

THE JEWS AND THE PASSION FOR PALESTINE IN THE LIGHT OF PROPHECY

by

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CHAPTER SIX

THE APPROACHING TIME OF TROUBLE UNTO JACOB

THE BITTER conflict between the seed of Ishmael and the seed of Isaac flaring out in Palestine today is an ominous cloud on the horizon of all Zionist hopes. Not only does the life of the Jew hang in doubt before him in the nations (Deuteronomy 28: 66) but as he returns to the land of his fathers there seems little hope of finding peace with the old enemy.

We must go back to the story of Genesis 16:7-15. Here we read of the angel that appeared to Hagar, the bondwoman of Abraham, telling her that her seed, Ishmael, should become a vast multitude. (The Arabs are traced to Hagar and the Jews and the Arabs are the only peoples who can trace their pedigrees back four thousand years). Hagar's son, soon to be delivered, was to be "*a wild ass of a man*" (meaning a free-lance), not submitting to yoke. To Ishmael, the Arabs proudly trace their ancestry. They have fostered Mohammedanism, the most powerful enemy of Judaism and Christianity. Thus from Abraham sprung both Judaism and Mohammedanism, the religion which, to this day, is their most formidable rival.

Every hand was to be against this wild man (v. 12) and his hand against every other man's. Every attempt to subjugate the Arabs has proved unsuccessful. They are preserved as another argument of the truth of the Bible. They live in a state of continual war, set at defiance international laws, are a constant problem to other nations—and there they stand as the bitterest enemies of the Jews who would now share the land with them, as the only hope of survival.

Can the sons of Isaac hope to live in peace with the sons of Ishmael as their neighbors? Can Great Britain or any other nation hold these Arabs in check? It is extremely doubtful.

There is no question as to what the ultimate issue will be, for the prophetic word describes the picture. Before Israel finds rest in the land, the "**time of Jacob's trouble**" must run its course.

The inheritance can never be Israel's until that time comes when the Jews have turned their back upon unbelief and embraced the One who was wounded for them.

The Mohammedan Mosque of Omar stands on the appointed site of the temple of the Lord, hindering its rebuilding until the appointed time. It is not difficult to imagine the intensity of the struggle between Jew and Arab before the time when this mosque is demolished.

BLOOD BITTERNESS OF ISHMAEL

In spite of their most subtle enemies in the land, the Jews have, within a very short time, practically undone the effects of two thousand years of neglect and decay in the land. In the rebuilding of Palestine, the Arabs have represented the forces of reaction and inertia; the Jews the elements of progress and enterprise. The Arabs outnumber the Jews about four to one, but the stake of the Jews in the country is a thousand times greater than that of the Arabs. We gain some idea of what the situation has been in a word from Dr. L. Schuller, a German missionary in the land. He writes:

“During harvest time, burning grain fields were a daily occurrence in the country districts. This destroying of the enemy’s crops in retaliation, is the same as that used by Samson, as told in the Bible story, when he and his comrades fastened burning torches to the tails of foxes and drove them through the wheat fields of the Philistines. And the unfortunate owners of the fields were only weeping and wailing, when, in a single night, their grain which had cost them six months of hard work, lighted up the darkness like a flaming torch, and when, as the next morning all their gains by striving and laboring lay before their eyes in blackened heaps of ashes. In an attempt to bring injury to England, the pipeline of oil leading from Mesopotamia was blown up and the stream of oil set on fire. The flames rose high into the skies, and the smoke traveled in mighty clouds over the land.

“The railroads, too, were attacked, trains were bombarded with shots, locomotives were blown up, rails and rail fixtures were destroyed. In the hills skirmishes grew to be battles, between Arab bands and British troops, which often lasted for whole days, since the Arabs were very familiar with their land and were able to choose well their hiding places.

“The Arabic officials, also, at the command of their national council, always more and more, laid down their work and went on strike. The King of East Jordania, Emir Abdullah, who is subject to the British, moved to act by his overlords, did, indeed to bring about peace, and induce his fellow countrymen to accept a reconciliation.

