

\$1.00

Israel, God's Clock

JOHN F. MacARTHUR
D.D., LITT.D.

CALVARY BOOK ROOM
a division of

VOICE OF CALVARY
P.O. BOX 1700, EUGENE, OREGON 97401
1969

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FIRST EDITION

SIXTH PRINTING

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Printed in the United States of America.

INTRODUCTION

This book is an introduction to a subject that would fill a number of volumes. It represents part of the material presented in a series of talks given on our television program, the Voice of Calvary. Numerous requests prompted us rather hurriedly and without much careful editing to ready the manuscript for printing. I am sure the reader will be indulgent because the truth expressed is both flawless and inspiring.

The purpose of this book is simply to demonstrate from the Word of God that Israel is God's "clock," and Jesus Christ is Israel's Messiah and mankind's only Savior. I Peter 1:19-21

John F. MacArthur

ISRAEL, GOD'S CLOCK

It has been a common conclusion among Bible scholars and students of Biblical prophecy that if anyone desires to know approximately where we are in God's plan for the ages, all that is necessary is to compare the prophecies concerning Israel in the Word of God with the present plight of these ancient people on the world scene. Indeed, Israel is God's clock! One of the most remarkable evidences of fulfilled prophecy, indicating the soon return of our Lord, is the regathering and re-birth of Israel. Jesus said, "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). The time of Gentile rule is that entire period when Jerusalem and Palestine are under Gentile dominion. When King Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem and took the people of Judah captive, it marked the end of Jewish time and the beginning of Gentile time. "The times of the Gentiles" will continue until the end of the age, the second coming of Christ in His revelation. We are actual witnesses to the beginning of the end of this period known as the "times of the Gentiles."

The most significant date in modern history is May 14, 1948. At 4 P. M. on that day, David Ben-Gurion banged the table with his fist and read "the establishment of the Jewish State to be called Israel." As his audience cheered and wept, Zionist flags, with their two pale blue stripes and the blue Star of David, flew overhead. For the first time in centuries, multitudes of Jews were

saying, "It's a miracle; it's a miracle; God has worked miracles." By this they referred to the establishment of an independent government after more than 2,500 years under the yoke of one Gentile nation after another.

PROMISES OF RESTORATION

The Word of God is filled with promises of the ultimate restoration of Palestine to Israel: "And I will bring again the captivity of my people 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, saith the Lord thy God" (Amos 9:14, 15). This is an event of which the Jews had been dreaming for centuries—an event many distinguished statesmen and economists had declared, in voluminous words and learned speeches, could never take place. But it has! The Word of God has been fulfilled! The modern state of Israel has been born.

In March, 1891, William E. Blackstone of Chicago, who wrote the famous book *Jesus Is Coming*, declared: "If Israel is beginning to show signs of national life, and is actually returning to Palestine, then surely, the end of this dispensation is nigh, even at the doors." Dr. Blackstone presented a petition to President Harrison asking our nation to assist the Jews in obtaining Palestine as their national home. At that time, the petition made little impression, but God was at work.

The fig tree is the national symbol of Israel, so our Lord said, "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So, likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Matt. 24: 32-34). *Generation* does not mean the Jews then living, because they died. *Generation* does not mean the race, because the race never passes away; and this is not the same word for race. The word used is "genea," which cannot be translated in this context any other way than generation.

The Amplified New Testament clarifies the meaning: "Truly, I tell you, this generation — that is, the whole multitude of people living at the same time, in a definite, given period—will not pass away till all these things taken together take place." The generation that sees the fig tree budding will see everything connected with the closing events. This means that the people on earth when the birth pangs of the new age begin will not all die until all be fulfilled, and our Lord Jesus Christ comes back. Remember, too there need be no specific sign with regard to the rapture of the Church. That may take place at any moment (I Thess. 4:13-18).

GOD'S AGENCY OF REDEMPTION

General Moshe Dayan, the heroic new Moses of Israel, said, concerning the lightning Six-Day War won so gloriously by the Israeli forces in June, 1967: "Now that the war is over, the trouble begins." As *Time* magazine commented: "For

months and perhaps years, debate will rage about the borders of Israel and about how much (if any) of its conquered territory it has a right to keep."

We can be sure that the shambles of defeat will but intensify the fanatic hatred of the 14 Arab nations, with its 110,000,000 people that ring about the tiny land of Israel. Even the resounding military disaster they have suffered has not for a moment daunted the Arabic desire to kill every living Jew in Palestine and wipe the nation from the earth. This is precisely as our Lord said it would be; and, according to the Bible, Israel's troubles are not over, they are just beginning. The Jews have been at once the most highly honored and most basely dishonored nation in the world. Honored of God, dishonored of men. God loves the Jews; men hate them. It was always so. Men have always hated what God loved, and loved what God hated.

It is often asked why God loved Israel above other peoples. Though much of the answer is mysterious and profound, we do know that His love for Israel was only an impression of the outreach of His love for us. Israel has been the vehicle of God, the instrument of His redemptive purpose for all men. What God did through Israel, He did because He loves man so much. "While we were yet enemies," He sent His Son to die for us, and that Son came by way of a Jewish womb, a Jewish ancestry, a Jewish heritage.

On the basis of one of the oldest promises in the Bible, God chose Israel. "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of

the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt" (Deut. 7:6-8). This explains that God set Himself in a peculiar place or relationship to Israel.

OLD TESTAMENT COVENANT STILL VALID

In the morning time of history, approximately 1936 B. C.—412 years after the flood—God called Abram, a Shemite, to be the father of a new nation, through whom He might work out His plan of redeeming the human race. Merrill F. Unger points out: "In the call of Abram, and the creation of the nation Israel, God purified and separated a small stream from the vast, polluted river of humanity. His purpose was to keep this branch pure and separated, that with it He might eventually cleanse the great river itself."

The account is found in Genesis 12:1-7. God promised Abram,

(1) *A Personal Blessing*

"I will bless thee, and make thy name great. . ." This was literally fulfilled. Abraham gave up much to be obedient to God's call, but God is never indebted to any man. He made Abraham wealthy beyond measure in cattle and land, in silver and gold, in power and influence. It is said

that when he died, he was the richest man in the world materially, and certainly spiritually; that is, in the knowledge of God. Abraham's name occurs 313 times in the Scripture. It is mentioned in 27 books of the Bible. Interestingly, his name is venerated by both Jews and Mohammedans (in spite of their deep-rooted antagonism and hatred), as well as by Christians.

(2) *A National Blessing*

"I will make of thee a great nation." This was an acute test of faith. Abraham was about 75 years of age and his wife nearly as old, and they were childless. Yet, this promise was fulfilled to the very letter in the Jewish nation that sprang from them. The distinction of this nation was not to be in her military power or commerce, but in her knowledge of the true God.

(3) *A World-Wide Blessing*

"In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." This has been partially fulfilled in the first advent of the Messiah, who was born of the Jews, and also in the preaching of the Gospel in this age. But it will be completely fulfilled in the future when Israel becomes the medium of blessing to the whole world.

(4) *Divine Protection*

"I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." This promise still operates and will continue until the end of the age. God says, in effect, Israel's enemies are His enemies, their friends are His friends.

There is no excuse for anti-Semitism. The entire 11th chapter of Romans is written to show that though God is temporarily saving more Gen-

tiles ("the fulness of the Gentiles"), and using more Gentiles than Jews; yet, according to Romans 11:25-29, God will eventually restore the Jewish nation to favor. This Scripture makes it clear that God has not cast away Israel, that blindness in part is only for a season, that the portion of the nation left alive at the end time will be saved, that they are beloved in God's sight for the sake of the Jewish fathers from Abraham on down, and that God has never repented of selecting Israel. The Old Testament covenants with Israel still stand. Israel is as much "the chosen people" as she ever was, and God's plans for her are unchanged.

ANTI-SEMITISM CONDEMNED

All who are tempted to persecute or think evil of the Jews should remember the plain statement of God: "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Gen. 12:3). That has been so in the past, and it is so now. Judaism and Christianity have the same God. Whenever Christian people have persecuted Jews, their Christian usefulness and blessing have dried up and become Christian in name only. The hatred fomented against Jews by Greek Catholics under the reign of the Czars doubtless contributed to the revolution that has made the Soviet Union what it is today. From Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, and other dictators, on down until the antichrist (the man of sin), makes his diabolical appearance, there can only be the wreck of Anti-Semitic empires and the ruin of their dreams because of God's curse on Jew-haters.

