

PROPHETIC TRUTHS FOR TODAY

Unveiling the End-Time Events

by

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE JEWISH NATION AT THE END-TIME

IN OUR previous presentation an abridged survey was made of Israel's historical past, including its origin, and the Old Testament period down to the nation's rejection of the Messiah. We also gave glimpses of the Hebrew people from the time of Jerusalem's destruction, along with the long historical record of their dispersion. We followed that survey until we reached our own time when a completely new situation has come with regard to that nation.

In fact, recent developments may be reconciled with the "**budding of the fig tree**" to which Christ made a significant reference in His Olivet discourse. In other words, our last discussion involved the preliminary stages of Israel's rise in the end-times. Let us now proceed and discuss the regathering of Abraham's descendants following nearly two millenniums of Dispersion.

This extraordinary turn of events has not come about through some historical accident, or strange coincidence, but rather has taken place entirely through the trustworthiness of God and His prophetic Word.

In the opening verse of Genesis 12, we read, "**The Lord had said . . .**"

The correct answer as to the reason for the amazing events which have transpired in our time obviously is the hand of God directing these developments. Not to believe in these events as being providentially arranged would force us to accept magic as the explanation of the unusual changes taking place with regard to Israel in recent decades.

These events are unparalleled in scope, especially as they directly concern God's ancient people.

It is my firm conviction; however, that the most significant developments relative to the Jewish nation during the end-time will take place mainly *after the Church is raptured*. What we now witness is simply the stage being set for the final dramatic events which will take place in Israel's land immediately following the Church Age.

These preliminary considerations should be weighed carefully by all who desire to have a deeper understanding of the prophetic Word.

GOD'S DECREES ARE CERTAIN

It is well to remember that God gave his nation the title deed to this land as an everlasting possession. The chastisement of His people because of their unbelief and rejection of their Messiah could not possibly rescind the unconditional pledge which God gave this nation long ago.

At Bethel God gave Abraham for his possession the land from “**the river of Egypt unto the great river, the mighty Euphrates**” (Genesis 15:18). This included a territory of 300,000 square miles, and not merely the 12,000 squares which the people actually occupied, which was called Canaan. The setting aside of His people is limited, or temporary, and will continue only “**until the times of the gentiles be fulfilled**” (Luke 21:24). God decreed, or destined, the nation to become the head and not the tail of nations. Let us keep before us the promise, “**In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed**” (Genesis 12:3). This is an unconditional declaration and it is as certain as the immutability of God Himself; in fact, it is irrevocable.

This arrangement is unquestionably the most significant land grant of all time. As a historian, I have been confronted with a large number of unusual land grants, but this one eventually guarantees Israel an abode from which the nation cannot be permanently dispossessed. Moreover, this covenant of God serves as a foundation of all prophecy, and it possesses a validity, I think, which is as abiding as the promises of God. This covenant promises:

- The restoration of Israel to her land;
- The placement of a king upon David's throne;
- The establishment of an earthly kingdom of peace, prosperity and righteousness.

In the opening chapter in Acts we find the prediction that the kingdom will be restored (Acts 1:6) upon the land God promised to their fathers (See Romans 11: 29; Jeremiah 31:35-37; 32:40; 33:21). To spiritualize such massive promises is nothing less than *sheer recklessness* and it is inexcusable; yet this is exactly what some people are doing with reference to God's earthly covenants with Israel.

A NEW DAY HAS DAWNED

Throughout the period of the Zionist movement, the Balfour declaration, and the many subsequent events, especially the unprecedented migration of the Jews to their homeland, Palestine has become a great phenomenon of history.

At the opening of this century there were only 20,000 Jews in all the land, including approximately 5,000 in the Jerusalem area. The last records indicate that there are now over 2,100,000 in the land and they have come from nearly every geographical direction. The records kept there reveal that the Jews have come to the land from at least 72 nations.

Dr. Daniel Poling, Editor of *The Christian Herald*, and one of the widest known Protestant ministers of our time, has this to say regarding the matter in an article entitled “Israel . . . Miracle of our Time.” Kindly ponder his fine statement:

“I am a prenatal Zionist. I got it from my mother’s womb and breast. She read and believed in the prophets, and who can disbelieve them now? But today faith in the new Israel must be an achievement as well as an inheritance. The return of the Jew to his ancient homeland is the most sublime vindication of God’s purpose in man that human history has recorded in two thousand years. What the return has already demonstrated, both in physical and cultural achievements, and in the revival of an ancient religion, is already the miracle of our time.”

