonians in 586 BC. When Persians took over the Babylonians, they allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuilt their temple. Again Jews rule over Palestine ended in 63 BC when Romans conquered Jerusalem. When the Jews rebelled against Romans in 70 AD, they destroyed the second temple and levelled Jerusalem. All Jews from Jerusalem were expelled forever in 135 AD. Jews were scattered in all directions i.e. Babylonia, Egypt, Alexandria, Asia Minor and in Greece. (Hubbard, 1999)

After their exile in 135 AD Jews prayed every day for a return to Zion and concluded their year’s ceremonies with ‘next year in Jerusalem’. Zion, through-out the centuries functioned as a binding force of the Jewish religious and social experience. Jews literature, prayer book, and medieval liturgy treatises all displayed a uniform preoccupation with the Holy-land.

Many scholars like Dr Elaine c. Hagopian consider that Zionist movement is merely a political movement and the Arab- Israeli conflict is merely a political conflict. But we see that the Origin of Zionism was totally based on longing of Jews for their homeland. The particular sense of superiority of Jews that they are God’s Chosen people is also a religious notion. The phenomenon of anti-Semitism, ‘weapon of Zionism’ is also a religious concept. David Ben Gurion warned the British authorities in this sentence “Bible is our mandate” (Ali, 1967; Garaudy, 1983; Hadawi, 1967; Iqbal, 2002; Khan and Mohsin, 2010; Masalha, 2007; Prior, 2005; Saleh, 2005; Wright, 1983). An Israeli diplomat replied to a question that the basis of Israeli diplomacy is the “Old Testament”. Golda Meir said: “This country (Israel) exists as a result of a promise made by God Himself. It would be ridiculous to ask for the recognition of its legitimacy”. These examples leave no place to say that it is merely political movement rather it is religious from the beginning to the end. Israel was created on the basis of some biblical prophecies and theological claims. That is why in this chapter we will examine their biblical prophecies and theological claims which are the foundation of Israeli politics.

**God made the promise to Abraham**

The Jews people base their claim to the land of Israel that God promised the land to the patriarch Abraham and they are the real descendants from Abraham. God made the promise to Abraham in the following verses;

*Now Yahweh said to Abram, “Now Yahweh said to Abram,*


**God renewed His promise to Isaac, Jacob and Moses**

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, Yahweh appeared to Abram, and said to him, “I am God Almighty. Walk before me, and be blameless. I will make my covenant between me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.” Abram fell on his face. God talked with him, saying, “As for me, behold, my covenant is with you. You will be the father of a multitude of nations. Neither will your name any more be called Abram, but your name will be Abraham; for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you. Kings will come out of you. I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you. I will give to you and to your seed after you, the land where you are traveling, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession. I will be their God.” (Genesis17:1-8)

**God renewed His promise to Isaac, Jacob and Moses**

When Abraham was hundred years old and his wife Sarah ninety years old, God promised to give them a child Isaac and also said that He will establish an everlasting covenant with him.

*God said, “No, but Sarah, your wife, will bear you a son.*
You shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He will become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this set time next year.” (Genesis 17:19-21).

Live in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you. For to you, and to your seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. (Genesis26:3).

God also renewed the promise to Jacob at Bethel. Isaac commanded Jacob to go to Paddan Aram and to take a wife from there. He obeyed his father and went to Paddan Aram. When he was on his way he stayed at a certain place. At that place he dreamed that God renewed the promise he had given to Abraham.

Behold, Yahweh stood above it, and said, “I am Yahweh, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon you lie, to you will I give it, and to your seed. Your seed will be as the dust of the earth, and you will spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. In you and in your seed will all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I am with you, and will keep you, wherever you go, and will bring you again into this land. For I will not leave you, until I have done that which I have spoken of to you.” (Genesis 28:13-15).

The promise that God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob again is restated to Moses. The land is described as flowing with milk and honey. God also mentioned that the land is the home land of different tribes.

I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey; to the place of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite (Exodus 3:8).

God reaffirmed the same promise to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ servant.

‘Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them’ (Joshua 1:6).

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE ‘PROMISED LAND’**

Zionists claim that God promised to Abraham to give the land (from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates) to his descendants forever. They construe this verse to claim that a large chunk of the Middle East belongs to the Jews today. They also claim that the covenant made by God to Abraham and to his descendants is unconditional that means God will give them the promised-land whatever they do. But we find in above mentioned verses that this covenant is not unconditional but conditional. If the people of Israel do not fulfil the terms and conditions of the covenants it would be broken and they will lose the inheritance of the promised-land.

But if you turn away from following me, you or your children, and not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but shall go and serve other gods, and worship them; then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have made holy for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all peoples. Though this house is so high, yet shall everyone who passes by it be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, ‘Why has Yahweh done thus to this land, and to this house?’ and they shall answer, ‘Because they forsook Yahweh their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold of other gods, and worshiped them, and served them. Therefore Yahweh has brought all this evil on them.’” (1 Kings 9:6-9).