We should never forget that Jews and Chris-

tians have the same Old Testament, and Jews and Christians alike hold the Old Testament to be the very Word of God. In fact, Judaism and Christianity have the same God as presented in the Old Testament and the same Christ as foretold by every prophet and pictured in every sacrifice and offering. The Messiah of the Jews is the Savior of Christians.

Though Jews generally do not accept the New Testament, it was written by Jews. The twelve apostles were Jews. Paul was a Jew. Barnabas was a Jew. All the prophets were Jews. Christ Himself was born of a Jewish mother, of the seed of Abraham, of the house of David. He grew up among Jews, had His ministry among them, selected His disciples from among them, saved Jews, taught Jews, healed Jews. No one can be a Christian who does not have a Jewish Bible and a Jewish Savior. How unthinkable it is for anybody who claims to be a Christian, even nominally, to persecute the Jews. They are patriotic, generous, unselfish, philanthropic, wholehearted Americans in their outlook. The accident that some Jews are anarchists or Communists, just as some Gentiles are, is no proper excuse for the hellish persecution of Jews and the age-long hate and mistreatment of Jews by Gentiles.

There are unseen forces working. Satan, under the surface, is carrying out a definite plan to destroy the Jews. Anti-Semitism is satanic. It has been repeatedly demonstrated in the history of the nations that those who seek the good of Israel are blessed, and those who oppress her are cursed. If there are those among the distinguished and august assembly of the United Nations who know anything about the Word of God,

this irrevocable truth should influence their thinking and their decisions. God has placed a curse on anti-Semitism, and the ultimate and final defeat of Israel's enemies is assured on the basis of this curse.

It is told that a Hyde Park orator in England once denounced the feeble efforts of the Jews to resist the Roman oppression and suggested that if they had appealed more to the sword and less to the Bible, they might have gotten along much better. A man in the crowd asked, "But where are the Romans today? And where are the Jews?" "Everywhere," was the answer, which was greatly appreciated by his hearers! Israel is under the protecting hand of God to this very hour.

PALESTINE BELONGS TO ISRAEL

(5) *The Gift of the Land of Canaan as an Everlasting Possession*

"Unto thy seed will I give this land." As the years passed, Abraham's faith began to waver, for Sarah had not borne the promised son. So God renewed the promise, making it a covenant. "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Gen. 15:18). The area of the land promised is more extensive than present-day Israel.

In response to an article on Israel's famous Six-Day War with the Arabs, *Time* magazine received the following letter:

Through the usual din of Middle East propaganda, we heard the voice of Israel at the U. N., sincere and compassionate, sweeping before it like

a refreshing, cleansing storm, all the filth of Arab-Russian intrigue and deception, exposing truth for all to recognize. All this with malice toward none, with condemnation of deeds only, not of people.

Here was a voice that reflected the spirit and will to peace that are the foundation of which the U. N. was built, and its *raison d'être*. Here is a conqueror offering co-existence and cooperation, claiming nothing for himself but security and the right to exist. Who dares put the tag of aggressor on him?

It is fascinating, in the light of Luke 21:24—"Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled"—that although Israel is willing to make concessions upon territory acquired during her magnificent defense, there is no concession with respect to the city of Jerusalem. This Israel intends to keep. To those who understand the prophetic Word, this is merely the down payment or guarantee that one day Israel will possess all the territory God promised her through Abraham.

Because of Israel's disobedience, she has experienced three dispersions, and, to this point, two regatherings—with the third now taking place. First, there was the dispersion from the land of Canaan into Egypt, where it was predicted Israel would be afflicted 400 years (Gen. 15:13-16). The second dispersion was into Babylon, where Israel remained in captivity 70 years (Jer. 25:11, 12). Only a remnant returned. The third dispersion took place after the fall of Jerusalem in A. D. 70. Today we are actually seeing the beginning of the regathering of the nation after dispersions of almost 2,500 year's duration. In the first two

dispersions, Israel was led back into the Promised Land from Egypt by Moses and Joshua, and from Babylon by Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Declares *Time* magazine: "There is no other people that has been dispersed so long from its original home, yet has maintained the memory of that home as a living reality."

In their former return to the land, the Jews never occupied more than 28 to 30,000 square miles, but the territory included in God's gift to Abraham is something like 300,000 square miles. Therefore, Palestine, as originally given by God to the Jews, is more than 25 times the size of the modern state. Dr. Edgar C. James points out that this vast area promised to Israel includes present-day Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, South Arabia, Muscat and Oman, Trucial Coast and parts of Egypt, Kuwait, and Iraq. All this area is to be the possession of Israel in her future millennial reign with Christ. The long dispersion described in Deuteronomy 28:63, 64 is nearly over.

ISRAEL—A WITNESS TO THE WORLD

The mission of Israel is to be a witness in the midst of universal idolatry, to teach the world there is but one living and true God. At the time Abraham was called, the heathen world worshiped many gods. If God was acknowledged at all, He was regarded simply as one among many. The Jews were raised up in order that through them the precious truth of monotheism—one God—might be taught to a heathen world. Moses, their great leader and lawgiver, asserts this truth in one of his farewell addresses in Deuteronomy. See also Isaiah 43:10-12. History shows that the

Jews have always been the teachers of monotheism. Until the time of Christ no other nation taught this doctrine. Monotheism was unique to Israel. Without this doctrine there is no possibility of salvation for any man.

As far as we know, there is not a writer of the Scripture who was not a Jew, except perhaps the physician, Luke. Furthermore, through the centuries, the Jews have kept the sacred Word from being mutilated and contaminated. The Bible is a miracle book, preserved through the storms of centuries by a miraculous people. Had it not been for the Jewish guardianship of the Bible, it would have long ago been lost to mankind.

Israel's ultimate destiny was to provide the world with a Savior. When sin entered the world through the agency of Satan, disguised as a serpent, God gave Adam a promise that He would raise up through the seed of the woman a Savior or Deliverer from the power of sin (Gen. 3:15). This Deliverer would eventually crush the power of Satan, the author of sin, and cast him out forever. When God called Abraham, He gave the promise that the Messiah, or the Deliverer, would come through his descendants. "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). This is the culminating and climaxing promise, the one toward which the others are leading.

The nations of the earth have been blessed and will be blessed by Abraham's seed. When God called Abraham 2,500 years before our Lord was born, it was announced that the Messiah would be a Jew. The Jew highly treasures this promise. It is his only star of hope. It has beamed in his

sky during the darkest hours of his history. With all that is taking place in Israel today, this one expectation—Messiah's coming—holds the foremost place in his heart.

The difference between Jews and Christians is that Christians believe the New Testament account that Messiah has already come, and they recognize Him as Lord and Savior. One day He will also be recognized by the nation Israel. The anticipation of our coming Lord is the one hope for the darkness and chaos of the world in this hour—the visible appearance of the Messiah of Israel, our great God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13).

ISRAEL IN THE DIASPORA

The whole world is watching Israel. This is the indication that more and more the world will begin to revolve around God's chosen people. Ultimately, as Israel becomes the center of concentrated attention, it will play an even more important part in the closing days of our age. Our Lord foretold the scattering of the Jews to all parts of the globe in Luke 21:24: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." This event took place forty years after Jesus spoke, when the Roman armies, under Emperor Titus Vespasian, overthrew Jerusalem in A. D. 70, after a merciless and bloody siege.

Six hundred years before Christ, the prophet Jeremiah predicted this scattering. "And as the evil figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so evil;

surely thus saith the Lord, So will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and them that dwell in the land of Egypt: And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them. And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers” (Jer. 24:8-10).

Fifteen hundred years before Christ, God spoke: “And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation. . . And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate and your cities waste” (Lev. 26:31-33) With the scattering of Israel, the land became desolate as prophesied.

Ruth Gruber wrote: “For over a thousand years Israel was a country with a few cities, ancient settlements, and vast stretches of desert where there was not a tree, a shrub, or a blade of grass, where the sun rode the sky in fierce and often terrible loneliness.”