His statement is particularly significant as very few, if any, have taken as many trips to the Holy land as he has during the past 15 years.

THE LAND REJUVENATED

The prophet says, “**The wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose**” (Isaiah 35:1).

While this great promise has reference mainly to the golden age (the kingdom era), yet we see now a preliminary fulfillment in our time. A few years ago my wife and I had the privilege of touring the Bible lands. As expected, in the Arab belt of nations, life was completely static except for a few key places.

From Damascus to Jerusalem, a distance of some 200 miles, on the treeless plains, we saw scattered Bedouins living in tents and eking out a bare existence on the barren fields. Even Ammon, the capital, was a miserable city. And the old city of Jerusalem, which lies in Arab-controlled territory, had very little of modern innovations. But as we left the old city and entered into Israel, it was like coming from a musty room into the bright sunlight. People greeted us with the characteristic expression “Shalom” which is a peaceful wish or greeting. But there is very little of peace and tranquility as the Arabs have an intense hatred for the Jews.

The area is walled off separating the two states, and barbed-wire entanglements serve as barriers. Armed soldiers stand guard at both sides of the Mandelbaum gate at which point tourists are permitted to leave and cross over to the other side.

A total boycott of Israel has been in force ever since the Palestinian war. It was the hope that the state of Israel would fail and wilt away for lack of economic necessities. This has not occurred, however. A new city, entirely modern, has been built by the Jews outside the old walls of Jerusalem. In the new Jerusalem you see many modern structures, as e.g., King David’s hotel, the Y.M.C.A. and many other well designed buildings.

There is in Israel also a uniformity in language and culture. Hebrew is the official language of the land. A new university is built with the structural material taken from the nearby quarries. You also see astonishing irrigation projects. For long centuries nothing but a desert and waste places characterized Palestine. Now you see great orange groves, olive orchards and vineyards which match the best in California. Even the swampy area of Esdraelon has been drained and now it constitutes one of the finest agricultural spots in all of the Middle East.

The whole triangle was purchased a few decades ago from the Arabs for 450 dollars since it was to them only a malaria-infested swamp.

Haifa has been dredged to accommodate regular ocean going vessels. Ships from countries in all parts of the world may be spotted in Haifa's harbor. It is one of the most flourishing harbors in the eastern Mediterranean.

Tel-Aviv, which did not even exist four decades ago, has been built on the sand dunes adjacent to the Mediterranean, and is a modern all-Jewish city of over 300,000 inhabitants. We took an Israeli plane from its airport to Rome. During the time we were in Israel dedication ceremonies were held celebrating the change of the flow of the waters in the Yarkon River to the direction of the Negev desert in the South. The water was being taken through a 66-inch pipe line.

Other irrigation projects were visible in many places. Another project by means of which it is hoped to tap the waters of the Jordan River, near the Sea of Galilee, is nearly completed. But the fierce opposition by the United Arab Republic has prevented the actual tapping of the Jordan.

Roads throughout Israel are lined with trees, especially the hardy cypress. They serve a dual purpose, namely furnishing shade and concealing military movements. Many millions of trees have been planted in recent decades. With the total absence of rain during the long summer period and early fall, one wonders how these trees are able to grow as they do.

At the Yarkon celebration ceremonies to which I just alluded, the principal leaders of Israel participated, including such well known figures as President Benjamin Zwi, David Ben Gurion and Moshe Sharett. Averill Harriman, then governor of New York State, also was present since he represented the place of the greatest concentration of Jews in the world.

All of the speakers chose texts from the Old Testament Scriptures in which the prophets envisioned a future glory of the nation. Harriman selected the text, "**With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation**" (Isaiah 12:3). The textual setting is pointing, of course, to the future restoration and kingdom glory, of which perhaps the governor may have had no awareness. But this moment in Israel was particularly interesting to me who for years has been a student of prophecy.

JEWS RETURNED IN UNBELIEF

One of the most distressing facts in conjunction with the return of the Jews to Palestine and the rejuvenation of the land is the persistence of their unbelief and their rejection of the Messiah, who came to the nation 1900 years ago.

From the best evidence we could obtain there are less than 5,000 true believers in all the land.

