

PROPHETIC TRUTHS FOR TODAY

Unveiling the End-Time Events

by

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE JEWISH NATION - GOD'S CLOCK OF PROPHECY

(Genesis 12:1-3; Matthew 24:9; Luke 21:24)

BEFORE THE curtain falls bringing the present world order to a close, we have the *Jewish nation to consider as God's infallible clock*. The inescapable fact of history is the Jew.

His is a record of both tragedy and glory. No other race has been able to assimilate him. He has outlived the Egyptian Pharaohs, the Roman Caesars and the Russian Tsars. The Jew has survived the persecutions of the millenniums. Someone has aptly said the Jew is both waterproof and fireproof. The crossing of the Red Sea and of Jordan indicates the waters were no permanent barrier, and the furnace into which the three Jews were cast, in Daniel's time, did not singe even the hair of these courageous lads. Indeed, this race has survived the historical storms of persecution.

THE HISTORY OF THIS RACE

The Scriptures have revealed clearly that Jewish history began with Abraham. In Genesis 12 we find the account of the call of Abraham from Ur in far-off Chaldea. God began with a special family. **"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed"** (Genesis 12:3).

A few generations later God called forth a special nation and designated Moses to be the leader of the Hebrews who were brought out from the Egyptian bondage.

The birthday of that nation came during the night when the Hebrews left Egypt for their great adventure of faith. Ultimately they were deposited as twelve distinct tribes in Canaan. Under Joshua the land was possessed and the enemies subdued. Subsequently an arrangement was made whereby the people were ruled over by a number of Judges.

These 400 years are usually designated as *the period of the Theocracy*.

Since most of the judges did not provide justice for the people, the desire for a king was expressed. This demand grieved Samuel, the prophet, but God told him to conform to the people's expressed wish.

The kingdom period followed during which time *all the tribes were united*. It lasted for 120 years. Saul, David, and Solomon ruled over the entire land. But in the reign of Solomon's son, Rehoboam, *the kingdom divided*, and a dual situation developed, with the 10 tribes forming the northern kingdom, while Judah and Benjamin continued as the southern kingdom. Later, through apostasy, the Northern Kingdom fell to the Assyrians.

Following Israel's captivity, over 150 years later, Judah experienced the 70 years of the Babylonian captivity. At the end of that captivity a remnant returned, approximately 42,500, together with several thousand servants. The temple, which was destroyed by the Babylonians, known as Solomon's temple, was replaced with the temple of Zerubbabel. Ezra, Nehemiah and Zerubbabel did heroic work in reestablishing the Jews following the captivity. The city and the walls were rebuilt. The Jews exercised semi-sovereignty, and religious worship and distinct Jewish traditions were preserved.

In the period prior to the Christian era the Jews suffered under cruel tyrants, but we will not go into the period of the Maccabees, and the sufferings under Antiochus Epiphanes.

At the opening of the Christian era, the Romans were in control over the entire land. Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem while Herod, the local Roman functionary, held jurisdiction over the area. Jewish religious, cultural, and other national traditions also were allowed under the Roman rule. The third Temple, known as Herod's Temple, was built shortly before the Christian era began, and it was the center of the Jewish religious life until its destruction by the Romans which took place in the year 70 A.D.

Jesus Christ came to earth through this chosen channel, that is, the Jewish nation. The Virgin Mary became the mother of the Son of God. He was the true descendant of David and for 33 years Jesus Christ lived within the small boundaries of the Holy Land. John writes, "**He came to his own, but his own received him not . . .**" (John 1:12). The leaders of Jewry refused to accept His Messianic claims, and after a series of conflicts with His teachings, they rejected and crucified the Lord.

In the famous *Olivet discourse* Christ gave a preview of Jewish history from the time of His rejection to His future return to earth. He envisioned the destruction of Jerusalem with its magnificent temple, and along with this tragedy, He predicted the dispersion of the Jews. The awful prayer of the Jewish leaders, "**His blood be upon us and our children**" (Matthew 27:25) was literally fulfilled in the centuries which followed.

The rejection of Christ wrenched the Jewish nation out of a direct ongoing relationship with God. Christ alluded to this disengagement in His words, "**Behold, your house is left unto you desolate**" (Matthew 23:38). In other words, the Messianic kingdom cannot come until there is a rebirth of that nation. This will eventually come when the feet of Jesus Christ will touch the Mount of Olives, after the judgment of the forces of Antichrist has come. It is then the true remnant will receive their Messiah whom they have rejected during this long period known as "**The Times of the Gentiles.**"

This quick resume of Jewish history from its beginning to the destruction of Jerusalem has been attempted in order that we may appreciate *the wholeness of God's covenant relationship with this race*.