The scattering of the Jews is called the “diaspora” (Greek for dispersion, or scattering). In a marvelous fulfillment of prophecy, we have lived to see the beginning of the end of the diaspora. Dr. Avidor, Director General of Education and Culture in the new state of Israel, says that Jews have returned to Palestine from 70 nations, speaking approximately as many different lan-

guages. Jeremiah prophesied this when he announced: "Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity: and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid.

"For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30:10, 11).

The prophet Isaiah proclaimed, "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" (Isa. 11:11, 12).

He further states: "Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee 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; even everyone that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him" (Isa. 43:5-7).

ISRAEL TEMPORARILY SET ASIDE

Raymond Cox, in an article entitled, *Eyewitness: Israel*, said:

If the scripturally inspired dream of Jews, since the first century, to be settled again in their Promised Land, is to remain true in our times, the Israeli apparently must keep militarily vigilant. A nation of less than three million people lies like an island in a sea of Arab enemies numbering over 110,000,000, and those Arab nations proclaim as prime national policy the proposition that Israel as a nation must be exterminated. The Jews want peace, but are prepared to defend themselves. Many Arab citizens and soldiers want peace, too.

As we all know, the deep-rooted enmity burst into flames in an amazing vindication of Israeli military strength that literally rocked the world. Israel has reason to be proud of its army, and the morale of its soldiers may be the highest in the world.

A Christian tourist discovered the Israeli soldier's sense of mission when he attempted to witness for Christ to an officer and his family he met while strolling along the Mediterranean shore. "Do you know the Prince of Peace?" inquired the tourist after exchanging a few pleasantries. "I am the prince of peace," the soldier replied proudly. This incident reveals dramatically Israel's supreme tragedy: the rejection of her Messiah.

In the New Testament we find the state of affairs entirely different from that in the Old Testament dispensation. We hear Paul saying in Romans 3:9: "...for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin."

Here Paul is putting Israel, as privileged as she was, on the same level as the Gentiles who were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2: 12). This makes it absolutely clear that Israel has been rejected from her position of privilege during this present age of grace. Many Old Testament Scriptures also clearly point out Israel's setting aside by God.

PARENTHESIS BETWEEN 69th AND 70th WEEKS OF DANIEL

After the prophet Daniel spoke of the end of the desolations of Jerusalem in Daniel 9:24-27, and after he earnestly poured out his heart before God in fervent confession of his sin and those of his people, God sent the powerful angel, Gabriel, to give him understanding in the matter. The "weeks" spoken of are not meant to be seven-day weeks; they are heptads of years. The divisions are: (1) seven weeks or 49 years, (2) 62 weeks or 434 years, (3) one week or seven years. The weeks of years begin with the decree to restore and build Jerusalem in the 20th year of Artaxerxes, or 445 B. C. (Neh. 2). From that time till Messiah the Prince there were to be 69 "weeks" or 483 years, another proof of the infallibility of the Word of God; Our Lord Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem (according to the reckoning of the prophetic years) at the expiration of the 69th "week." This prophecy, as readily seen, has been fulfilled. God's clock stopped at the end of the 69th week, interrupting the Jewish age. The interval of time in which we now live is the

Church age, not foreseen in the Old Testament. This interval solves the problem that troubled the prophets as they searched for the specific time of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

Jesus made this clear in the synagogue at Nazareth when He stopped in the midst of His reading Isaiah 61:1-3 and announced the portion of the prophecy that was fulfilled. "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:17-19).

Immediately following this, we read, "And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (vss. 20, 21). A comparison with the passage quoted in Isaiah shows us an instance of the exquisite accuracy in the way in which our Lord used the Word of God. He stopped at "the acceptable year of the Lord," which, of course, is connected with His first coming and His gracious offer of Himself. The rest of Isaiah's prophecy was not for that day. "The day of vengeance of our God" belongs to the second coming of Christ, and the Judgment. He made it very graphic that only a part of this prophecy was then being fulfilled.

This parenthetical interval is further brought into prominence by Matthew who begins his Gospel account with the Lord's ministry among Israel—the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom, His great signs and miracles, and His choosing of the disciples to “go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. 10:6).

The interval between the 69th and the 70th weeks of Daniel and the age of Christendom (Matt. 13), is the same period Paul speaks about in Romans 9:22 to 10:21, as he demonstrates God's forewarning of Israel, that because of her sin—specifically the crucifixion of Christ—she should be set aside and the Gentiles would come into blessing. Hosea prophesied that God would call a people His people which were not His people (Hosea 2:23). Isaiah foretold that if it were not for the Lord, Israel would have been left as Sodom and Gomorrah (Isa. 1:9).

THE TRAGEDY OF ISRAEL'S BLINDNESS

During Israel's rejection, she is spiritually blind and deaf. Jesus Christ was a tremendous disappointment to Israel when He failed to deliver the nation from her Gentile oppressors. All the prophets had foretold that when Messiah came He would throw off the Roman yoke, assume the throne of David, bring in the Kingdom of Heaven, and restore the nation Israel. Believing this, His disciples had followed Him; but when, instead, the road led up the hill of Calvary, they all forsook Him and fled (Mark 14:50). They had dreamed of the glory and majesty of Messiah's reign. Eagerly they went forth proclaiming the message of the kingdom (Matt. 3:2).

Gradually it became apparent that something was wrong somewhere, and the disciples were confused when, instead of the glory of Messiah's throne, the shadow of the cross appeared. It is then that Jesus began to reveal to them He was not going to set up His kingdom at that time, but instead was going to die. This was a severe shock and bitter disappointment. As a result we read one of the saddest records in the Holy Book: "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (John 6:66). But everything was in God's plan; and before the Messiah was to set up the kingdom, He would come first to die for the sins of the whole world. God's plan of redemption included far more than the redemption of one nation, Israel—it embraced all mankind.

To accomplish this God blinded the eyes of the nation until after the sacrifice of the Messiah had been made, and then revealed the "dispensation of the grace of God" (Eph. 3:2); "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 13:11); and the "mystery among the Gentiles" (Col. 1:27). The "kingdom of heaven" was no mystery, for that had been clearly revealed and the disciples were earnestly expecting our Lord to set up that kingdom at His first coming. Their confusion resulted from ignorance of the "mystery of the kingdom," that at His first coming Jesus would be rejected, the nation of Israel disowned and scattered for centuries among the nations. The kingdom would be postponed, and in the interval the Lord would call out the Church to be His bride, to reign with Him in the kingdom age of the future.

Because of Israel's rejection of her Messiah,

she is experiencing judicial blindness. However, we must not make the mistake of believing that this blindness, caused by the rejection of Christ over 1900 years ago by their forefathers, makes their conversion today an impossibility. As Dr. A. C. Gaebelien explains:

The judicial blindness is certainly not to be understood that every Jew is born with this blindness upon him; far be the thought. Every generation of Jews, in refusing the light which shines for all in sharing the sin of their fathers in rejecting their Messiah, in continuing in their evil ways of unbelief, is put under the sentence of this judicial blindness.

The Jew may see if he so chooses, and he may refuse the light if he so chooses. God declared in His Word beforehand what would happen to them in this respect.

THE PARABLE OF THE HOUSEHOLDER

The progress of Israel's blindness from the time of the prophets to the time of the rejection of Christ is well illustrated in the parable of the householder who planted a vineyard and let it out to husbandmen before he departed for a far country (Matt. 21:33-39). When harvest time arrived, the householder sent servants to receive the fruit of the vineyard from the husbandmen. However, they abused the servants, beating one, killing another, and stoning another. When the householder sent other servants, they fared no better than their companions. Finally, the householder sent his son, thinking they would surely reverence him. On the contrary, they took him and slew him.

The meaning is evident when we remember that God speaks of Israel as His vineyard (Isa. 5:1-7); and Jesus addressed Jerusalem as "thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee. . ." (Matt. 23:37). No prophet of Israel, however, had suffered the indignities that were heaped upon Christ. When He first appeared in Israel, Matthew relates that Herod attempted to slay Him. After He entered upon His public ministry, it was evident that Israel would have none of Him. They plotted continually how they might destroy Him, and many times attempted to stone Him.