The Israeli government is not particularly tolerant of any missionary attempts to convert the Jews to Christianity. In other respects, however, as e.g., cultural activities and archeological research projects, outsiders have received encouragement.

It is still painfully true as Paul states it, “**Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in**” (Romans 11:25). This historical blindness is giving way slowly, but there is some slight change in that regard. One of the outstanding Jewish religious leaders was perhaps the late Rabbi Wise, who said before he died that Jesus Christ was the greatest person who has emerged out of their race.

Some years ago, when I was pastor in Michigan, I invited the several Jewish families in our city to come to hear a series of lectures which I gave on the Jewish nation in prophecy. Several of these families came, and they manifested a deep interest in that which I had to say. While they were reluctant in accepting Christ, they did indicate a willingness to rethink the matter.

I have observed that there is not quite the calloused rejection of Christ by them as in earlier years.

Occasionally I meet with Jews and Christians who seek to understand each other’s point of view.

But the long historical blindness of the Jews with respect to their Messiah will not give way until the time when Jesus Christ descends from on high and sets His feet on the Mount of Olives, which is predicted in Zechariah 14:4.

This prediction harmonizes with Paul’s statement, “**All Israel shall be saved.**” The true remnant will then accept the long rejected Messiah when He confronts them openly on the holy mount in the concluding moments of the Great Tribulation. There will be a joyous reconciliation between Christ and His brethren, as it was *typified*, I think, when Joseph revealed himself the second time to his brethren in the flesh. He forgave them for all the evil they had done to him, and they were given Goshen, the choicest place in the land.

Christ, a greater Joseph, will achieve this recognition, when He reveals Himself the second time to His nation. Zechariah, chapters 13 and 14, depicts graphically this coming restoration of Israel, and their acceptance of the Messiah.

In the New Testament Paul verifies this very well in this statement, referring to his conversion as “**one born out of due time**” (I Corinthians 15:8). Unquestionably he had reference to his own conversion as typical of the conversion of his nation in the end-time. Paul was converted ahead of time, as it were, and his conversion was unique in that he was not brought to Christ through the preaching of the Gospel, but rather by the personal revelation of the glorified and ascended Son of God. In like manner the true remnant will be converted quickly as they see Christ in person coming to establish His messianic kingdom. Let us not forget so long as the church is here, we as Christians need always to witness to unbelieving Jews. God’s injunction is still valid, “**to the Jew first.**”

CONCLUDING LESSONS

The amazing verification of prophecy which we have witnessed not only by the events of history, but also by the signs of the times in recent years as they concern Israel, should, I think cause three things to stand out in particular:

First. *in watching the Jew we might tremble.*

When the nation Israel, which was called out by God for a specific mission, failed so utterly despite possession of the oracles of God, the voices of the prophets, and the personal appearance of their Messiah, what must happen to the Gentiles, who have had 1900 years of grace in this Gospel age? It is enough to cause one to tremble.

Historically we have seen verified the statement God gave to Abraham, “**I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee**” (Genesis 12:3). The over whelming defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945, and its division and humiliation, serves as a good modern verification of God’s irrevocable decree.

Dr. Ley, who headed the massive German labor front battalions in the war, before committing suicide, left a testament to the German people, the key statement of which comes in these words, “*God abandoned us because we abandoned Him.*” The Nuremburg trials, and the subsequent execution of the Nazi leaders who were committed to the liquidation of all the Jews, serve I think, to sober men today regarding the immensity of God’s retributive judgments.

Secondly, *we might well watch the Jew and believe.*

How can one fail to accept the full inspiration of the Scriptures when the Word has been so wonderfully fulfilled and vindicated in its dealings with the nation Israel? Fulfilled Bible prophecies, especially as they pertain to Israel, are imposing monuments of the reliability of the Holy Scriptures.

Thirdly, in view of all we have seen, *we ought to rejoice that a new day is about to dawn for these people* who have failed over so many centuries and who have suffered so much in the course of history.

Jesus stated it very significantly in the words, “**When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh**” (Luke 21:28). Indeed, “**The star will rise out of Jacob and the scepter out of Israel.**” He will yet “**graft them into their own olive tree.**” The Jew will yet dwell under his own vine and fig tree.

Moreover, “The lion “**will lie down with the lamb,**” and men shall “**take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew saying, we will go with thee, for we have heard that thou hast found the Lord.**” Beyond the final tribulation is the kingdom, when the whole earth will be baptized with the glory of God.

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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