

THE REGATHERING OF THE JEWS

Almost an entire generation has passed away since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. I was 5 years old when the State of Israel was declared on May 14th 1948. When I was 9 years old my teacher at school informed the class that Jews were returning to their ancient homeland, and those who did return no longer referred to themselves as Jews but as Israelis.

Since that time the new born state was subject to numerous attacks by the Arab Fedayeen from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt. Indeed as soon as the Israel was born and the declaration of independence declared Israel was attacked by the armies of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. One by one these nations withdrew and with the exception of Iraq, signed an armistice agreement in 1949. And Israel much, to the surprise of world opinion, survived.

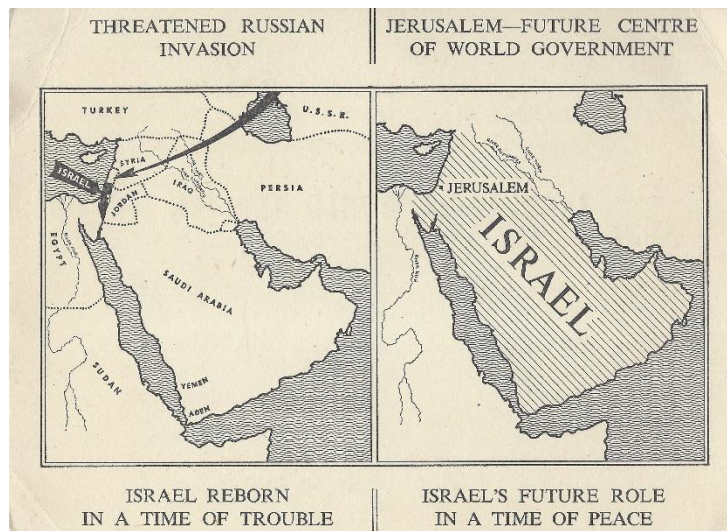
In October 1956 Israel joined Britain and France and were involved in what was known as the Suez Crisis, a military action to prevent the Egyptian President from nationalising the Suez Canal. Israel successfully invaded Sinai and managed to open the Strait of Tiran and pacified its Southern border. I was just 13 and remember my mother talking to me about Britain going to war again. As a result of this action the United States and Russia forced Britain and France to withdraw. Anthony Eden the Prime Minister was effectively forced to resign his office due to ill health, but his decision signalled the end of British predominance in the Middle East.



In 1962 I was baptised into the Truth as it is in Jesus and in those days the Ecclesia was organising a special lecture every other month. Later on when I was living in digs in Dartford, the whole household, seven Ecclesias in all held a special Lecture in London with a distribution of 100,000 invitations. At that time I used to take a Jewish magazine called the Jewish Observer and shortly after this lecture was given I was reading the editorial as I was eating my evening meal, and it quoted a recent speech of

Gamal Abdel Nasser the President of Egypt and he was haranguing a massive Egyptian crowd about his antagonism to the State of Israel.

He told them how had been given a card in London with an invitation on one side and on the reverse side it had two maps one of Israel as it is today and another of Israel as it would be tomorrow, and he said that the Israeli had shown there expansionist intentions, and “they even include Medina and Mecca! So Israel must be obliterated.



Not long after, the Six Day War occurred in June 1967. Egypt, Syria and Jordan were preparing to launch a concerted attack upon Israel and Egypt decided to terminate the presence of the United Nations Emergency Force from the territory of the United Arab Republic and Gaza Strip, and the United Nation peacekeeping forces withdrew

without a whimper. The generals of Israeli forces, many of whom had been trained by the Englishman Orde Wingate, decided to strike first. On June 5th at 7.45 a.m. the Israeli Air Force launched a massive attack that destroyed the majority of the of the Egyptian Air Force on the ground. By noon they also destroyed the Syrian and Jordanian Air Forces with about 450 aircraft destroyed and 18 airfields in Egypt were disabled. Israel had appealed to Jordan to stay out of the conflict, but Jordanian forces fired artillery barrages at Israeli cities and Israel was forced to counterattack and in two days repulsed and defeated the Jordanian forces on the West Bank.

On June 7th Israeli paratroopers advanced into the Old City of Jerusalem and gained control of the Temple Mount. At that time virtually every newspaper in Britain voiced their astonishment at Israel’s victory, and the astonishment went round the world. Many countries sympathised with Israel but none were prepared to assist her in her hour of need and the Israeli chief of staff declared to his generals. “We are on our own”.

Israel not only gained control of the old city, but over four times the territory it had before the war began. Interestingly enough some political cartoonists used Bible themes to express their admiration of Israel’s stunning victory. One showed Nasser and his top general in a tank together, about to enter the Red Sea where the waters had opened up as in Exodus. “No, no”, says the general, “It’s far too dangerous, the Israelis have got someone far more powerful on their side.” As we were reminded in our study of times and seasons, the 2,300

day/years starting from Alexander's victory over the Persians, as described by Daniel in chapter 8:14 is a measurement of time for the treading underfoot of the army and cleansing of the sanctuary. In 1828 Adam Clarke stated that this would occur in 1966. The Temple Mount today is under Israeli control, but it is still occupied by the Haram al Sharif, or Dome of the Rock. But one thing is certain and that is, the **Israeli armed forces are no longer trodden under foot**, but the most powerful defence force in the Middle East.