When you disobey the covenant of Yahweh your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods, and bow down yourselves to them. Then the anger of Yahweh will be kindled against you, and you will perish quickly from off the good land which he has given to you.” (Joshua 23:16).

But if you turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them; then I will pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have made holy for my name, I will cast out of my sight, and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples. (Chronicles7:19-20).

But it shall come to pass, if you will not listen to the voice of Yahweh your God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command you this day, that all these curses shall come on you, and overtake you. You shall be cursed in the city, and you shall be cursed in the field (Deuteronomy 28:15-16).

You shall be plucked from off the land where you go in to possess it. Yahweh will scatter you among all peoples, from the one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth (Deuteronomy 28:63-64).

If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of
the land but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken it.” (Isaiah1:19-20)

The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever (Psalm 37:29)

DO THE JEWS FULFIL THE CONDITIONS OF THE COVENANT?

The above mentioned verses clearly show that the covenant was conditional and to gain the promised-land they had to fulfil some terms and conditions. First and foremost of them was to keep and follow the God’s commandments and statutes. The other was to follow the path of monotheism and not indulge in polytheism. But we see that every time and at every place they turned away and forsook the statutes and commandments of God which He has set before them. They rebelled against God. They were said not to serve other gods but they served other gods and worshiped them. They killed the prophets and committed awful blasphemies. They dealt proudly and sinned against the ordinances of God, turned their backs, stiffened their neck and did not listen. On the basis of their crime and attitudes God cursed them and scattered them. They were deprived of inheritance of the promised-land. (Ali, 1967).

“Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against you, and cast your law behind their back, and killed your prophets that testified against them to turn them again to you, and they committed awful blasphemies. Therefore you delivered them into the hand of their adversaries, who distressed them….. Yet they dealt proudly, and didn’t listen to your commandments, but sinned against your ordinances, (which if a man does, he shall live in them), turned their backs, stiffened their neck, and would not hear (Nehemiah9:26-29).

There are lot of instances in the Old Testament in which warnings and threats were given to Israelites in the form of death, destruction and desolation due to their disobedience.

In Ezekiel God presents the picture of their disobedience and the resultant punishment because of their rebellion against His ordinances and statutes (Iqbal, 2002).

Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: Because you are turbulent more than the nations that are around you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my ordinances, neither have done after the ordinances of the nations that are around you; therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh: Behold, I, even I, am against you; and I will execute judgments in the midst of you in the sight of the nations. I will do in you that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like, because of all your abominations…….Therefore as I live, says the Lord Yahweh, surely, because you have defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable things, and with all your abominations, therefore I will also diminish you…….A third part of you shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of you; and a third part shall fall by the sword around you; and a third part I will scatter to all the winds, and will draw out a sword after them.(Ezekiel 5:7-12)

Therefore tell them, thus says the Lord Yahweh: You eat with the blood, and lift up your eyes to your idols, and shed blood: and shall you possess the land? You stand on your sword, you work abomination, and every one of you defiles his neighbor’s wife: and shall you possess the land? (Ezekiel 33:25-26).

In Micah God described that because of their heinous crimes Zion become ploughed and Jerusalem turned into scrap heap.

They build up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity. Her leaders judge for bribes, and her priests teach for a price, and her prophets of it tell fortunes for money: yet they lean on Yahweh, and say, “Isn’t Yahweh in the midst of us? No disaster will come on us.” Therefore Zion for your sake will be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem will become heaps of rubble, and the mountain of the temple like the high places of a forest. (Micah 3:10-12).

God also said that if they do not change their attitude of disobedience and transgress against Him they will be forbidden to enter the land of Israel.

I will purge out from among you the rebels, and those who disobey against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they live, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and you shall know that I am Yahweh.(Ezekiel 20:38).

THE COVENANT OF GOD AND THE PROPHET OF ISMAEL

Zionist, on the basis of the Old Testament, claim that God established covenant with Abraham and his seed after him. Ismael also belongs to seed of Abraham (Genesis 21:13) but he was deprived of inheritance and the covenant was not established with Ismael rather with Isaac only. Even when Abraham made a covenant with God he had only one son Ismael. Isaac was not born that time. Circumcision was the token of covenant (Genesis 17:10) and first circumcised was made of Ismael.

When he finished talking with him, God went up from
Abraham. Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house, and all who were bought with his money; every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the same day, as God had said to him (Genesis17:22-23).

Zionist gave the reason of not establishing covenant with Ismael that he was the child of Abraham's concubine. But we see that Abraham had another wife named Keturah and also from her he had six children (Genesis 25:1-2) but according to the Bible established covenant did not belong to them (Genesis 25:5-6). There is also contradiction that Keturah was first described as wife of Abraham and later as concubine. (Ali, 1967).

Dr Alfred Guillaume, Professor of Old Testament studies at the University of London explains, “It is true that henceforth among the descendants of Isaac ‘the seed of Abraham’ was taken to mean the Israelites; but from the beginning it was not so and the descendants of Ishmael had every right to call and consider themselves of the seed of Abraham.” (Hadawi, 1967).