In Paul's magnificent document, the Epistle to the Romans, the apostle makes it clear (in chapters 9-11) that the setting aside of the nation was *not a permanent thing*. Paul exclaims: **"Has God cast away his people? God forbid"** (Romans 11:1).

Even Old Testament predictions pointed to such a time of extreme suffering for the Jews. **"Among the nations thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot find any rest . . . In the morning thou shalt say, would God that it were even! At even thou shalt say, would God that it were morning"** (Deuteronomy 28: 65, 67).

Another historical expression of derision of the Jews is stated in the same book, **"Thou shalt become a byword among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee"** (Deuteronomy 27:37). This, too, has been fulfilled literally.

FROM JERUSALEM'S DESTRUCTION TO 1900

Following the destruction of Jerusalem, the scattering of the Jews became the amazing phenomenon of history. For more than 1200 years the land was occupied mainly by the cruel Turks. This led to the great Crusades of the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries, when the Christian nations tried to wrench the sacred places from the hands of the Turks. Largely, it may be said, these costly expeditions failed, and the Turks continued to possess the land.

Wave upon wave of persecutions struck the Jewish settlements in many areas of Europe during the medieval period.

In the year 1492 the Jews were ordered out of Spain. Several hundred thousand went to Portugal, and later that nation expelled them. Thousands were loaded on board vessels whose hulks were rotten and large numbers perished at sea. Easter week was celebrated in England, in 1264, by putting 500 Jews to death. In Germany at approximately the same period 140 Jewish communities were wiped out and 100,000 Jews were roasted alive. One pope issued a decree that each Jew had to carry a badge of shame.

Other persecutions were launched in later centuries, and the suffering of Jews in Eastern Europe is a record of tragedy that is unmatched. The final chapter came when Hitler and his Nazi cohorts liquidated 6,000,000, the greatest mass-murder of Jewish people in all of history. The continent of Europe has been reddened with Jewish blood. Even so enlightened a leader as Bismarck arranged to segregate the Jews as aliens.

For the past 700 years it is particularly true that the Jews have been the wanderers of earth and often regarded as vagabonds. The term often used, *"the wandering Jew,"* is historically correct. They also have been called money changers and international gypsies, even parasites.

The brightest period perhaps in history for the Jews was the decades immediately before the outbreak of World War I. Economically, politically, and in most respects the Jews, while living as segments among Gentiles, nevertheless were successful for the most part. No indications were visible that a mass migration to their ancient homeland was imminent.

A NEW DAY HAS DAWNED

Many people who had *no capacity to believe prophetic predictions attempted to spiritualize the Biblical promises which pointed to a completely new day for the descendants of Abraham.*

Nothing could have been more unrealistic because recent decades have served to verify many of the Old Testament predictions pointing to the return of the Jews to their ancient homeland.

God promised through His prophets that He would bring about a restoration of the Jews. Ezekiel, Chapter 37, gives a vivid account of God's future restoration of His people. The chapter graphically depicts *the dead bones in the valley*. The interpretation also is given: "**These bones are the whole house of Israel;**" the graves are the Gentile nations among which the descendants of Abraham have been buried for nearly two millenniums. In verse 7 it is stated "**There was a noise in the valley.**"

For the first time since the scattering of the Jews, nearly 1900 years ago, a historical turn came with the publishing of a book by Theodore Herzl in 1895, entitled *Der Judenstaat*. It was a clarion call from a great Jew to his scattered kinsmen to get together. He did not at the time particularly specify a return to Palestine, but "getting together" was his slogan.

This call by Herzl may be said to be the "**noise**" which the prophet mentioned in his prediction pertaining to the Jews during the end-time. The voice of Herzl was heard around the world. It was heard and recognized by thinking people. The prophet goes on to say, "**There was a shaking and the bones came together**" (Ezekiel 37:7).

In 1897 the first Zionist Congress was held in Switzerland. This, you see, went a step beyond Herzl's original call to the Jews to get together.

At this Congress a national restoration became the objective. Leaders of Jewry began to promote a return of the Jews to their ancient homeland. Since most of the Jews had reasonable economic success and security within the Gentile nations in which they were living, there was not very much of an incentive for Jews to return to Palestine before the First World War, that is, before 1914.