Sadly Israel's troubles did not stop there. From 1967 to 1970 there was a War of Attrition, Egypt supported by the USSR, Jordan and Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, continued to attack Israeli buildings and people by, for instance blowing up buses, restaurants and night clubs. Then followed the Yom Kippur War in October 1973. Eventually Arab forces were defeated but not before they had taken a considerable toll on the Israeli forces.

In 1982 there was War with Lebanon over the PLO which had bases there. This resulted in the expulsion of the PLO from Lebanon. From 1985 there were nearly 15 years of War in southern Lebanon against Muslim guerrilla forces backed by Iran. These were followed by the First and Second Intifadas being uprisings by the Palestinian people against Israeli rule. 2006 saw a further armed conflict in Lebanon against Hezbollah who suffered serious casualties. Since then in 2008, 2012, and 2014 armed conflict has taken place between Israel and the Palestinians in the Gaza strip. Yet though facing such opposition Israel has flourished.

I have lived with a few others through all this time watching Israel and its gradual ascent to become a prosperous nation as Ezekiel 38 requires. When I was born Jews in their hundreds and thousands were being annihilated across Europe, but the survivors have been regathered to re-establish themselves as a nation. Today another generation is taking over who have not really known of the great work that has thus far been achieved. For so many, the world only began when they were born. But thousands of years before that, God was directing the affairs of his people and had in mind 3000 years ago that they would be scattered and persecuted among all nations, but eventually he would bring them home again. All of these happenings are proofs of God's existence, but what does it mean to you. How can you make your calling and election sure?

Now to see how great a miracle God has been performing, it is important to know something of the History of the Jews in order to understand just how remarkable it has been, and how much more remarkable and miraculous their full restoration will be. Long before they became the Kingdom of Israel over 3000

years ago and before they ever entered the land of Canaan after having been in Egypt for some 320 years, God informed the nation through Moses of those things that would befall them in the latter years

Leviticus 26 verses 14, 32-33 *“If you will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments ... I will bring the land into desolation ... and I will scatter you among the nations, and will draw out a sword after you, and your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.”*

Deuteronomy 28:64, 65 *“The Lord shall scatter you among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other ... and among these nations shall you find no ease, neither shall the sole of your foot have rest: but the Lord shall give you there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes and sorrow of mind.”*

This 28th chapter of Deuteronomy shows that on account of Israel rejecting God’s law, a sevenfold series of calamities were predicted to come upon the nation with increasing intensity, until they should be removed from the land covenanted to their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

1. Agricultural, domestic and public calamities while the tribes were still resident in the land. Verses 15 - 24
2. A removal of part of the nation (historically the Ten Tribes) into all the kingdoms of the earth with all the attendant evils and consequences – accomplished by the Assyrians in 726 B.C. Verses 25-35
3. A removal of the remainder of the nation including their king - fulfilled in the Babylonian Captivity from 606 – 536 B.C. Verses 36 & 37
4. A restoration to the land, (note *“throughout all your coasts”*) but subject to the oppressive rule of foreign nations - realised in the period from Ezra and Nehemiah down to the time of the Maccabean revolt and the Hasmonean dynasty. Verses 38 - 47
5. Subjection to *“a yoke of iron”*, by a nation *“from the end of the earth as swift as the eagle flies, whose tongue you shall not understand”* - accomplished in the Roman subjugation of Judaea first under Pompey (63 B.C.) and afterwards through their appointees Antipater, Herod, and Archelaus. The Romans came from far off Italy, and some who served in her armies came from Britain, beyond the Pillars of Hercules as the Straits of Gibraltar were known, or *“the ends of the earth”* at the western extremity of the Mediterranean Sea. ***“Like the Eagle”***, the eagle was one of the common symbols of the Roman government, being found on the standard of every legion. In fact they served as the representation of the deity of each legion, and as a result the eagle became the symbol of Divine Rome and her army. With the coming of the Romans, ***Latin*** - a language unknown to the Jews, was introduced to the region. One of the major characteristics of Roman rule was oppressive taxation. Verses 48 - 51

The closing verses, 65 and 66 of the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, summarise the Jewish experience over 19 centuries exactly.

6. The destruction of Judæan cities and finally the capital Jerusalem: fulfilled during the crushing of the revolt against the Romans by the armies of Vespasian under the general, Titus. In previous struggles there had been battles, but this war, culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem, was pre-eminently a campaign of sieges. Jotapata, Japha, Tarichea, Gamala, Itabbyrium, Gischala, Jerusalem, Herodion, Machaerus, Massada, wherever the Romans came they destroyed the cities and villages until Judæa was filled, in the words of the apostle Peter quoting from the prophecy of Joel, with *“blood and fire and pillars of smoke.”* Josephus, in his history of the Jewish Wars gives an eye witness account of the events that fulfilled the predictions of Moses to the letter. Verses 52-58

7. The scattering of the Jewish nation from one end of the earth to the other: realised in the history of the Jewish Diaspora over the last 1900 years. Verses 59-67

“And among these nations you shall find no ease, neither shall the sole of your foot have rest: but the LORD shall give you there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: And your life shall hang in doubt before you; and you shall fear day and night, and shall have none assurance of your life: In the morning you shall say, Would God it were even! and at even you shall say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of your heart wherewith you shall fear, and for the sight of your eyes which you shall see.”

