

Israel's Only Choice: To Be the Chosen Land

In the face of Arab hostility and American ennui with Israel, the founder of the Jewish Defense League urges Jews to become Jewish again, recognizing by faith and deeds that they are the chosen people.

By Rabbi Meir Kahane

From Jerusalem, the capital of the chosen land, I find it essential to reply to the article by Mark Bruzonsky, "Posing Difficult Choices for the Chosen Land." The article is yet another shot in the war launched by dovish Jews who—for various reasons—would have Israel commit suicide before it is murdered by U.S. enforced solutions. The pity is that a man who uses the phrase "chosen land" does not really believe in it or the even more important ancillary concept, "the chosen people." For it is these two concepts that are at the heart of the problem and solution, and neither Mr. Bruzonsky nor the Israeli government that he differs with understand the authentic Jewish answer to what is happening in the Mideast, and what will be tomorrow.

To begin with, let us be very clear. There are no Arab states or leaders who are "moderates." To be sure, there are some who—knowing that the United States is their best hope to force Israeli retreat—are clever about what they say. But the ultimate fact remains that the same states which possessed all the land in 1967 they now say they want back before peace is possible went to war then. Why? What did Egypt, which had the Sinai and Gaza, want in 1967? What did Syria, which ruled the Golan Heights, want then? What did the "moderate" Hussein of Jordan, sovereign over the West Bank and East Jerusalem, want when he attacked Israel in June, 1967?

Of course, they all wanted then what they want now—the elimination of any Jewish state, of any size, which they see as a foreign body in an Arab Mideast. That which is happening today in Lebanon would be the lot of the Jewish people should they be mad enough to make the insane—not "difficult"—choice that Jewish doves suggest.

The Arabs believe that the Jews are thieves. They believed it in 1947 when they rejected a United Nations plan that would have created a tiny, grotesque Jewish state that already had in it some 40 per cent Arabs. They believed it when they staged three years of riots from 1936-1938 and murdered some 500 Jews in the process, before there was any glimmering of a

Rabbi Meir Kahane founded the Jewish Defense League in 1968. Since 1973, aside from a jail term in the United States last year, he has made his home in Israel.

Jewish state. They believed it when they slaughtered 69 Jews in the City of Patriarchs, Hebron, in August, 1929. They are not only seeking Hebron, Shechem and Bethlehem that were part of the pre-1967 lands; they seek, too, Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem. They seek to eliminate an "Israel" and replace it with a "Palestine."

The choice facing Israel is not between concessions and peace versus standing firm and war. The choice, to my sad regret (as I live with my family in Israel and serve in its army) is between war near the Arab heartland and war near the Jewish one. I prefer the former.

Any agreement on the part of Arab leaders to make peace with Israel in return for total retreat (as advocated by Mr. Bruzonsky), would be an irrevocable exchange of tangibility for a scrap of paper that would not survive its Arab signer and who, in turn, would very likely not survive it. A "Palestine" state, such as advocated by Jewish doves, would stand next to an Israel that would revert to a coastal strip, barely 15 miles wide at its most populated point—Tel-Aviv-Netanya. SAM missiles legally placed in that "Palestine" state would cover the entire air corridor over Israel, menacing the flight of every plane and neutralizing Israel's air force. Soviet troops and advisers called in by the new "Palestine" government would face Israel in a confrontation that the United States would not interfere with.

For the United States is growing tired of Israel. It looks to what it perceives to be its own "interests," and morality is not one of them. Oil, business con-



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tracts and investments and, above all, a revulsion against any more foreign "adventures" are the realities of American policy today. Nothing that Israel does will make America move to jeopardize its interests in the Arab states as defined by the State Department. Nothing will make it continue to give huge amounts of economic aid to Israel at a time when American domestic problems will grow worse, not better. Israeli surrender to the Rogers Plan—which is both American policy and that of Mr. Bruzonsky—will only whet the Arab appetite which sees in every Jewish concession not goodness and moderation, but weakness.

What, then, is the solution? If the Arabs will never make peace with Israel, and the world is tired of, if not hostile, to it, what hope is there?

