

## THE PENETRATING NIGHTMARE

MY FRIENDS, in my last message we viewed the SOURCE, the SEQUENCE and the SCENE of a dramatic invasion of the Holy Land as prophetically expressed in the thirty–eighth and thirty–ninth chapters of Ezekiel in the Tenach.

In this message we shall survey the SCALE and the SEASON of the prophesied invasion.

The language employed by Ezekiel would suggest that the SCALE of the invasion is vast. It is vast because the evil mind of the invader envisages a devastating blow at the very existence of restored Israel. It is vast because the Divine Will of the God of Israel has determined an equally devastating judgement upon the invaders, the leader of whom, you will remember, is designated by the expressive name “Gog.”

Little does Gog, and the predatory nations associated with him, realize the Divine pre–emptory nemesis overshadowing them.

With poetic justice God has decreed that the scene of His judgement should coincide with the scene of Gog’s villainy.

If, in our previous message, it is our imagination which clothes Ezekiel’s descriptive phrases with conceptions of modern aerial activity, we need have no recourse to any flight of fancy, however permissible, when we survey the graphic recital related to the SCALE of the invasion. This language is clear – **“mighty army,” “many peoples,” “horses and horsemen,” “swords,” “buckler and shield,” “the bows and arrows.”** Indeed, so pronounced is the scale of this invasion that we read of the weapons gathered after the Divine judgement has fallen that **“they shall make fires of them seven years.”** (Ezekiel 39:9)

Now, my friends, a word of warning regarding Ezekiel’s reference to **“bucklers”** and **“shields.”** I admit that if we allow these terms a superficial contact with our understanding we shall be tempted to use them as handles by which we shall swing the whole prophecy back into antiquity. But, remember, in these messages we wish to avoid superficiality as much as extravagance in our approach to the Scriptures; therefore, we shall remind ourselves that Ezekiel must, of necessity, speak in the language of the times in which he lived. After all, he had to pay his household bills with the currency of his day. Had Ezekiel spoken of United States dollars he wouldn’t have been understood until the year 1794 of the Common Era. If comprehension were a woman she would need great patience to wait so long, don’t you think so?

Of course, Ezekiel spoke in the language of his own day and he has been well understood ever since.

However, if there be a demand that Ezekiel’s reference to armour and wooden weapons be given a literal employment undivorced from time — a demand which I find I cannot regard as reasonable and which ignores the proven principle of interpretation known as the “Canon of Double Sense”

embodied in my message number six in this Series, a demand which seeks, apparently, to render the terms ineligible to our modern days — I am afraid I must ask you to pull the snow-white whiskers of remote times off those words because, like Santa Claus' facial adornments, they conceal a current entity.

How do you like the following newspaper headings which I cut out of the Melbourne "Argus" in Australia a few years ago?

"Fibre Armour would protect soldiers from shrapnel" (Melbourne "Argus," 6 July, 1940) "Body armour for troops" (Melbourne "Argus," 4 December, 1941)

"Shoulder and back-plates of pressed steel" (Melbourne "Argus," 15 April, 1941) "United States Airmen wearing armour" (Melbourne "Argus," 11 June, 1943)

"Aircraft of timber" (Melbourne "Argus," 15 July 1940)

That's interesting, isn't it? You see, my friends, — grasp it, please — armour and wooden weapons in our own day! And methinks that fibre armour and wrecked timber-aircraft on the scale of this invasion would indeed solve the firewood problem of many peoples for extended periods. Surely these modern newspaper headings need no commentary.

But, listen carefully! Do we hear the voice of one convinced against his will and of the same opinion still? What does the lone dissentient say — **"What of the bows and the arrows?"**

Ah! What indeed! Very well, then: one last newspaper cutting from the same Melbourne "Argus," dated 25 February, 1941. Here is the headline: "British Fire Arrows. Siege of Asosa. Bows and arrows have reappeared in the British Army in East Africa." That is the end of the quotation and I hope the end of the objection, too.

Bows and arrows in 1941! You see, no snow-white beard on those terms either; they have the downy chins of callow youth!

Surely we shall display nothing but our ignorance if we stamp the Ezekiel prophecies obsolete because of certain terms he employs.

Having given you a parenthetic side-glance at this possible objection, I now feel free to proceed on the main highway of our subject.

An abortive invasion of restored Israel by a godless power north of the Promised Land and which culminates in a Divine judgement upon the invader is an event so apocalyptic in character that we seek eagerly to inquire in what SEASON we may expect it. When does it happen? Only the Scriptures can give an authoritative and final reply to this question. Here is the Bible answer — **"in the latter days," "in the end of days."**

However obscure and unsatisfactory these terms may be to our Gentile friends, they are by no means unintelligible to Jewish minds. Indeed, they are expressions with special long-recognized Messianic significance amongst Jewish people.

Let me quote Rabbi Dr. S. Fisch, M.A. here are his words: "No specific date for the coming invasion by Gog is given. The character of the two chapters is apocalyptic and relates to the indefinite future, the advent of the Messiah, indicated by the phrase **"the end of days."**

Yes. In the **"end of days"** restored Israel, tranquil, placid and unagitated, basks in the relaxed composure of an unjustified security.

Then, with catastrophic suddenness, invasion's ruthless shock shatters the serenity of the scene. Completely unequal to the magnitude of the menace, Israel awaits decimation!

How often this peril has threatened God's elected people. Again and again down the long ages, hatred, Devil-derived, has hunted this people to the point of annihilation.

Hatred is the leprosy of the soul and now, because the reunion of the people of Israel with the land of Israel presages the approach of the promised Messianic age, that old Serpent, the Adversary, Satan, ever the ugly author of Jew-hating and Jew-baiting, himself sin-deceived, has another desperate bid at the total destruction of Israel.

The mountains of Israel resound with the clamour of the invader when, with even greater unexpectedness than the very invasion itself, the invader suffers the sudden SHOCK of Divine retributive interposition.

My friends, let us observe that both the backward glance of history and the forward look of prophecy merge into one blazing red beacon-light of Divine warning against anti-Semitism.

The Jewish people, the nation of Israel — whatever else it may be — remains dominantly the national vehicle for the outworking of the Divine will upon the earth.

Inevitably, therefore, those who raise the hand against Israel raise the hand against the Almighty God of Israel, and Gog and his hordes and supporters will learn the age-long lesson that anti-Semitism is suicide indeed.

In my next message we shall follow Ezekiel as he brings us, spellbound, into the very centre of the prophesied inburst of the Divine wrath.

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**(1900-1964)**

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