The new day dawned in the midst of World War I for the Jews. England, being hard pressed for a need in the production of explosives on a much greater volume, turned to the Jewish scientist by the name Chaim Weizmann for help. He succeeded beyond expectation and contributed much to Britain's victory in the war. This led Lord Arthur Balfour to issue the famous Balfour Paper in which the scattered and hard-pressed Jews were promised a homeland in ancient Palestine.

This was all that Chaim Weizmann asked for when Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, offered a reward to him for his scientific breakthrough in the way of expanding the volume of explosives.

Under the League of Nations, which was created after World War I was concluded, Britain was given Palestine as a mandate, and exercised jurisdiction there under the direct sanction of the League. This was logical, for in the year 1917 Lord Allenby, a Christian general, led a British force into Jerusalem. Not a shot was fired, for the city was considered sacred by both Mohammedans and Christians. It was completely proper for this general to take the city as he was a believer in prophecy and in God's purposes concerning the Jews.

Following the First World War and up to the time of the close of World War II, Britain had a knotty problem in policing the land. The Arabs were increasingly disturbed as larger contingents of Jews entered the Holy Land each month. The extraordinary sufferings of Jews throughout Europe during Hitler's mad rampage made it imperative for surviving elements that were expelled from most areas there, to seek relocation. Palestine was the land to which they turned in those days when only ghettos and certain death awaited them if they remained on the continent.

With the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, which superseded the defunct League of Nations, Britain still was assigned the responsibility of maintaining order and peace in the land of Palestine. But Britain was vigorously opposed by both Jews and Arabs in the land. The Jews felt Britain had double-crossed them by limiting the number of persecuted and homeless Jews from entering the land.

Britain did not primarily wish to harm the Jews, but rather she sought to appease the Arabs by holding back the pressures and tensions rising out of a greatly stepped-up Jewish migration.

The problem became insurmountable, and Britain announced she would withdraw from the responsibility she had carried so long under the international mandate. This produced a major crisis, and quickly the United Nations assumed the task which Britain had borne.

Count Bernadotte of Sweden and Ralph Bunche of the United States were the key personalities that were sent out there to make a new arrangement. War already had broken out between the Arabs and the Jews. Fanatical Jewish partisans assassinated Count Bernadotte. The deputy, Ralph Bunche, did a heroic work in securing a truce between the Arabs and Jews.

Later the United Nations agreed to partitioning of the land into two sections, one allotted to Israel, the other to the Arabs under a new state, which was designated as Jordan. Almost everything else but peace and good will has been experienced in the Holy land. Yet the two states have existed side by side since the partitioning took place.

In May, 1948, the Jewish state of Israel was created.

Quickly it was recognized by a score of countries. At long last, after 2,500 years, the homeless Jews have once again been established as a sovereign state. This is one of the miracles of the ages.

A leading Orthodox Jewish rabbi of Jerusalem told me a few years ago that he knew of no responsible person in Israel who did not see the hand of God in that which has transpired in recent decades. Yes, this is something to which we may fully agree. While returning Jews have not accepted Christ as their true Messiah, they have recognized the hand of God in bringing back over 2,500,000 of their race in one single generation.

The persecutions of the Jews are not over by any means. Their return to Palestine will bring about even greater suffering than what the Hebrews have experienced in the past centuries. The day of “**Jacob’s trouble**” is in store for them. Only the very “**beginning of sorrows**” has been experienced. The Great Tribulation is ahead. (See Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21).

Now let us cap all of this with the proper Scripture references.

“The days will come, saith the Lord, I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers.” (Jeremiah 30:3).

Another passage equally significant: **“I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries** (Already they have come back from 72 nations) **and I will bring you into your own land”** (Ezekiel 26:24).

The most far-reaching prediction was given by our Lord, **“And they shall be led away captive into the nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the gentiles be fulfilled”** (Luke 21:24).

The final sign confirming the approach of the End-Times is in the parable of our Lord: **“Behold the fig tree, and all the trees. When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled”** (Luke 21:29-32).

If you have followed my exposition of fulfilled prophecy as it concerns the Jews, you will be impressed, I think, that these developments simply could not have happened by chance, or by some strange coincidence. This nation is God’s clock of prophecy, and all one needs to do is to assemble the passages in Scripture that bear on the Jewish nation in the light of Biblical predictions, and see how amazingly well it all spells out.

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