When the Lord Jesus asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" the reply was that some thought He was Elijah, others testified He was Jeremiah, and still others maintained that He was one of the prophets. No one thought Him to be the Messiah. The only reasonable conclusion is that the people were evidently willing to account for Him by any subterfuge that would relieve them of acknowledging Him as their king. So intent were they on His destruction that two decidedly antagonistic parties, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, were in complete agreement in plotting His death. When Judas went out to betray the Lord into the hands of His enemies, it was at night; but it was just as dark a night when the religious leaders sought to kill Him. They would rather have their "place and nation" than yield allegiance to Him who came only to bless.

THE HARDENED HEARTS OF ISRAEL

Since Israel was intent on His rejection, lightly esteeming His Person and refusing to receive His

testimony and work, the Lord inaugurated an altogether different phase of His work, that in which He is designated "son of Abraham," as well as "the son of David." He began to speak in parables, so that the prophecy of Isaiah 6:9-12 might have its most complete fulfillment in His ministry. They would hear His parables, but they loved darkness rather than light.

Says Dr. Charles L. Feinberg in his book, *Israel in the Spotlight**:

After the Lord had therefore turned from Israel, He directed the hearts of His disciples to the purpose—the salvation of the lost—which had brought Him to earth. Thus He ministered until the hardened hearts of Israel were satisfied with the crucifixion of Him whose last words in their behalf were, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Such was the calamitous climax of all Israel's blindness and hardening throughout her life's history.

Nor was their condition after Pentecost improved, for although some believed, the majority rejected the offer of the Holy Spirit's ministry, even as they had rejected the loving kindness of the Father and the undying love of the Son. The hardness of heart continued until Paul could bring the full indictment against them, when he declared that they had killed the Lord Jesus Christ and their prophets; they had persecuted the apostles; they did not please God; they were contrary to all men, forbidding the apostles to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, for "the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" (I Thess. 2:15, 16).

From the time of Christ till this day this hardening of heart has been going on. Especially

**Israel in the Spotlight*, published by American Board of Missions to the Jews, New York, N.Y. Used with permission.

is this true in regard to the Messiah. The Lord Jesus knew full well whereof He spoke when He said, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John 5:43).

THE FULNESS OF THE GENTILES

Israel's blindness will continue until the Church is complete. The key to the understanding of prophecy is recognition of the mystery of Israel's temporary rejection. God "set aside" the nation for a time, but He has not cast them off forever. This is confirmed by Romans 11:25: "For I would not brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

The "fulness of the Gentiles" is the completion of the purpose of God in this age; that is, the outcalling from among the Gentiles of a people for Christ's name. See Acts 15:14. The "fulness of the Gentiles" must be distinguished from the "times of the Gentiles," that prophetic period when the land of Palestine, and particularly Jerusalem, are under Gentile dominion. When the last member is added, completing the body of Christ, the Church will be raptured, the "clock will start," and the awful 70th week of Daniel will begin.

All the other sins of the Jewish nation do not compare with the sin of rejecting Christ, their own Messiah and King. Pilate, during the trial of Jesus, washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people

and said, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matt. 27:24, 25).

OUR LORD'S SOLEMN WARNING

Before He walked the lonely way of sorrows to the cross, our Lord warned the Jews that the destruction of their city would soon come; they would be dispersed to all nations of the earth, and there would be "great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people" (Luke 21:23). Nearly 40 years after the crucifixion of Christ the Roman army, under Titus, besieged Jerusalem (then in revolt), and at last took it with terrible slaughter. The historian Josephus said 1,100,000 Jews perished in one day after a siege so horrible that cultured women cooked and ate their own children before the city fell. Ninety thousand Jews were sold into slavery in Egypt and elsewhere. The temple was burned to the ground. Jews were forced to fight wild beasts in Roman arenas. The remnant was literally scattered throughout the world, and none, save a handful, were left in Palestine. Titus took some of the noblest Jews to march in his triumphal procession through the streets of Rome. The city's Arch of Triumph was built by Titus to commemorate this victory. On the arch were carved figures of the young captives carrying sacred temple vessels. Later the Arabs took possession, and today the Mohammedan Mosque of Omar stands near the site of Solomon's temple.

Jerusalem, until recently, has been trodden down of the Gentiles. Undoubtedly, now we are seeing the beginning of the end of that domination, as the times of the Gentiles rapidly draw to

a close. Jews have been and are a persecuted people, suffering the vengeance of their unbelief because they turned their hearts away from the Lord and did not accept God's Son, their own Messiah, foretold by all the Jewish prophets. To read the tale of Israel's woes is to learn of a people who have been the object of the hatred of all nations.

THE TERRIBLE SUFFERINGS OF ISRAEL

Israel's woes began as Christ predicted, with the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70. After the scattering of the Jews from Palestine, they dwelled in various countries with comparative safety. Their awful night of terror began with the Crusades. The words of Deuteronomy 28 found shocking fulfillment. In his book, *Stranger Than Fiction*, Lewis Browne gives many details of the scattering and suffering of the Jews. He writes:

From the 5th to the 7th century the Jews were at rest in hardly a land in the world. In Christian countries—especially in Spain—they were hounded out of town after town, or were penned in like lepers in a single, foul little alley. Christian kings and noblemen robbed them. Christian bishops wrote books against them, and Christian ruffians murdered them.

The year 1096 inaugurated the first Crusade. Europe seemed to go stark, raving mad. The bloodthirstiness of the Mohammedans was whetted first with the blood of Jews. One Godfrey C. Bouillon enlisted fellow crusaders to swear with

an oath that no infidel Jew would be left alive in the land of Palestine. In Worms 800 Jews—almost the entire population—were slaughtered. In Mayence over one thousand Jews were massacred. In Cologne, Regensburg, Treves, and Prague the pogrom continued—violent, bloody, and shameful, while the hordes of crusaders left their trail of blood all over Europe during that devastating year. Sometime later, when they reached Jerusalem, in unbelievable sadism all the Jews were driven like animals into one of the synagogues and burned alive.

Dr. Feinberg relates:

In the great city of Worms many of the Jews had gained the protection of Bishop Allebrandus. It was not long, however, before the crusaders made a raid on the Bishop's palace, it appears, and demanded that the Jews be turned over to them. The Bishop then informed the Jews that they would have to be baptized in order to enjoy his further protection. The Jews asked for time to consider. When the time had elapsed and the Bishop went to receive the answer, he found some of them dead in their own blood. When the infuriated mob heard this, they murdered the survivors and dragged their corpses through the streets.

After the massacre at Worms, the crusaders moved on to the city of Mayence. Here the unscrupulous Archbishop Ruthard had craftily invited the Jews to take shelter in his palace. When their surrender was demanded, the mob was allowed to seize them without any opposition on the part of the Archbishop's guard. The horrible massacre at Worms was then re-enacted.

In England the accession of Edward I brought to the Jews some feeling of security because they

looked upon the King as a just monarch. He showed them no favors, but neither did he extort their wealth from them. He protected their persons and their property.

All was indeed going well until a Dominican monk, studying the Hebrew language in order to be able to convert the Jews, became converted to Judaism, even undergoing the rite of circumcision. This monk was handed over to the Archbishop of Canterbury for punishment, but from all appearances, he escaped without injury. The Dominicans, smarting under the disgrace that this member of the Order had brought upon them, resolved to take vengeance on the Jews. The Order first sought the ear of the Queen, who shortly afterwards expelled the Jews from the town of Cambridge, which was her property, and aroused ill feeling toward the Jews among the merchants of the whole country.

Soon parliament began to pass discriminating laws against the Jews. Every opportunity that afforded itself of draining them of their wealth was seized upon. Shortly after this, a charge of counterfeiting the coin of the realm was brought against them, for which they were hanged. Others were sentenced to life imprisonment, and yet others were expelled from the country, while their property was confiscated.

The outcome of this was that many Jews in London were torn asunder by horses and their dead bodies were hanged on the gallows. It was not long before other accusations were forthcoming and similar penalties were inflicted. Finally, in 1290, the King, through the influence of others, issued a decree that all the Jews of England were to be expelled from the country. Failure to leave was to be punished by hanging.