The exodus from the Egypt and the entry into the Promised-Land

The exodus from Egypt and miraculous escape of Israelites led by Moses has also become central to the foundational myths of Zionism. Today Zionists claim that Palestine is our promised land but that time they decided not to enter into Palestine and stayed away from that land. They wanted to return to Egypt because they were very frightened of people of that land. They were weeping then and now want to settle there.

The congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. All the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why does Yahweh bring us to this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will be a prey: wouldn't it be better for us to return into Egypt?” They said one to another, “Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.” (Number 14:1-5).

After seeing their attitudes and hearing their demand of a captain Yahweh became angered and the Israelites were being disinherit.

Yahweh said to Moses, “How long will this people despise me? and how long will they not believe in me, for all the signs which I have worked among them? I will strike them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.” (Numbers 14:11-12).

Moses prayed to Yahweh to pardon them. So He granted pardon, according to the Old Testament, but threatened that they would not be allowed to enter “the promised land”.

Surely they shall not see the land which I swore to their fathers neither shall any of those who despised me see it: (Number 14:23)

Israelites disobedience to enter the promised-land turned into forty years of wanderings in the desert. “But as for you, your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness. Your children shall be wanderers in the wilderness forty years, and shall bear your prostitution, until your dead bodies be consumed in the wilderness” (Number14:32-33).

They had seen the consequences of disobedience to Yahweh, but their attitudes never changed. They revolted against Moses. Consequently Yahweh again angered and decided to curse them.

Yahweh spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, “Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment!” (Number16:20-21). “And the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed them up”. (Number16:32). Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, “Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment. (Number16:44-45).

When God brought the people of Israel out of the Egypt, He commanded Moses to follow the path of monotheism.

“You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourselves an idol, nor any image of anything that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: you shall worship no other gods (Exodus 28:3-5).

Be careful, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be for a snare in the midst of you: but you shall break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars, and you shall cut down their Asherim; for you shall worship no other gods (Exodus 34:12-13).

Monotheism was not only the basis of commands of Moses but an essential qualification to be an heir of the Promised Land. But we see that at every place and at every time the people of Israel were seen in practicing polytheism and indulging in idolatry.

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves together to Aaron, and said to him, “Come, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we don't know what has become of him” (Exodus 32:1).

Yahweh spoke to Moses, “Go, get down; for your people,
who you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves! They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molten calf, and have worshiped it, and have sacrificed to it, and said, ‘These are your gods, Israel which brought you up out of the land of Egypt.’ Yahweh said to Moses, ‘I have seen these people, and behold, they are a stiff-necked people’ (Exodus 32:7-9).

When God brought the Children of Israel out of Egypt He commanded that “Be careful, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going”(Exodus 34:12) but they did not care of His command and made a covenant with them.

The angel of Yahweh came up from Gilgal to Bochim. He said, “I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you to the land which I swore to your fathers; and I said, ‘I will never break my covenant with you: and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.’ But you have not listened to my voice: why have you done this? (Judges2:1-2).

Israelites entered Canaan after the death of Moses, but they remained constant and rebelled against Yahweh.

“I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.” (Isaiah1:2)

Ah sinful nation, a people loaded with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken Yahweh. They have despised the Holy One of Israel. They are estranged and backward. Why should you be beaten more, that you revolt more and more? (Isaiah 1:4-5).

Does the promise still await fulfilment?

Zionists also claim that they have never occupied the entire promised-land so the promises are yet to be fulfilled. It is clear from history that Jews have never captured this land between the Nile and the Euphrates, but we find in many verses that under the leadership of Joshua the entire land was given to Jews and they were exiled from that land two times because of their disobedience and heinous crimes.

So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that Yahweh spoke to Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. The land had rest from war. (Joshua 11:23).

So Yahweh gave to Israel all the land which he swore to give to their fathers. They possessed it, and lived in it. Yahweh gave them rest all around, according to all that he swore to their fathers. Not a man of all their enemies stood before them. Yahweh delivered all their enemies into their hand. Nothing failed of any good thing which Yahweh had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass (Joshua 21:43-45).

Nehemiah also thanks God for the fulfilment of His promise. You are Yahweh, the God who Chose Abram...made a covenant with him...... and have performed your words; for you are righteous. (Nehemiah 9:7)

Professor Guillaume goes on to say, “The Jews did return to Judea, they did rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and they did rebuild the temple; and after fluctuating fortunes, they did secure a brief period of political independence and expansion under the Maccabees. Thus the prophecies of the return have been fulfilled and they cannot be fulfilled again.” (Hadawi, 1967).

God promised to give the land to Abraham but he was not the real owner of the land. He had to buy some part of the land from Ephron to bury Sarah (Genesis 23:16) and Jews were also tenants of the land (Leviticus 25:30). The promise was also made to the heirs of Abraham and Ismael also belongs to seed of Abraham (Genesis 21:23); so in real sense the descendants of Ismael are the legitimate heirs of Abraham.

“Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim…..verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Abraham are those who followed him, and this prophet (Muhammad SAW) and those who have believed...."(Al-Quran 3:67-68)

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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