“But the independent king, Sa’ood, who is the most powerful ruler in Arabia, sent heartening messages to the Arabs and urged them not to give up their resistance. And this resistance was renewed and strengthened by the voices of their fellow Moslems in India and also by financial aid from them. There are eighty millions of Moslems in India, much more than there are British in the whole world.”

THE PAWN OF EASTERN POLITICS

After witnessing the Arab revolt against the Jews at its height, Dr. C. C. McCown, Director of the American School of Oriental Research in Palestine, declared that the idea was gradually gaining way in many circles that Palestine was only a pawn in the larger game of Mediterranean and Near Eastern politics, that would have its complete unfoldment later on.

At present the eyes of seventy million Arabs and two hundred fifty million Moslems were centered on Jerusalem, which was regarded as their most sacred city after Mecca. The recent revolt engaged the active sympathies and the great active help of a great many of these peoples. In any revolt to come that sympathy and help is likely to be stronger. One event, the importance of which seems to have been greatly overlooked by the press of the world, was the launching of a pan-Arabic movement in Iraq. As the situation stands, today, Palestine is surrounded by an Arabic empire that is only waiting its time to fight for its place in the sun.

Dr. McCown, while praising both the British administration of the mandate over Palestine and the efforts of the Jews to establish a Jewish national home there, declares that the opposition of the Arabs, which is steadily tending toward more and open revolt and violence, is based on their conviction that their existence depends upon it. Says Dr. McCown:

“The Arabs also frankly admit that they are unable to compete with western civilization that is being imposed on them. They admit the superiority of the Jews in all branches of trade, industry and commerce, but which constitutes for them only another reason why Jewish emigration should be stopped or limited, and that they should be allowed to develop the country on the basis of their own civilization and their own standards of living.

“The growth of the Arab population tells the story of what Jewish genius has brought to the land. From 488,000 in 1922 it has reached 850,000 (estimated) in 1936. This is due both to natural increase, which proceeded at the rate of twenty-nine per thousand in 1935, and to immigration from neighboring Arab countries. The higher standards and wider opportunities prevailing in Palestine have attracted some twenty to thirty thousand Arabs, chiefly from Syria and Transjordan. The seventy per cent increase in the Arab population of Palestine between 1922 and 1936 compares with a thirteen per cent increase in Egypt between 1920 and 1932.

“The impulse to the development of the country given by Jewish enterprise and capital has greatly increased the demand for labor, both urban and rural. Of the 9,096 workers employed in Jewish orange groves in four principal village areas in February, 1935, 6,214, or nearly seventy per cent, were Arabs. In August of the same year (when the orange season is over) Arabs accounted for 2,326 out of a total of 3,810, or nearly sixty per cent.”

IN DANGER FROM THEIR PROSPERITY

But the very prosperity of the Jews in the land carries its dangers. A recent editorial in the *Sunday Express* (London) refers to it as “a dangerous prosperity.” We read:

“Look at Palestine! No crisis there—no unemployment. In four years the customs receipts are up three hundred per cent, the value of imports doubled, the investment capital trebled. New towns shoot up. Camels and mules give place to motor omnibuses. Nomad Arabs settle down. They have four million pounds in the banks. The Promised Land is an industrial state. Once more it flows with milk and honey.

“But it is a dangerous prosperity. The first Jews came as pilgrims and pioneers to till the soil, to risk and to endure. Now they come as moneymakers and speculators to crowd the cities.

“The cities grow, the price of labor goes up. The colonists, who are the life-blood of the country, desert the soil for the higher wages that the town has to offer. That is an unhealthy sign. All this the prophetic student understands, for the Word has told him of Israel’s return in unbelief to face eventually even worse woes than they had known before.”