From England many Jews went to France. The misfortune of the Jews in France began with the

last quarter of the 12th century. One Phillip Augustus, son of Louis VII, came to the throne. He accused the Jews of usury and compelled them to pay huge sums for their exoneration. The accusation brought against them was that they slaughtered Christian children so they might have their blood for the feast of the passover. Misery upon misery followed them until 1181. The King issued an edict forcing all the Jews to leave his province. Upon their departure, the King enriched himself with their property. What Phillip Augustus had begun, Louis IX carried on. A year before his death, he ordered the wearing of a badge of red felt or saffron yellow cloth in the form of a disk upon the breast and back of every Jew.

In the middle of the 14th century, during the time of the great epidemic known as the Black Death, it was from the southern portion of France the rumor originated that the Jews had poisoned the brooks and wells. In one town a whole Jewish congregation of men, women, and children were burned to death with the Scriptures by the incited populace.

The Jews in Germany felt so keenly the anguish of their martyred saints, the kedoshim, they went about in mourning clothes of sackcloth sprinkled with ashes. The years following were no better. The persecution went on at the hands of serfs, priests, kings, and popes. In further humiliation, a law was passed by the Roman Catholic Church in 1215 requiring the wearing of a colored badge sewn to their clothing whenever they were seen in public. This "Jew badge" was a sign of inferiority and shame.

The Jew was a constant target for all forms of abuse, including stoning. He could not be a

craftsman because the trade unions rigidly excluded him from membership. He was restricted as trader, for in many lands a law forbade him to sell any but secondhand goods. He had to eke out a livelihood as a rag peddler or a haggling pawnbroker.

The Spanish Inquisition began in 1480; and in 1492 about 200,000 Jews were driven from Spain leaving their gold, silver, and jewels behind. These persecutions drove the Jews together, and they were forced to live in ghettos which were located in the filthiest parts of town. Here they were crowded together, with two or three families living in a single room. High walls surrounded the ghetto, and the gates were closed and locked at night. (What we call a ghetto today is not really a ghetto.) All this caused the Jews to dream again of the Messiah. Their only solace was found in prayer in the places of worship on the Sabbath. The agony of the Jews in Spain was their worst hell. The most intense persecutions were during the reign of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile. Their diabolical "holy zeal" seemingly knew no bounds. The entire Spanish population was enlisted to inform the Inquisitorial officials of all those guilty of so-called Jewish heresy. In 1481 all "heretics" were thrown to the flames. In unbelievable desecration they attempted to punish the dead by burning their bodies, unearthing the corpses of even the converts to Judaism who had been murdered for heresy. They seized the possessions of these dead converts and reduced their heirs to abject poverty. From Spain many Jews went to Turkey, Russia, and other Eastern countries to seek a place of refuge.

MODERN JEWISH POGROMS

The story of Russian persecution takes us to comparatively recent times. Under the Soviet Regime the Jews are now drinking the cup of sorrow to the dregs. Reports of recent years have been to the effect that officials took whole communities in order to extort money by torture. Those who did not have money were compelled to write to their relatives in America asking money of them. Later reports continue to tell of the sad situation of the Jews in Russia.

Finally, we turn to the condition of the Jews in Germany under the Nazi regime. No one can fully tell the whole tale of sorrow that was enacted in that country, as well as throughout the Continent of Europe. The Jewish population of the world before World War II was about 17,500,000. Over six million Jews were slaughtered by the Nazis and their allies. In the light of this terrible attempt at genocide, Jeremiah gives us a remarkable prophecy: "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, "The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks" (Jer. 16:14-16).

ANTI-SEMITISM AND ZIONISM

After World War I the "bait" of the homeland for the Jew in Palestine was offered. Zionism began to "fish" for Jews to return to their ancient home. Those who were comfortably settled in various nations of the world did not accept the "bait." At times the interest in the return of the Jews to Palestine was kept alive more by Christians than by the Jews themselves. It was only toward the end of the 19th century that Zionism found broader echoes in the Jewish world.

The plight of the Jew in Germany revived Zionism and brought it to the highest pitch it had ever known. The idea of a Jewish homeland became an obsession. The time had come for the "hunters" to arrive, as Jeremiah prophesied, and drive the Jews back to Palestine. Though the Jew had been hunted, driven, and persecuted through the centuries, none of his experiences compared with the brutalities under Hitler's rule. He aroused a new wave of anti-Semitism and Jewish extermination. The memory of those desperate days is preserved in a "Chamber of Destruction" on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. There one can see lamp shades made from human skins, and containers that hold bars of soap made from the bodies of the prisoners collected from the prison camps of Germany. Each bar is numbered to identify the person. The German army *used* this soap. Julius Streicher, the most extreme Anti-Semite among the Nazis, said, "The holiest night in the world will be the night the last Jew dies." The decree of July 6, 1939, determined to speed up Jewish immigration and "get the last Jew out of the Reich."

The story of the concentration camps of Germany—Belsen, Dachau, Sachsenhausen—is too hideous to relate. An American correspondent, when he saw the ovens of Buchenwald, where it is said as many as 3,000 a day were suffocated and burned, exclaimed, “If I had not seen it, I could not have believed it!”

Dr. Feinberg further comments: “And for Israel the end is not yet. Full well did the Lord Jesus Christ, with breaking heart, foresee this long night for Israel when He stretched out His arms to receive them as a hen does her chickens, but they would not. Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how long wilt thou turn from the light and life and love of Him who seeks only thy blessedness and peace?”

“With these centuries of suffering,” writes Lewis Browne, “the old Messianic ache began to throb again, and once more Jews, even in the West, began to long for their ancient homeland. . .

Dr. Feinberg relates how the Zionist movement started first in Russia during the dread days following the murder of Alexander II. Its Russian adherents were enthusiastic over it, but that was all. Zionism with them remained a dream, a thing to talk about. They lacked the worldly ability required even to attempt to realize it. Then came Theodor Herzl. At the time of the first Dreyfus trial, Herzl was in Paris serving as foreign correspondent for a Vienna newspaper. A young Jew named Alfred Dreyfus, an officer in the French army, was accused of selling military secrets to the Germans. Dreyfus was condemned and sentenced to a living death on Devil’s Island. Immediately his people began an agitation for a new trial. Protests were made, mass meet-

ings were held; articles, pamphlets, and books were written in defense of the innocent man. France was convulsed to its very depths, and all the civilized world became aroused.

Twelve long years the excitement lasted. Finally, after the true criminals committed suicide and the corrupt government had been overthrown, Dreyfus was exonerated. It was a frightful ordeal, not alone for Alfred Dreyfus, but for the whole Jewish people. With him they all stood on trial, for he had ceased to be a Jew and had become *the* Jew. The strange people were a far sadder but wiser lot. They had been telling themselves that they were at home everywhere, but now they knew again they were at home nowhere at all. All this set the stage for Theodor Herzl and the Zionist movement, which began in 1897. The first Zionist congress met in Basle, Switzerland in August of that year, after the publication of a pamphlet by Herzl entitled, *The Jewish State*. The program adopted by the first congress stated: "Zionism aims at establishing for the Jewish people a publicly recognized and legally secured home in Palestine." To attain this end, the program specified "the promotion of the settlement of Jewish agriculturists, artisans, and tradesmen in Palestine."

PALESTINE, ISRAEL'S HOMELAND

There were about 25 Jewish colonies in Palestine in 1898, which increased to 43 in 1915, with a population of about 100,000. The outbreak of World War I ended the influx of Jewish settlers, and the program came to a standstill, with many leaving the colonies. Yet, out of the despair and

darkness of the war, there was to shine a bright light, for God had not forgotten Israel or the land of Palestine. In November, 1917, Lord Alfred Balfour, British Foreign Secretary, issued the famous Balfour Declaration, stating that the British government looked with favor on the "establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." A special Jewish battalion was organized to assist General Allenby in the conquest of the Holy Land. Israel's former Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, was a corporal in that army.

One who exercised a tremendous influence on the British was Israeli chemist, Chaim Weizmann. Born in Russia, he was naturalized in 1910 and appointed director of the British Admiralty Laboratories in 1916. In this capacity, he discovered and developed a method of synthesizing acetone, a substance essential in the manufacture of a smokeless explosive powder called cordite. In 1921, Weizmann was elected president of the World Zionist Organization and served eight years. May 16, 1948, he was elected president of Israel and served in this office until he died November 9, 1952.