Anti-Semitism has been described as the longest hatred. It is certainly difficult to rationalise and is capable of extreme depravity quite beyond normal explanations. Nevertheless it is fore-ordained in the Torah, and anyone acquainted with the facts of Jewish persecution in almost every land, has no alternative but to acknowledge that this prediction of Moses has seen terrible fulfilment. Across Europe the lust for Jewish blood, with its cries of "Juden raus" and "Jihud verrecke" culminated in the destruction of six million at the hands of Nazi Germany. The trembling hearts, sorrow of mind, the fear day and night and no assurance of life, are experiences that have been powerfully documented in Holocaust literature and in the archives at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. Hundreds of books and films have been made about the Holocaust, but though everybody must by now be aware of Jewish suffering, Anti-Semitism is still a continuing fact of modern life. Yet the prophecies anticipated the attempted justification, so often repeated as an excuse for persecuting the Jews in all the countries of “christian” Europe:

“All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.” Jeremiah 50:7

The world-wide dispersion of the Jews, the destruction of their Temple and the Mosaic constitution are facts too well known to be disputed; and the wanderings of the Jews among the nations, and their experiences, are well documented by many writers: among them being Professor H. Grätz in his “History of the Jews” in five volumes, published in 1892 is an exhaustive work. “The History of Anti-Semitism from Roman Times to the Court Jews” In three volumes by Leon Poliakov is an excellent work and for a good summary. Twelve centuries of Jewish Persecution by Gustav Pearlson illustrates how every country in Europe from England to Russia have been responsible for Jewish persecution. Dr. Werner Keller’s book “Diaspora” is a book which covers the same ground but is easier to read than some of the foregoing. Clearly, in their long and sad history the predictions of Israel's prophets have been fulfilled.

Right back in the time of Moses God made his intention known to his people that though on account of disobedience to his law they would suffer punishment, but eventually they would be regathered to the land promised to their fathers, Abraham Isaac and Jacob.

“The LORD your God will turn your captivity, and have compassion upon you, and will return and **gather you from all the nations**, whither the LORD your God has scattered you. If any of yours be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD your God gather you, and from thence will he fetch you: And the LORD your God will **bring you into the land** which your fathers possessed, and **you shall possess it**; and he will do you good, and multiply you above your fathers.” Deuteronomy 30:3- 5

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again **the second time** to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall **set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.**” Isaiah 11:11- 12

“Fear not: for I am with you: I will bring your seed from the **east**, and gather you from the **west**; I will say to the **north**, Give up; and to the **south**, Keep not

back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth”
Isaiah 43:5 - 6.

“For, lo, the days come, says the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, says the LORD: and I will **cause them to return** to the land that I gave to their fathers, and **they shall possess it.**” Jeremiah 30:3

“For thus says the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish and give praise, and say, O LORD, save your people, the remnant of Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the North Country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travails with child together: a great company shall return there. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.”
Jeremiah 31:7-9

“Hear the word of the Lord, O you nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, **He that scattered Israel will gather him**, and keep him as a shepherd does his flock.”
Jeremiah 31:10

“Behold, I will **gather** them out of **all countries** whither I have driven them in mine anger and in my fury and in great wrath, and I will **bring them again** unto this place.”
Jeremiah 32:37

“For I will take you from among the nations, and **gather you out of all countries**, and will bring you into **your own land.**” Ezekiel.36:24

“And say unto them, Thus says the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, where they are gone, and **will gather them** on every side, and bring them **unto their own land**: And I will make them **one nation in the land** upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.” Ezekiel 37:21

“Therefore thus says the Lord God; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; after that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid. When I have brought them again from the people, and **gathered them out of their enemies' lands**, and am sanctified in them in the

sight of many nations. Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the nations; but I have **gathered them into their own land** and have **left none of them anymore there.**”
Ezekiel 39:25-28

“And I will bring **again** the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and **they shall no more be pulled up out of their land** which I have given them, says the LORD your God.” Amos 9:14

“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel **return**, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.” Hosea 3:4 -5

“Lord, will you at this time **restore** again the kingdom to Israel?” Acts 1:6

“Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and **so all Israel shall be saved**, as it is written: There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins.” Romans 11:25-27

This generation has seen the largest transmigration of Jews to their original homeland at any time in history, It is a clear sign of the re-appearance of Christ to the earth. But when he comes, not only will his people in the land become reconciled to him, but the programme concealed in the Bible, reveals that all Jews will be brought back from all over the world to the promised Land and through the Lord Jesus Christ they too will be reconciled to him and become citizens of the Kingdom of God.

All those who read of these things in the Scriptures will pray, Even so Come Lord Jesus. May all who study these things be accounted worthy to participate in the wonderful events that are shortly to come to pass. Amen

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