There is the hope that Mr. Bruzonsky, and all the Jews who have become so gentrified in their thoughts and concepts, will become Jewish again; that they will know that the events in Jewish history, past, present and future, are not things of chance; that there is a G-d; that there is a Creator who made all and directs all, who is the G-d of history; that the history of the Jewish people is a directed one and the rise of the Jewish state is not the story of one more Ghana, or

one more Sweden or one more Bulgaria; that the survival of the Jewish people who wandered from country to country suffering Aushwitzes great and small, only to return to its home exactly as predicted by the prophets, is not mere chance; that the rise of an independent Jewish state, again exactly as envisioned in the Bible, is not an accident; that the ingathering of exiles from the four corners of the earth as dreamed by the Jewish seers is not blind fate. The incredible victories of the Jews, few in numbers and weapons, over the many Arabs—in miraculously swift wars—were precisely that. Miracles.

For Mr. Bruzonsky is absolutely correct when he speaks of the "chosen," though to him it is merely a pertinent phrase. But the Jews are the chosen people, chosen to create a chosen state in a chosen land. And that land is the land of Israel, and there is no "Palestine" or "Palestine people." What there is a section of the Arab nation, and that I recognize fully. But from the day that the Jew was driven into exile by the Romans, he ever ceased to pray for Zion, for the chosen land of Israel. Not once did he give it up, not once did he waive his rights to every inch of it. Many trespassers came—Byzantine, Crusader, Turk, Arab. They remained nothing more than trespassers. And just as there is no Byzantium in Israel, or Crusaderland or Turkey, neither is there a "Palestine."

The State of Israel is the hand of G-d, His determination to put an end to both His and the Jewish people's humiliation, which was the very essence of the exile. For each time that the Jew was beaten, spat upon, degraded, burned and gassed to death, what the gentile was doing, in effect, was to both kill the Jew and mock him by asking: "Where is your G-d?" The exile is humiliation, it is the desecration of the Jewish G-d. The redemption of the Jewish people has begun and the rise of the State of Israel heralds it. The exile and its humiliation is ending and the Jewish state with its government, returning people and armies that now control the holy places—the churches that tortured and killed Jews even as they explained that this was Heaven's punishment of them—are the very opposite of that desecration that was the lot of the Jew for 20 centuries. The Jewish state is the proof of G-d, His sanctification.

And, as such, it can never fail. All the believers in realpolitik, and all who face Washington each day and say: "I raise mine eyes unto the administration, from Ford shall come my salvation . . ." are the real mystics and irrational believers in perfidious politicians. Not from Washington will come the redemption, but rather from a return to the recognition who we Jews really are: the chosen people, chosen to follow the Jewish Law, chosen to rise to holiness and to create a truly Jewish state.

What is the answer? The Jew always worked in two parallel ways. One, faith and trust in the Almighty, and readiness to do that which He demands: a return to the laws and tradition and a refusal to return one inch of the chosen land because there is a Biblical prohibition against giving it up and making it "unchosen."

And then, with this faith, deeds: unlimited settlement for Jews in every part of their land of Israel; return of the liberated lands (Judea, Samaria, Gaza and the Golan) to the sovereignty of the State of Israel; a call to the Jewish people to leave the exile and return home to settle every corner of the Jewish homeland and to escape the inevitable holocaust that must come outside the land; giving the Arabs in Israel the choice of accepting Jewish sovereignty over the land, or leaving the country lest it turn into another Northern Ireland or Cyprus; expansion of the nuclear potential and deterrent, for Mr. Bruzonsky must surely know that Quaddafi, Asad and the rest are not waiting for Jews to be "the first" and will not honor the moderation of Israel.

I propose that Jews decide to become Jewish once again. It is surely time to put an end to the tragic fact that the Jews wrote the Bible, but Jimmy Carter reads it. Let Jews know what being chosen is like. With it will come the faith to make the Jewish choice of standing firm and crying: Not one inch.

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Kahane Adamant

From Israel, Rabbi Meir Kahane replies to Jews and others who advocate a negotiated peace with the Arab states. Kahane, founder of the Jewish Defense League, takes as his particular target a recent viewpoints commentary by Mark Bruzonsky, a consultant on Mideast affairs. Kahane's answer to proposals for compromising Israel's borders: "Not one inch." Page 57.