David Lloyd George, late Prime Minister of Great Britain, wrote about Weizmann:

I was confronted by a serious crisis. It became clear that the supplies of wood alcohol for the manufacture of acetone would prove quite insufficient to meet the increasing demands, particularly in 1916. The matter was urgent, for without the acetone there would be no cordite for our cartridges, for rifles, or big guns.

In exchange for this scientific discovery, on

behalf of the British Cabinet, Balfour promised Palestine as a national home for Israel. One month later, December 9, 1917, Jerusalem was freed from the Turks by General Allenby. The city was taken without firing a shot.

ISRAEL'S DEED TO THE LAND

In 1967, infant Israel bravely defended herself with invincibility that has startled the world. Even though Azzam Pasha, Secretary General of the Arab League, announced, concerning his nation's war with Israel that same year: "This will be a war of extermination and a momentous massacre, which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades," and even though Gamal Abdel Nasser announced that his forces would drive Israel into the Mediterranean Sea forever, and reiterated his threat, "We want a decisive battle, to annihilate that germ, Israel," their failure was dismal and devastating.

None of Israel's 14 Arab neighbors will admit that she has a right to be a nation; but the Word of God makes it clear that the Jew is the only man on earth who has a country promised to him by the original Creator of all things—a country, a nation of this earth forever. On the deed of the gift are the words, "I am the Almighty God," and there is no other nationality that can show such a claim to any portion of the earth. Since the Almighty has spoken and has laid down the boundaries of the land which is to be Israel's, how foolish for Communist Russia and the Arab nations to think her land can ever be taken from her. The history of modern Israel should convince any skeptic that God is still deeply involved in

the affairs of this world. God has a purpose in the life of His chosen people, though He permitted them to be scattered among and persecuted by the Gentile nations for about 1900 years, because of their unbelief. He has also directed the recent possession of part of their ancient homeland, and eventually they will possess all of it. This is a direct fulfillment of the prophecy: "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, saith the Lord thy God" (Amos 9: 14, 15).

ISRAEL THE MIRACLE NATION

No nation can trace its lineage by the clear light of religious history so far back as the Jew. They had literature before most nations had letters—a literature that is today more widely diffused than that of any other people. In comparison with the Jews, the nations making history today are but babes. The Jew is the key to prophecy, and all prophecy is intimately concerned with the Jews. When we speak of the Jews, we are speaking of a people that had their origin in a miracle. From 90-year-old Sarah, sterile and past hope, was born Isaac. From Isaac came Jacob; and from Jacob the 12 tribes of Israel. In the course of natural events, Isaac could not have been. By the power of God he came into being, and from that point a nation,

clothed in the supernatural, stood up on its feet and began its strange march down the centuries. As my father, the late Dr. Harry H. MacArthur, expressed it: "No other nation in history has had such manifest and visible tokens of the divine presence." For them the Red Sea was driven back and the Jordan parted. They were miraculously fed in the wilderness, sheltered and guided by the divine pillar of fire. For them the sun and moon were stayed in their courses that their enemies might be cut down. They began as a miracle, and their endurance to this hour is a miracle.

How fascinating it was to hear the interviews held by CBS's Mike Wallace with several defeated Egyptian generals in an Israeli prisoner of war camp, following the Six-Day War. In every instance these generals concluded that Israel's victory was an impossibility, that no nation could have won against such odds unless they received outside help. These military men were firmly convinced that the United States and Great Britain aided Israel. One general stated that there was absolutely no other explanation. What he does not realize is that Israel's aid was divine, and behind her magnificent defense was God Almighty. Their preservation is the miracle of history.

The number of eminent Jews in the world is, and always has been, out of all proportion to their population, not because they plotted to put themselves in places of eminence, but because of sheer brilliance and application. Their positions on the faculties of universities are awarded by competitive examinations, where names are not signed to the papers. Yet, under these conditions, they have advanced in outstanding proportion.

ISRAEL'S INFLUENCE AND INDESTRUCTIBILITY

It was Jewish money that financed Christopher Columbus and made possible the discovery of this country. It was Jewish money that carried through the Revolutionary War. Haym Salomon was the Jewish broker who, almost singlehandedly, carried Jefferson, Monroe, and Madison through the days of their financial difficulties, bringing America to victory. Rarely did Salomon ask interest on his loans, and frequently he made them, knowing he would never be repaid. He died in squalor, his lungs choking with tuberculosis. Nothing was done to repay his heirs, and nothing to perpetuate his memory.

The number of Jews receiving Nobel prizes is extremely large, indicating great achievements in science and other worthy causes for the blessing of humanity. During World War II the *Miami Daily News* carried this item:

A Nazi who has syphilis must not allow himself to be cured by salvarsan, because it is the discovery of a Jew, Ehrlich. He must not even take steps to find out whether he has syphilis, because the Wassermann reaction used for that purpose is the discovery of a Jew. A Nazi who has heart disease must not use digitalis, the use of which, in the treatment of heart disease, was developed by a Jew, Ludwig Trabo. If he has a toothache, he will not be able to use cocaine, for he will be benefiting from the work of a Jew, Solomon Stricker. Typhus must not be treated, for he will have to benefit by the discoveries of the Jews, Widall and Weill. If he has diabetes, he must not use insulin, because of the research work of a Jew, Minkowsky. If he has a headache, he must shun

pyramidon and antipyrine, discovered by Spiro and Eiloge. Anti-Semites who have convulsions must put up with them, for it was a Jew Oscar Leibreach, who thought of using chloral hydrate.

We could add that Salk and Sabin, who ended the awful epidemic of polio, were Jews.

As we have seen, these wonderful people have been blamed for almost everything from the Black Plague of the 14th century to a recent plot to overthrow all Gentile governments. Because of the recent victories of this little miracle nation in the Middle East and the embarrassment of the great gigantic colossus, the Soviet Union, we can be sure there will rise a new tide of hate that the Word of God assures us will climax in that great invasion from the north, led by a Soviet confederacy and motivated by the evil desire to destroy Israel once and for all. But God will defend his people, and terrible beyond description will be the slaughter of Israel's enemies in the valley of Megiddo (Ezek. 38 and 39). See also Ezekiel 37:11-13; Jeremiah 31:35-37; Genesis 3:14, 15; Genesis 17:7, 8. This will mark the end of the blasphemous, God-defying, Christ-hating, Communist hordes with their dream.

THE THRILLING AWAKENING OF ISRAEL

The story of Israel's recent awakening is dramatic and thrilling because of its prophetic and Biblical significance. At last, May 14, 1948, Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled, "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or

shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children" (Isa. 66:8). And that is exactly what happened! After 1,878 years of Gentile domination, shortly after sunrise, the Union Jack of Great Britain, flying over the government house in Jerusalem, came down, and at 4 P. M., the 24th day of Iyar, 5,780 years after creation on the Jewish calendar, the state of Israel was born, with still eight hours left before the British mandate ended at midnight. The United States recognized the Jewish state at the very moment of her birth. As President Truman signed a formal document, he said:

The U. N. voted to partition Palestine. We went along with that decision and recognized Israel. It was my responsibility to see to it that our foreign policy fits in with the foreign policy of the world. Besides, after what Hitler did to the Jews, and after the reports I got when I sent Earle Harrison to make a study of the displaced persons camps and found that the Jews wanted to get out of Europe and go to Palestine, I felt that they ought to have a democratic home of their own.

An eye-witness of the event reported that the day the state of Israel was established, they ran up the Jewish flag with its six-pointed Star of David. The Jews went almost wild. Jews with long, white beards, wearing little skull caps, climbed upon two-wheeled oil carts used for delivery of gasoline and kerosene. Two or three of these old men, astride one barrel, were waving their flags and shouting. An old grey-haired Jew said, "I have been waiting since 1885 for this great event. It is time for the Messiah to come."

The thirteen men who were to rule the new

state sat down at a long table. Zionist flags, with the two pale blue stripes and the blue Star of David, flew overhead. They all arose and sang a Zionist anthem, "Song of Hope," which in part says:

We have not forgotten, nor shall we forget our solemn promise. . . The ancient longing will be fulfilled to return to the land. . . of our fathers.