Dr. Joseph Cohn, after doing considerable research work, returned to America, convinced that Palestine faces a calamity of the highest order. In his paper, *Chosen People*, he wrote:

“I visited the major colonies, from Haifa to Acre, to Safed, to the Sea of Galilee, to Capernaum, to Nazareth; then at Tel-Aviv (which means, *the hill of Spring*) and south to Gaza. It is all stupendous. Haifa, for instance, looks much like one of our own frontier towns of the West might have looked in a boom. Roadways thrown up, trucks, cement and stone-crushing machinery, buildings going up over night, women, Jewish women, actually laying bricks and doing stucco and plaster work, hotels filled, streets crowded, surveyors measuring out land, feverish buying and selling of land, bargaining for property, figuring in advance the profits, these are some of the bewildering sights.

“Nobody really knows how many Jews there are in Haifa, for instance. They can only guess: and the guesses run from forty-five thousand to one hundred thousand. As to Tel-Aviv, the minimum is one hundred thousand and the maximum is two hundred thousand!

“So, take your choice. Now, I am well aware that some Bible students have been declaring in recent days that the only solution for the Jew’s problem is Palestine, and they seem of the opinion that Zionism of itself is Israel’s cure. But these brethren are apparently not familiar with two most important facts:— one is, that the solution of the Jewish problem is not Palestine, but the Lord Jesus Christ! The other fact is that the Jew who is now going back to Palestine is going there without God! This is the most terrible indictment of the whole movement. Money? Yes. British Mandate? Yes. Modern machinery? Yes. But God? No!

“One meets it everywhere. And one thinks desperately of Jeremiah 17:5.

‘Thus saith the Lord: Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.’

“Great Britain has spent over two million dollars in dredging the Haifa harbor, so that Haifa alone can now accommodate half of the entire British Navy. It does not take much perspicacity to guess what this means.

“Great Britain is not carried away with any false illusions. The Arabs are restive. They see the land passing out of their possession, and the Jews slowly but surely crowding them out. The Jew, sad to say, has not only forgotten God, but he has become rather overbearing, and boastful of his money and his strength. In all Tel-Aviv, with over one hundred thousand Jews, I found one synagogue; and within there were perhaps forty Jews, all of them aged and of the orthodox sect.

“Thus, we have before us all the ingredients for an outbreak in Palestine that may well be a calamity of the highest order. Add to this, the sobering fact that Palestine, and particularly from the Mount of Olives south-westward to the Sea, is directly in the earthquake belt, and the Word of God begins to stand out with disconcerting clearness when it foretells distress and earthquakes for Palestine in the latter days.”

IS THE GREAT TRIBULATION PAST?

There is a school of prophetic teachers today holding that there is no future “tribulation” for the Jews, and that “**the time of Jacob’s trouble**” had its fulfillment in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. It is significant, however, that the leaders of Jewry sense a time of trouble ahead such as their nation has never known, both in the nations and in Palestine.

Writing to a Christian Jewish friend of the author, a leader of Jewry said:

“From the highest to the lowest, through every stratum of society, the venom of Jew-hate runs, stronger, more poisonous, more deadly, day by day. It is not confined now to a mere country, a mere section, a mere religion. Like a pandemic, it is virulent and malignant, spreading with lightning rapidity, devouring, destroying, hungry and murderous, waiting only for the near day when it will pounce upon us all and renew the history of our torments.

“When that day comes, you will remember what I told you, you deluded Jews, that your new gods and your sweet-tongued Gentile friends will not protect you. The day is almost at hand. We need you. We need every precious drop of Jewish steadfastness, Jewish blood, Jewish fortitude and Jewish faith. We must stand together. We must face as one man the savage Gentile world that is going to flood upon us to destroy us. It is not too late for you to return to the fold.

“God will gather us together again by fire, by the sword, by the agonies of our children, by the pouring out of our blood, by our tears. We shall be depleted after the holocaust, but God will not let Israel die. Palestine is struggling to fulfill the old prophecy of her renewal and the fight is heartbreaking and full of despair. Palestine needs your help. Only in Judaism is majesty and peace. Be proud of your race. Do not make our lot harder.”

