

chosen sets higher standards and requires harder work.

At the time of G-d's biblical choosing of the Jews, Abraham represented us. We understand Abraham's new obligations to be lovingkindness, hospitality and justice. But let's remember that Abraham was a flawed character who made mistakes, whom G-d tested with tribulations, and who had to struggle to maintain his special relationship to G-d.

Certainly, modern Jewish people, for all their blessings, have struggled to rectify their human flaws, have suffered through adversity . . . and to this day strive to be worthy of G-d's favor.

Without a doubt, the Jewish people have accomplished greatness. Members of this tiny group, representing only 2/10 of a percent (0.02%) of the world's population, have won 23% of all Nobel Prizes, are 21% of all Ivy League students, have won 51% of Pulitzer Prizes for non-fiction and account for 31% of all Academy Award directors.

Clearly, G-d was not on the committees that chose such Jewish stars. Each of these super-achievers did it themselves. Jews may have been blessed by G-d—*chosen* by G-d—but Jewish accomplishment and Jewish survival comes from a spiritual well-spring within Jews as individuals and as a people.

As for the land of Israel, in the Bible's first book, Genesis (ברשית in the Torah), G-d appeared to Abraham in Shechem—then in the land of Canaan, today a city in Judea-Samaria—and said, “to your seed I will give this land.”

Famously, also in Genesis, G-d said,

“And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great and you will be a blessing.

“And I will bless them who bless you, and he who curses you I will curse, and in you will all the families of the earth be blessed.”

This biblical message certainly confirms the idea that God “chose” the land of Israel for the Jews. But in Abraham's time, this divine utterance gave only notional credence to Jewish claims to the Promised Land.

Then came 4,000 years of history—in which the Jews conquered the land from the now extinct Canaanites, formed kingdoms, starting with the Kingdom of Saul in 1,025 BCE, and continued living on these lands for 3,000 more years until the present day, despite being conquered and exiled and returning over and over again.

Just as important, in all the thousands of years in which Jews were dispersed throughout African, Arab, European and American lands, they never forgot their heritage in the Holy Land—and they never gave up the hope and determination to return to it.

For thousands of years, exiled Jews have yearned to return to their homeland—no wonder millions of Jews in the Diaspora conclude every Passover Seder with the prayer: “*Next year in Jerusalem!*”

So G-d encouraged Abraham to make a home in the Promised Land, which the

editorial hasbarah messages placed in media nationwide every month: The dire threats from Iran, Hamas and Hizbollah, the injustice of BDS, Palestinian anti-Semitism and more. If you support a bold voice that tells the truth about Israel in American media, please donate now.

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Jews then did—creating a nation state 3,000 years ago. Tens of thousands of Jews remained in this land, despite many efforts to drive them out. Then, in the 19th century, hundreds of thousands of Jews began returning to this land, to reclaim it.

Finally, in 1948, the Jews again achieved critical impetus in the Holy Land, mustering the political, economic and military strength to *recreate* their nation state—the State of Israel.

While Israel is a postage-stamp sized country—about the same area as New Jersey, just 1/800 of the total Middle East land mass, its accomplishments in just 72 years are legion. Since its founding 1948, when Israel was at best at second-world country, it has become one of the strongest military forces on earth and, judging by economics, politics, technology, culture and armaments, the eighth most powerful country on earth.

While G-d's blessing may have assisted the Jewish people in their determination to survive persecution and return to their homeland after thousands of years of exile, we can easily argue that it was Jews themselves that made this happen.

One final word on Jewish chosenness: Many reject Jewish chosenness because it seems exclusive or divisive. But this should not be the case. While Jews are a people—with distinct religious and cultural attributes—they are not a race.

Anyone who wants can become a Jew—anyone can convert to Judaism. If you want G-d's blessing—if you want to be among the “chosen people”—you can simply choose to join us. Welcome aboard. Just talk to your local rabbi for instructions.

It clearly annoys some anti-Zionists and Jew-haters that G-d “chose” the Jews and “gave” them Holy Land. But I hope as you discuss the “Chosen People”—with friends, family, colleagues and in letters to the editor—you'll note that while G-d's blessing has no doubt strengthened the Jewish people, their accomplishments have been won through determination and hard work.

I hope you'll also take a minute, while you have this material front and center, to visit FLAME's lively [Facebook page](#) and review the P.S. immediately below. It describes FLAME's new *hasbarah* campaign—which provides powerful arguments for maintaining strong sanctions against our enemy, Iran.

Best regards,

Jim Sinkinson

President, Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. Some leftist European and American politicians have recently proposed easing sanctions on Iran as a humanitarian gesture in the face of Covid-19's devastating attack on the Islamic Republic. However, this would be an egregious mistake, just as tough U.S. sanctions are pressuring Iran to back off its imperialistic adventures across the Middle East—especially since U.S. sanctions do not restrict Iran from acquiring humanitarian medical supplies. That's why FLAME has created a new *hasbarah* message called “[Keep the Pressure on Iran](#)” I hope you'll review this convincing, fact-based paid editorial, which ran in the

Sunday *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. It lays out the many dangers that Iran poses to the U.S., Israel and our other allies in the region and spells out why in fact we should consider *increasing* sanctions on Iran. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, Vice President Pence and President Trump. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to support us. Remember: FLAME's powerful ability to influence public opinion—and U.S. support of Israel—comes from individuals like you, one by one. I hope you'll consider [giving a donation now](#), as you're able—with \$500, \$250, \$100, or even \$18. (Remember, your donation to FLAME is tax deductible.) To donate online, just go to [donate](#) now. Now, more than ever, we need your support to ensure that the American people, the U.S. Congress and President Trump stay committed to realistic policies in relation to Israel, Iran and the entire Middle East.

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Facts and Logic
About the Middle East
PO Box 3460
Berkeley, CA 94703

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