At this, the audience cheered and wept. In two hours it would be the Sabbath when many would be praying for the nation's future, while its armies fought for freedom. The name of the army commander-in-chief of Haganah was Israel Galilee, which became the national rallying cry.

The prophet Jeremiah gave a word for all nations to heed: "For thus saith the Lord; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth. . . a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them. . . for I am a father to Israel. . . Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattereth Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock" (Jer. 31:7-10). The fulfillment of this prophecy is as exacting as the mathematics which says 2 plus 2 equal 4. It is beyond denial!

In her book, *Israel Today*, Ruth Gruber writes:

The drama of Israel's own birth had its counterpart in the drama of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. It seemed almost an act of destiny

that both occurred on the same day. In New York, Saturday, November 29, 1947, the nations of the world were voting to partition Palestine and create a Jewish state. In Jerusalem Dr. Eleazar Sukenik, professor of archaeology at the Hebrew University was hurrying home from Bethlehem with the sacred scrolls wrapped in paper under his arm. He opened them in his study and began excitedly reading the writing on the ancient leather.

It is interesting that the scrolls contained the whole book of Isaiah, the Gospel of the Old Testament that prophesied of the coming Messiah. In fact, it is the most detailed book of Messianic prophecy. Isaiah also told of the regathering of Israel. "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away" (Isa. 41:8, 9).

Said David Ben-Gurion, reading the Proclamation of Independence:

The land of Israel was the birth place of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious, and national identity was formed. Here they achieved independence and created culture of national and universal significance. Here they wrote and gave the Bible to the world...It is the natural right of the Jews to lead, as do all other nations, an independent existence in its sovereign state...by virtue of the natural and historic right of the Jewish people and the establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine, to be called the state of Israel. With trust in Almighty God, we set our hand to this declaration on this Sabbath eve, the 5th of Iyar, 5,708, the 14th of May, 1948.

Ruth Gruber continues her narrative—

It was a miracle at midnight. One minute before midnight of May 15, any Jewish man, woman, or child caught carrying a gun could be arrested by the British. One minute after midnight the Jew was called upon to defend himself against six Arab states with all the help Britain could give them. "The miracles" became logic. The rationalists, the disbelievers, the materialists and the 20th century existentialists, could find no better word. The miracle was the State. The miracle was winning the war after the Arabs had threatened to drive every Jew into the sea. The miracle was that a heterogeneous people from every cultural level in the world was being fused together into a nation again. The miracle was that an enlightened democracy was springing up in the middle of the feudal and corrupt Middle East. The miracle was that ordinary human beings, full of ordinary desires, mistakes, visions, pettiness, quarrels, dreams, and ambitions—noble people and mean ones, strong people and ordinary ones—were doing this extraordinary thing.

THE AMAZING EXTENT OF THE REGATHERING

Our Lord declared, "Behold, the fig tree (the symbol of Israel), 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" (Luke 21:29-31). He referred not only to Israel, but other similar nations that have been dormant for centuries. With the rise of Israel, there has been an awakening among other small nations that have been downtrodden and op-

pressed. We have seen the shooting forth of Burma, India, Ghana, Nigeria, and a number of other African states. A wave of nationalism has arisen among the Arab states and African colonies.

There is no stranger story in the history of the world than the regathering of the Jews from all parts of the earth forming the new nation of Israel. This began a new "exodus" of thousands of Jews from every nation. About one million returned from 70 nations during the first 12 years of Israel's history. See Jeremiah 16:14, 15. For the first three-and-one-half years after the founding of the nation, they came at the rate of 23 per hour, day and night. Yitshak Ben Zevi, President of Israel, said, "We are witnesses of the wondrous process of the joining of the tribes of Israel bone to bone, flesh to flesh, into one people; an ancient people, condemned to exile and dispersion, has sprung to life again."

One of the most thrilling accounts of Israel's regathering relates to the return of 50,000 Jews from the Arab kingdom of Yemen, where for centuries they lived in slavery. Before 1949 it meant death to try and leave Yemen, but that year they were permitted to leave if they abandoned their property or sold it for almost nothing. They were a deeply religious people and had to pay a head tax on themselves and their Bible scrolls. They walked for hundreds of miles to the British protectorate of Aden when the American Joint Distribution Committee, through the United Jewish Appeal, flew them out in giant C-54 Sky-masters, piloted by American boys, in what was called "Operation Magic Carpet."

The Yemenite Jews claimed to be the oldest

Jewish community in the world, having gone into voluntary exile in 628 B. C. to escape from Nebuchadnezzar. They made a strong place for themselves in Yemen, and refused to return to Jerusalem during the invasion of Cyrus, king of Persia. By the 7th century they became second-class citizens. Oppressed and humiliated, they nevertheless practiced their Jewish faith. The Yemenites were a primitive people, bypassed by civilization for centuries, but they returned to Israel as foretold. Although overwhelmed by all the awesome contrivances of the modern world, they were not frightened when they saw the airliners standing by to take them to their new home. They stepped aboard without hesitation, claiming this was prophesied in Isaiah 40:31. One of them firmly established this claim when he said, "For all these years we waited upon the Lord and He kept renewing our strength. Now we are mounting up with wings as eagles, only the Bible didn't say they would be *American* eagles' wings!"

In May, 1950, the Iraqi government gave the Jews one year to get out. Once again, weeping Jews by the rivers of Babylon were returned to Palestine in the largest human air lift in history. A thousand Jews a day were flown from Iraq to Israel, in an operation called "Ali Baba." American planes flew out 122,000. In 1951, 80,000 Jews came from Romania. Others came from Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The entire Jewish community of Yugoslavia returned to Israel, and about 44,000 came from Bulgaria. From 1952 to 1956 thousands of Jews arrived from North Africa. They came from Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia. Many came from Egypt after Nasser stole the businesses of wealthy Jews. More came from

Hungary, and in one year 40,000 fled from Poland. Thousands came from Iran and others from Kurdistan, Afghanistan, and Bukhara, a small community on the Iran border. Many of them traced their descent from the lost tribes of Israel.

Over 2,000 "black Jews" of India returned and settled in Israel between 1953 and 1956. They had taken on the dark skin of the Indian people during the centuries they had lived there. Records show also the existence of autonomous Jewish communities in the southern extremity of India as far back as the 4th century. They have kept certain traditions of the Jewish faith, observing many of the rituals, and praying in Hebrew. They are proud of their historic past and racial ancestry, though they have had very little association with the rest of the Jewish world. Travelers from America and Europe brought them information of other Jewish communities, as well as Torah scrolls and prayer books. What prompted them to go to Israel? They were unfamiliar with 20th century Zionism and modern trends in Jewish life. It has been said they were moved to take this step out of a vague, religious, Messianic feeling.

Miss Dvora Elon, associated with the Israeli embassy in Washington, told of the black Jews who came from Ethiopia. These black Falashas trace their descent from King Solomon's guards, who escorted the Queen of Sheba back after her stay in Jerusalem. These guards then settled in the Ethiopian mountains.

A community of 2,000 Jews returned from China. Ten of them came at first; five had a serious disease, so the remaining Jews were not allowed to enter Israel. Jewish doctors were sent

to the Institute of Tropical Diseases in London to find a cure for this sickness. The doctors then went to China to cure them, and now all have returned to Israel.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ISRAEL'S REBIRTH

After Ezekiel's vision of the "dry bones" (Ezek. 37), God asked him the question, "Can these bones live?" To which the prophet answered, "O, Lord God, thou knowest." It is explicitly stated that these bones are representative of the house of Israel (vs. 11). God announced that He would open their graves and bring them home to the land of Israel. This would be followed by a new spiritual relationship with God. Then the prophet saw the realization step by step. There was a noise and a rattling, and the bones came together. Next, the muscles and flesh formed over the bones, and skin covered them. Finally the bodies began to breathe and live.

The dry bones are a dramatic picture of the Jewish nation before the people returned to their land. Here we have indication that there will be successive and distinct stages of development, with preliminary organization and gradual implementation over a span of time. It often seems that great historic events appear abruptly on the scene. As a matter of fact, the underlying causes are usually at work over a period of time.