Those who are familiar with Jewish publications in recent years cannot but be aware of a note of terror that indicates a growing fear on the part of the Jews that their people face a climax of the world’s wrath. Rabbi Neches in *Rash Hoshona Magazine* wrote:

“The more one examines the chaos rampant in Jewish communities, the more perplexed he becomes. He can see no way out of this morass. It seems all hope is lost for the Jewish people. Yet, despite all this, we have not forgotten our task as Jews. We know that Israel does not suffer in vain. Yes, we are indeed facing a time of trouble unto Jacob, but says the prophet, out of it we shall be saved. The Jew will emerge stronger, more conscious of himself, more willing to do his duty as a Jew, with increased vigor and strength for the rebirth of his people in the Holy Land.”

MOVES ON ACCORDING TO PROPHECY

A Hebrew paper recorded an incident concerning a traveler who, while visiting Poland, went to see a famous rabbi, Israel Mayer Hacoen. The venerable sage questioned his visitor concerning the welfare of Jewry at large. When told of their fearful plight in Europe, his eyes filled with tears and as he grasped the hand of the visitor, he exclaimed: "Thank God, everything moves on according to the prophecy. And does not the Talmud say that before the Messiah comes great trouble will befall the Jews? How could we have more troubles than at present? Is it not a sign that the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings are approaching?"

Witness the following words from the Jewish periodical, *B'nai B'rith Magazine*:

"We hear of the Jews being frightened when they pick up their morning papers these days. The Jews are in the headlines, not by reason of anything they themselves have done but on account of the aspersions of their enemies. American blatherskites are heard challenging the Jews with false innuendoes, and Hitlerites spew venom at Jews and Bolshevists in one condemnation.

"'Fascist (Italian) Editorial Hits Jews,' reads a black headline that admonishes Jews of anti-Semitic infection in Italy, which until now has been free of this disease. Jews tremble. 'What does all this mean to us in America? This tumult of voices raised against Jews?'

"Only inhabitants of a fool's paradise could laugh this off. It would be child's talk for us to say that unthinking minds will be impervious to a multitude of voices crying, 'Jew! Jew!' through the press."

Yes, the time of trouble unto Jacob is in the offing. It is not past! Men in "shirts" of varied hue march the streets of the great cities of the nations. Their fanatical leaders scream before street mobs: "Down with the Jews!" The Jew sees an approaching climax of the world's hate! The prophetic student knows that the vortex of the storm will fall in Palestine and come to its end at Armageddon.

A story concerning the late Leon W. Tucker has appeared in *Christian Victory* magazine. Editor Meldan says:

"Mr. Tucker once met a Jew in a sanitarium in California. He was wealthy, and lived only for his business. He was not interested in God, or Christ, or his people, and he cared not for Palestine and the return of the Jews to their land, and such things that are precious to orthodox Jews.

"One afternoon Mr. Tucker said to him, 'May I see your right hand?' Instantly he passed it over, saying, 'I didn't know you were a palmist' 'I'm not,' said Dr. Tucker, 'I'm a Psalmist.'

"He looked at the hand for a moment, thanked the Jew, and then let the hand drop. Then he asked the Israelite to open his mouth and stick out his tongue. This, apparently, was going too far, and he had no easy task getting him to show his tongue; but finally he did. This gesture over, the Jew said: 'What are you doing, anyway; trying to make a fool out of me?'

“Then Dr. Tucker read to him from Psalm 137. When he came to the verses, **‘If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,’** tears came into the eyes of the spiritually indifferent Jew. He said to Dr. Tucker, ‘You have taught me a lesson which I shall not forget.’

“But the greater tragedy is, Israel has forgotten her God, and rejected her Messiah. But God has a great future for the Jews; however, their restoration to divine favor will not come until after they repent of crucifying and rejecting Christ, and they accept Him as their Lord and Savior. Before that day shall dawn—the **‘time of Jacob’s trouble’!**”

~ end of chapter 6 ~

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