The exciting, astonishing victory of Israel in 1967 is significant in pointing toward the fulfillment of the climax of history—the second coming of Jesus Christ. His feet are to stand upon the Mount of Olives. The celestial visitors said at

His ascension, “. . .this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11). He is not recognized today as Israel’s Messiah, but He will be when He comes (Zech. 12:10).

Orthodox Jews are anticipating the coming of their Messiah. I have heard them praying at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. With genuine tears they pleaded for the peace of Jerusalem, the rebuilding of the temple, and the return of the Messiah. The Apostle John promises that their longing will not be in vain, as he proclaims: “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen” (Rev. 1:7).

THE DIVINE TIMETABLE

It was Zechariah, one of God’s prophets who, in the year 520 B. C., intimated the formation of the United Arab Republic by identifying the enemies of Israel that would surround the land of Palestine. But not until February 21, 1958, was this announced to the world as an accomplished fact. See Zechariah, chapters 9 through 11. Similarly, the empires of Rome, Egypt, Greece, Medo-Persia, and Babylon have run a course clearly foretold in the Old Testament. Alexander and the Caesars did not change destiny; they were only part of it. And so it is with the leaders of nations today, as a United States of Europe is a very real possibility on the basis of the present European Common Market (Dan. 2, 7, 8, and 11).

The Bible clearly fixes the world on a precise timetable. In prophecy it establishes the destiny of nations without violating the free will of the individual, and the history of this world will find its consummation in the One who declared, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8).

On July 27, 1959, President Nasser of the United Arab Republic said Israel was "a crime established by treachery...I announce on behalf of the United Arab Republic people...we will exterminate Israel." Nasser had obviously not read the Bible very carefully, or ignores its unerring prophetic record which declares: "And they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given unto them" (Amos 9:15). See also Isaiah 11; Jeremiah 33; Ezekiel 11; Amos 9.

Because of Nasser's lack of Biblical knowledge, on Monday, June 5, 1967, in stunning pre-dawn air strikes, the tiny nation Israel all but annihilated the massed air forces of hostile Arab countries. Within hours the 25 most vital air bases in the Arab world had been wrecked. In four hours the air war against Nasser was won; in 60 hours the Jordanian, Syrian, and Iraqi air forces were shattered. In six days the war was over. Those who believe in the integrity of the Bible realize Israel's military victory is renewed evidence that the God of Israel lives, that His promises of protection and guidance will be fulfilled, and that the establishment of a strong Israel ushers in what Richard Wolff called "Act II" on the stage of world history.

THE UNERRING ACCURACY OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY

As G. B. Hardy warns in his book, *Countdown*, high-powered diplomatic corps, it would appear, in the absence of crystal balls, might well use Bibles as they ponder the future of the world. Mr. Hardy lists the following prophetic facts as being easily discernible:

1. The long dormant people of the Middle East cannot be put back to sleep.
2. The new nation Israel will always exist, and ultimately increase, not decrease.
3. Israel will continue an irremovable thorn to her neighbors.
4. There will be destruction in that area that man can only work with his newly found "nuclear toys."
5. China will rise as a giant among the nations.
6. A confederation of Europe is inevitable.
7. The nations will ultimately submit to a world dictatorship (Ezek. 38; Zech. 12, 14; Dan. 2; Rev. 13, 16, 17).

When the Church age is brought to a close by the completion of the body of Christ from among Jews and Gentiles, Israel's blindness will be taken away, and the Jewish clock will begin to tick. This is foreknowledge beyond question. Yet, withal, behind it is the hand of God, for we have had the privilege of seeing God fulfill the promise He made to Moses and the other Old Testament prophets that one day He would bring His people

back to the land God gave them through Abraham. This remarkable fulfillment of prophecy vindicates forever the integrity and infallibility of the Word of God. If there were no other evidence (though of course, there is), this should be sufficient forever to substantiate divine inspiration. Fulfilled prophecy is found in the Bible alone. Hence, it presents proof of divine inspiration that is positive, conclusive, and overwhelming.

No man, unaided by God, foreknows the future, for it is an impenetrable wall, an "iron curtain" to all mankind. Only an all-knowing God can infallibly predict the future. If one can find true prophecy (as one does in the Bible), with definite fulfillment, with sufficient time intervening between the prediction and the fulfillment, and with explicit details to insure that the prophecies are not clever guesses, then the case is perfect and unquestionable. Desperate atheists and other unbelievers, seeking a way to circumvent the fact of fulfilled prophecy and its connotation, have argued that fulfillments were "accidental," "chance," or "coincidental," but when a number of details are given, the "chance" fulfillment is ruled out.

JERUSALEM AND THE PROPHETIC WORD

An outstanding example of a specific, detailed prophecy and its fulfillment is found in the graphic prediction our Lord made regarding the destruction of Jerusalem. He had remarked that the things admired by the disciples—the beautiful stone work of the temple, constructed of immense stones, some of which were more than

six feet long, ten feet wide, and eight feet high—would be knocked down, and one stone would not be left on top of another. In answer to the question of His disciples as to when this would take place, our Lord said, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:20-24).

In A.D. 70, forty years after our Lord spoke these words, the Roman soldiers of Titus, in express violation of his orders to preserve it, leveled the temple to the ground; the symbol of the Jewish faith was no more. The Romans sent thousands of prisoners to the Egyptian mines. Multitudes perished in Roman arenas, slain by the sword, and torn asunder by wild beasts. Those who were under 17 years of age were sold into slavery. Josephus estimated the total number of captives at 97,000, and the number of those who perished during the siege at 1,100,000.

Our Lord predicted that they would "fall by the edge of the sword"—literally by "The mouth of the sword." The sword is poetically represented as a biting animal with a mouth devouring and

destroying. One interesting side light to this prophecy took place in the following manner. After the conquest, Titus considered Palestine his private possession. He gave large sections to his friends and favorites and allowed 800 Roman veterans to establish themselves close to the ruins of the city of Jerusalem.

Jesus had said, "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains." If ever a message from our Lord required explicit belief contrary to appearances, it was this one. There were thousands of Christians in Jerusalem at the time, and they were told the sign to watch for was the surrounding of the city by hostile armies. It would seem that the fulfillment of the promised sign would automatically cut off any hope for anyone profiting by it. But the believers trusted their Lord. General Cestius brought up his troops, and then, as Josephus says, he withdrew "without any just occasion in the world." The great historian, Phillip Schaff, wrote: "The Christians of Jerusalem, remembering the Lord's admonition, forsook the doomed city in good time and fled to the town of Pella in the Decapolis beyond the Jordan." When Titus utterly destroyed the city, everyone who believed the warning of the Lord escaped the dreadful fate of Jerusalem.

JESUS CHRIST, ISRAEL'S MESSIAH AND THE WORLD'S SAVIOR

How solemn are His words, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that

judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). Christianity is not a new religion, unrelated to the Old Testament; it is based on the solid ground of fulfilled Old Testament promises. Someone said:

Christianity, with Jesus as its central figure—human and divine, prophet, priest, and king—is nothing less than the translation of prophecy from the region of ardent belief to actual fact. And we see the living and organic connection between the two dispensations and recognize it as the same God who spake in both—in the first to prepare, in the second to accomplish.

And if you think, as surely you ought, that there is a remarkable fulfillment of prophecy in the history, preservation and restoration of Israel, this overwhelming evidence is not to be compared with the prophecies and their fulfillment concerning the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The golden milestone in the ancient city of Rome was the point in the Old World at which many roads, running from all directions in the Roman Empire, met and converged. So all lines of Old Testament Messianic prophecy meet in Jesus the Christ of the New Testament.

He is the burden of the prophets' messages, the theme of the Psalmist's song, the chief character of the Gospels, the fountainhead of inspiration in the Epistles, and the sublime and majestic central figure of the Revelation. If, in the light of the evidence presented, it becomes plain to you that the preservation of Israel is the miracle of God, an undeniable fulfillment of prophecy, an undeniable evidence of divine foreknowledge, then Jesus Christ is even more so.

He is the center of Old Testament prophecy. He is the center of New Testament history, and most important of all, He is your only possible Savior. He is God invading the world with a redemptive purpose. He is alive—His presence is manifested in the world by His Holy Spirit. He promises, “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37).

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).